

The Constitution of Avoy Christian Church

Article I *Name*

This Organization will be known as Avoy Christian Church. It is to function as an independent church, answerable only to God the Father and Jesus Christ, His Son, for its actions.

Article II *Purpose*

We the people of Avoy Christian Church do ordain and establish this Constitution in order to form a union of fellowship with one another by the divine help of the Holy Spirit. We, Avoy Christian Church, do purpose the following: proclaim the gospel ministry of Jesus Christ; make disciples train and edify believers in faithful obedience to the Word of God; to aid in missions work throughout the world; and promote Christian living (Acts 1:8, Matt. 25:19-20).

Article III *Affiliation.*

Avoy Christian Church will not affiliate itself with any religious organization or otherwise that has departed at any point from the truth of the Bible, given to the saints. However, the church will encourage and assist any Christian organization of true believers in Jesus Christ, which is in conformity to the plain and clear teaching of the Word of God; regarding purity of living and belief. The church will disassociate itself from any organization that violates the principals of the Word of God, the Bible.

Article IV *Confession of Faith*

Section One: Of the True God

We believe that there is one true, living God; an intelligent Spirit and the Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and Earth. God is triune, of one substance but of three distinct and perfect persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person plays a distinct, but harmonious office in the great work of Redemption. (Ex. 20:23; Psalm 90:2; Matt. 3:16-17; John 4:24, 10:30, 14:16; I Cor. 8:6, 12:4-6; II Cor. 13:14)

Section Two: Of the Lord Jesus Christ

We believe in the Deity of Jesus Christ; He is and will always be God. As a man, He did not deny His Deity, but emptied himself of certain divine privileges. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, fulfilled the Law, and voluntarily died a full and vicarious atonement for the sins of all mankind. He was buried in a grave and rose again the third day, delivering man from the power of sin and death. He ascended bodily into heaven and is returning someday to receive His saints and establish His earthly kingdom as heir to David's eternal throne. His return is imminent. (John 1:1; Phil. 2:6-10; I Tim. 2:5, 3:16; Heb. 1:8; I Peter 3:18; I John 5:20)

Section Three: Of the Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit as a divine person of the Godhead, having the same nature as God the Father and God the Son. He played an active role in Creation. His ministry to the unbelieving world is the restraint of the Evil One, conviction of sin, and conviction of man's need of righteousness and judgment. He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony. His ministry to the believing world is His sealing, indwelling and baptism of new believers. These ministries are a one-time event occurring at the moment of salvation. He guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer. Sign and revelatory gifts have been fulfilled and are not applicable to the Church and its ministry today. (Gen. 1:1-13; John 3:3-6, 14:16, 17, 26, 15:26, 27, 16:7-14; Romans 8:26-27; I Cor. 2:12, 14, 6:19, 12:13; Eph. 4:30; II Thess. 2:13)

Section Four: Of the Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is the inspired Word of God in its original manuscripts. The Scriptures are the product of Spirit-controlled men, making them the only writings supernaturally inspired and free of error. No other authoritative writings have ever existed or will exist. (John 17:17; Romans 15:4; II Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Rev. 22:18-19)

Section Five: Of Satan

We believe that Satan was once the angel Lucifer, a member of the Heavenly Host. By His pride and ambition to be like the almighty God, He fell and drew with himself a third of the Lord's Heavenly Host. He is the Prince of the Power of the Air. He is the Church's greatest Tempter and the author of false religions and apostasy to this day. His final defeat will be by God's Son, and his final destiny is Hell, a place prepared for him and his angels. (Ezek. 28:13-17; Matt. 4:1-3; II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2; I Peter 5:8; Rev. 12:9, 20:10)

Section Six: Of Creation

We accept the Genesis account of a literal, six-day Creation. We believe that man came by direct creation of God, not by evolution. Man is created in the image of God. (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:7; John 1:3, Acts 4:24; Col. 1:16-17)

Section Seven: Of the Fall of Man

We believe that man, was created in innocence, enjoying perfect fellowship with God, but fell from his sinless state through willful transgression against God's law, resulting in death, physical and spiritual. Through the first man, all mankind is guilty of inherent and willful sin, and therefore, under just condemnation without defense or excuse. (Gen. 3; Jer. 17:9; Romans 1:20, 28, 32, 3:10-19, 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3)

