

# **CONSTITUTION of Christ the King Church of Denville, NJ**

## **Preamble**

We, the members of CHRIST THE KING CHURCH OF DENVILLE, NEW JERSEY, in order to carry out more efficiently the commission given by our Lord Jesus, do ordain and establish the following Constitution to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

## **Article 1 - Name**

The name by which this organization shall be known in law shall be CHRIST THE KING CHURCH OF DENVILLE, NJ, referred to herein as “the church,” which has been organized as a religious corporation under the laws of the State of New Jersey.

## **Article 2 – Foundation and Purpose of Ministry**

1. The cornerstone and foundation of the church is the Lord Jesus Christ, and its standard of guidance, in all facets of its existence, is the Word of God. The church affirms its conviction that the Old and the New Testaments of the Bible are uniquely and unchangeably the Word of God.
2. The chief end of the church is to glorify God through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, rejoicing in Him as we seek to live out His revealed will in our time and place. Our priorities are to praise and worship Him with all of our hearts (Colossians 3:16, Ephesians 5:16-19), to grow in our devotion to Him and to one another through discipleship and community, and to spread His fame through evangelism and ministries of mercy. We purpose, by His grace, to live in line with the truth of the Gospel.

## **Article 3 – Statement of Faith**

We have gratefully adopted and gladly affirm the doctrinal statement set forth by The Gospel Coalition [[www.thegospelcoalition.org](http://www.thegospelcoalition.org)], which is “a fellowship of evangelical churches deeply committed to renewing our faith in the gospel of Christ and to reforming our ministry practices to conform fully to the Scriptures.”

### **1. The Triune God**

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who know, love, and glorify one another. This one true and living God is infinitely perfect both in His love and in His holiness. He is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible, and is therefore worthy to receive all glory and adoration. Immortal and eternal, He perfectly and exhaustively knows the end from the beginning, sustains and sovereignly rules over all things, and providentially brings about His eternal good purposes to redeem a people for Himself and restore His fallen creation, to the praise of His glorious grace.

### **2. Revelation**

God has graciously disclosed His existence and power in the created order, and has supremely revealed Himself to fallen human beings in the person of His Son, the incarnate Word. Moreover,

this God is a speaking God who by His Spirit has graciously disclosed Himself in human words: we believe that God has inspired the words preserved in the Scriptures, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, which are both record and means of His saving work in the world. These writings alone constitute the verbally inspired Word of God, which is utterly authoritative and without error in the original writings, complete in its revelation of His will for salvation, sufficient for all that God requires us to believe and do, and final in its authority over every domain of knowledge to which it speaks.

We confess that both our finitude and our sinfulness preclude the possibility of knowing God's truth exhaustively, but we affirm that, enlightened by the Spirit of God, we can know God's revealed truth truly. The Bible is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it teaches; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; and trusted, as God's pledge, in all that it promises. As God's people hear, believe, and do the Word, they are equipped as disciples of Christ and witnesses to the Gospel.

### 3. **Creation of Humanity**

We believe that God created human beings, male and female, in His own image. Adam and Eve belonged to the created order that God Himself declared to be very good, serving as God's agents to care for, manage, and govern creation, living in holy and devoted fellowship with their Maker. Men and women, equally made in the image of God, enjoy equal access to God by faith in Christ Jesus and are both called to move beyond passive self-indulgence to significant private and public engagement in family, church, and civic life. Adam and Eve were made to complement each other in a one-flesh union that establishes the only normative pattern of sexual relations for men and women, such that marriage ultimately serves as a type of the union between Christ and His church.

In God's wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. God ordains that they assume distinctive roles which reflect the loving relationship between Christ and the church, the husband exercising headship in a way that displays the caring, sacrificial love of Christ, and the wife submitting to her husband in a way that models the love of the church for her Lord. In the ministry of the church, both men and women are encouraged to serve Christ and to be developed to their full potential in the manifold ministries of the people of God. The distinctive leadership role within the church given to qualified men is grounded in creation, fall, and redemption and must not be sidelined by appeals to cultural developments.

### 4. **The Fall**

We believe that Adam, made in the image of God, distorted that image and forfeited his original blessedness—for himself and all his progeny—by falling into sin through Satan's temptation. As a result, all human beings are alienated from God, corrupted in every aspect of their being (e.g., physically, mentally, volitionally, emotionally, spiritually) and condemned finally and irrevocably to death—apart from God's own gracious intervention. The supreme need of all human beings is to be reconciled to the God under whose just and holy wrath we stand; the only hope of all human beings is the undeserved love of this same God, who alone can rescue us and restore us to Himself.

### 5. **The Plan of God**

We believe that from all eternity God determined in grace to save a great multitude of guilty sinners from every tribe and language and people and nation, and to this end foreknew them and chose them. We believe that God justifies and sanctifies those who by grace have faith in Jesus, and that He will one day glorify them—all to the praise of His glorious grace. In love God

commands and implores all people to repent and believe, having set His saving love on those He has chosen and having ordained Christ to be their Redeemer.

**6. The Gospel**

We believe that the gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ—God’s very wisdom. Utter folly to the world, even though it is the power of God to those who are being saved, this good news is Christological, centering on the cross and resurrection: the gospel is not proclaimed if Christ is not proclaimed, and the authentic Christ has not been proclaimed if His death and resurrection are not central (the message is “Christ died for our sins . . . [and] was raised”). This good news is Biblical (His death and resurrection are according to the Scriptures), theological and salvific (Christ died for our sins, to reconcile us to God), historical (if the saving events did not happen, our faith is worthless, we are still in our sins, and we are to be pitied more than all others), apostolic (the message was entrusted to and transmitted by the apostles, who were witnesses of these saving events), and intensely personal (where it is received, believed, and held firmly, individual persons are saved).

**7. The Redemption of Christ**

We believe that, moved by love and in obedience to His Father, the eternal Son became human: the Word became flesh, fully God and fully human being, one Person in two natures. The man Jesus, the promised Messiah of Israel, was conceived through the miraculous agency of the Holy Spirit, and was born of the Virgin Mary. He perfectly obeyed His heavenly Father, lived a sinless life, performed miraculous signs, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead on the third day, and ascended into heaven. As the mediatorial King, He is seated at the right hand of God the Father, exercising in heaven and on Earth all of God’s sovereignty, and is our High Priest and righteous Advocate.

We believe that by His incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus Christ acted as our representative and substitute. He did this so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God: on the cross He canceled sin, propitiated God, and, by bearing the full penalty of our sins, reconciled to God all those who believe. By His resurrection Christ Jesus was vindicated by His Father, broke the power of death and defeated Satan who once had power over it, and brought everlasting life to all His people; by His ascension He has been forever exalted as Lord and has prepared a place for us to be with Him. We believe that salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved. Because God chose the lowly things of this world, the despised things, the things that are not, to nullify the things that are, no human being can ever boast before Him—Christ Jesus has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness, and redemption.

**8. The Justification of Sinners**

We believe that Christ, by His obedience and death, fully discharged the debt of all those who are justified. By His sacrifice, He bore in our stead the punishment due us for our sins, making a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God’s justice on our behalf. By His perfect obedience He satisfied the just demands of God on our behalf, since by faith alone that perfect obedience is credited to all who trust in Christ alone for their acceptance with God. Inasmuch as Christ was given by the Father for us, and His obedience and punishment were accepted in place of our own, freely and not for anything in us, this justification is solely of free grace, in order that both the exact justice and the rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners. We believe that a zeal for personal and public obedience flows from this free justification.

**9. The Power of the Holy Spirit**

We believe that this salvation, attested in all Scripture and secured by Jesus Christ, is applied to His people by the Holy Spirit. Sent by the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit glorifies the Lord

Jesus Christ, and, as the “other” Paraclete, is present with and in believers. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and by His powerful and mysterious work regenerates spiritually dead sinners, awakening them to repentance and faith, baptizing them into union with the Lord Jesus, such that they are justified before God by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. By the Spirit’s agency, believers are renewed, sanctified, and adopted into God’s family; they participate in the divine nature and receive His sovereignly distributed gifts. The Holy Spirit is Himself the down payment of the promised inheritance, and in this age indwells, guides, instructs, equips, revives, and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

#### 10. **The Kingdom of God**

We believe that those who have been saved by the grace of God through union with Christ by faith and through regeneration by the Holy Spirit enter the kingdom of God and delight in the blessings of the new covenant: the forgiveness of sins, the inward transformation that awakens a desire to glorify, trust, and obey God, and the prospect of the glory yet to be revealed. Good works constitute indispensable evidence of saving grace. Living as salt in a world that is decaying and light in a world that is dark, believers should neither withdraw into seclusion from the world, nor become indistinguishable from it: rather, we are to do good to the city, for all the glory and honor of the nations is to be offered up to the living God. Recognizing whose created order this is, and because we are citizens of God’s kingdom, we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, doing good to all, especially to those who belong to the household of God.

The kingdom of God, already present but not fully realized, is the exercise of God’s sovereignty in the world toward the eventual redemption of all creation. The kingdom of God is an invasive power that plunders Satan’s dark kingdom and regenerates and renovates through repentance and faith the lives of individuals rescued from that kingdom. It therefore inevitably establishes a new community of human life together under God.

#### 11. **God’s New People**

We believe that God’s new covenant people have already come to the heavenly Jerusalem; they are already seated with Christ in the heavenlies. This universal church is manifest in local churches of which Christ is the only Head; thus each “local church” is, in fact, the church, the household of God, the assembly of the living God, and the pillar and foundation of the Truth. The church is the body of Christ, the apple of His eye, graven on His hands, and He has pledged Himself to her forever. The church is distinguished by her Gospel message, her sacred ordinances, her discipline, her great mission, and, above all, by her love for God, and by her members’ love for one another and for the world.

Crucially, this Gospel we cherish has both personal and corporate dimensions, neither of which may properly be overlooked. Christ Jesus is our peace: He has not only brought about peace with God, but also peace between alienated peoples. His purpose was to create in Himself one new humanity, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both Jew and Gentile to God through the cross, by which He put to death their hostility. The church serves as a sign of God’s future new world when its members live for the service of one another and their neighbors, rather than for self-focus. The church is the corporate dwelling place of God’s Spirit, and the continuing witness to God in the world.

#### 12. **Baptism and the Lord’s Supper**

We believe that baptism and the Lord’s Supper are ordained by the Lord Jesus Himself. The former is connected with entrance into the new covenant community, the latter with ongoing covenant renewal. Together they are simultaneously God’s pledge to us, divinely ordained means of grace, our public vows of submission to the once crucified and now resurrected Christ, and anticipations of His return and of the consummation of all things.

### 13. **The Restoration of All Things**

We believe in the personal, glorious, and bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ with His holy angels, when He will exercise His role as final Judge, and His kingdom will be consummated. We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the just and the unjust—the unjust to judgment and eternal conscious punishment in hell, as our Lord Himself taught, and the just to eternal blessedness in the presence of Him who sits on the throne and of the Lamb, in the new heaven and the new earth, the home of righteousness. On that day the church will be presented faultless before God by the obedience, suffering and triumph of Christ, all sin purged and its wretched effects forever banished. God will be all in all and His people will be enthralled by the immediacy of His ineffable holiness, and everything will be to the praise of His glorious grace.

**Note on Baptism:** The Gospel Coalition does not specify the timing or form of baptism. While we respect our brothers and sisters who understand this differently, we believe that all persons who are truly looking to Christ alone as the Lord and Savior should be baptized (i.e., “believers baptism”), and we believe that the most Biblically consistent way to practice this is through immersion.

## Article 4 - Church Vows

### I. WORSHIP

- A. We exist to spread a passion for the supremacy of God in all things for the joy of all peoples. ~~therefore~~ Therefore, we purpose to ceaselessly praise Him from whom all blessings flow. We will gather regularly and eagerly to worship the Triune God with all of our hearts.
- B. We will devote ourselves to His word, continually reforming our thoughts and actions in response to it, His revealed will. We pray that the words of our King will dwell in us richly.
- C. We will be a people devoted to prayer, both privately and corporately. We will pray that God's will be done on earth ~ in every corner of our existence ~ as it is in heaven. We will strive to remember one another before our Father in prayer.
- D. We will obey our Lord by following Him in baptism.
- E. We will remember Him with reverence and joy at His table, proclaiming His death until He comes.
- F. We will be cheerful givers, ever mindful of all that God has given us. We will wholeheartedly and sacrificially support the life and ministry of our church, contributing our tithes and offerings as God enables us.
- G. We will frequently confess our sins to our Father in heaven, repenting toward the pleasure of our King.
- H. We will seek to preserve and deepen the unity of the body of Christ.

### II. COMMUNITY

- A. We will celebrate the gift of one another. In a world starving for joy, we will take every opportunity to rejoice in our Lord's extravagant goodness, liberally sharing the blessings we have received. We will seek to be a culture of Godward delight.
- B. We will pray for and encourage our Elders, following their leading and submitting to their oversight. We will uphold the doctrine, order, discipline, and mission of our church.
- C. We will use whatever gifts and talents we have received to serve and build up the body of Christ and to further His Kingdom, faithfully sharing God's grace in its various forms to the end that He be glorified. We will continually explore what it means to find our lives by losing them for His sake.
- D. We will be devoted to one another. We will gather together regularly, both formally and informally, to carry one another's burdens and to encourage one another toward heaven. We will suffer with those who suffer and rejoice with those who rejoice.
- E. We will be attentive, careful listeners.
- F. We will refrain from gossip, and use words only to build one another up. We will maintain a conversation of truth and grace.
- G. We will be loyal, merciful, careful in judgment, and slow to take offence. When misunderstandings arise, we will be eager for reconciliation and mindful of the rules our Lord has given us to secure it without delay.
- H. We will hold one another accountable to the Word and to these vows. We will speak the truth in love, knowing that it is the truth which sets us free.
- I. We will be faithful to our spouses and uphold the vows we have made before God, and encourage the ongoing health of all the marriages within our fellowship.
- J. We will rejoice in the existence of our children, welcoming them as our Lord has taught us. We will train their affections Godward both by example and precept, always mindful that each one of them has a soul that will never die.

- K. We will practice hospitality. We will seek to be a family, to be willing to sacrifice our own comfort to ensure one another's well-being. We will work to diminish the loneliness which might exist in our fellowship, to be channels of healing and hope to those who have endured brokenness and loss.
- L. We will endeavor to rid our hearts of all un-Biblical prejudice. We will welcome and love those who are different from us, mindful that every person is created in the image of God.

### **III. OUTREACH**

- A. We will seek to spread light in our community by deepening in our affection for one another. We will diligently forge the love and unity which our Lord tells us is a compelling witness in a fragmented world. We will, by His grace, be a counter-culture for our culture.
- B. We will share the light and warmth of Christ with our neighbors, and look for ways to be welcoming and hospitable. We will strive to be a people who articulate the Gospel with courage, clarity, and joy, commending the worth of our King whenever and wherever possible.
- C. We will deliberately work and give to ensure that the blessings of the Gospel spread cross-culturally both here and overseas. It is our desire to see many others join us in worshipping God.
- D. We will find ways to promote the welfare of the poor and needy, to be merciful to others as God has been merciful to us.
- E. We will be faithful in the places where God has called us, whether in our places of employment, in our homes, or in our schools.

**Note:** Scriptural support for the vows is included the "CTK Vows Package".

### **Article 5 – Membership**

The membership of this church shall consist of persons who confess faith on the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior, who give evidence of a new life consistent with their profession, who are glad to step into the shared convictions and commitments of this church, and who have been received into its membership according to the Bylaws of this church.

## **Article 6 – Authority, Leadership and Organization**

1. **Ultimate Authority:** Jesus Christ is the head of all things in general, and is the head of the Church in particular (Ephesians 1:22-23). He is the Foundation and Source of the Church (Ephesians 2:20; Colossians 1:18), which He has bought at the cost of His own life (I Corinthians 6:19-20). As the head, Jesus Christ gives direction to His body by the Holy Spirit through His Word. Therefore, all movements of the Church are to be consistent with Jesus Christ's authority and rule as set forth in His Word, the Bible.
2. **Oversight:** It is the conviction of the church to be Elder-led in accordance with Scripture. (Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; Hebrews 13:17). We believe that under Christ the highest authority in the local church are the Elders in their corporate capacity. We are congregational in that the congregation initially affirms the Elders in their positions of leadership, but Elder-led in that the Elders are then to govern the life of the church.
3. **Affiliation:** The church has no formal affiliation with any denomination, but it may choose to affiliate if the church leadership and membership believe it would better promote the cause of Jesus Christ. The church may cooperate with interdenominational fellowships on a voluntary, independent basis.

## **Article 7: Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended by eighty percent (80%) majority vote of the members present, providing there is more than 25% of the membership at the annual meeting or specially called business meeting. Notice of such proposed changes must be made in writing to every member of the congregation two (2) weeks prior to the meeting in accordance with the church Bylaws.