Section Eight: Of Salvation

A. Atonement

Salvation of sinners is wholly by grace, the grace of God reaching down to man in the person of Jesus Christ. He paid the debt of our sin on the cross. This blood sacrifice is sufficient to cover all of mankind's sin, extending to those who admit their sinfulness, believe that Christ died on their behalf, and confess Him as Savior. This is the only way to be righteous before a just and Holy God. (Isaiah 53:4-7; Rom. 3:24, 25, 5:8; I Cor. 15:1-4; I Peter 1:18, 19, 2:24, 3:18 I John 2:2, 4:10)

B. Justification

Believers are justified by his or her belief in Christ. Justification is the judicial act that provides forgiveness of sin and the gift of eternal life. It is granted solely through faith in Christ's righteousness and His life-giving blood. It cannot be merited by any works of righteousness on the part of the believer. (Acts 13:39; Rom. 1:17, 4:1-8, 5:1, 9, 8:1; Titus 3:5-7; Heb. 10:38)

C. Faith

Faith, belief in the solid evidence of the existence of Jesus Christ, and is the only condition for salvation. (Acts 16:31, Rom. 5:1)

D. Grace

Salvation is wholly of God's Grace, God's unmerited favor provides full substitution and atonement for sin and gives eternal life through Jesus's Christ's sacrifice. (John 3:16; Eph. 2:8-10)

E. Free

Salvation is free to all through the gospel message. Anyone who turns from their sinfulness to accept God's way will be saved. Man's condemnation is totally by his own rejection of the gospel. (John 3:15-18, 36; Rom. 10:13; I Cor. 15:10; Rev. 22:17)

F. Regeneration

Those that place their faith in Christ are regenerated. This is a supernatural act of rebirth caused by the Holy Spirit, where a person begins a new life in Christ. It is manifested by the fruit of the Spirit and a believer's repentance, faith, and newness of life. (John 3:3-7; II Cor. 5:17; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:23)

G. Repentance

Repentance is the act accompanying faith in Christ where the believer's eyes are opened by the Holy Spirit to reveal the sinner's guilt, danger, and helplessness. In desperate need, the sinner turns from his or her life of sinfulness in pursuit of God's mercy by openly confessing Christ as his or her all-sufficient Savior. (Ps. 51:1-4; Mark 1:15; Luke 12:8, 18:13; Acts 2:38, 3:19, 20:21; Rom. 10:9-13)

H. Sanctification

Sanctification is the process by which God makes the believer a partaker of His Holiness. It is a progressive work that begins on the day of salvation and continues through life on earth. It is accomplished through Spiritual discipline: Scripture reading, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer. (I Cor. 1:2, 6:11; Eph. 5:25, 26; I Thess. 5:22, 23; Heb. 10:10, 14)

I. Perseverance of the Saints

Those who are born again are kept eternally by the Godhead until the day of redemption. While the Word of God grants assurance of salvation, Christian liberty is not an opportunity to please the flesh. True Christians have a preserving attachment to Christ which enables their commitment and devotion to him. This is distinguished from superficial believers, who are professors of faith, that, with time fall by the wayside. (Matt. 13:19-20; John 6:37-40, 8:31-32, 10:27-30; Rom. 8:35-40, 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Phil. 1:6; Col. 1:21-22; Titus 2:11-15; I Peter 1:5)

Section Nine: Of the Local Church

We believe that the Head of the Church is Christ. We believe that the local church of Christ is a congregation of immersed believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ and are governed by His laws allowing them to exercise the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word. Scripturally designed offices are: pastor(s) and deacons, whose qualifications are given by the Scriptures. The mission of the church is given in the Great Commission: (1) to make disciples of all nations (2) to baptize them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and (3) to teach and instruct. In all matters of membership, government, discipline, and benevolence, the will of the local church is final. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8, 2:41-47, 6:5; I Cor. 5:11-13, 12:4, 8-11; Eph. 1:22-23, 5:23-24; I Tim. 3:1-13)

Section Ten: Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We celebrate two Biblical ordinances (1) believer's baptism by immersion and (2) the Lord's Supper. Christian Baptism is the believer's immersion in water, to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior symbolizing our death to sin and resurrection to a new life. The Lord's Supper is a memorial of what Christ has done on the cross of Calvary to atone for sin, and looking forward to His Second Coming. The Lord's Supper is observed by all who have personally accepted Christ as His Savior. (Matt. 3:6, 16, 26:26, 30, 28:19; I Cor. 11:23-30)

Section Eleven: Of the Two Natures

We believe that every saved person possesses two principal natures: an old nature and a new nature, with provision for victory of the new nature over the old nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The presence of sin in a believer's life is not an absence of new life, but a conformity to the flesh within a believer. (Romans 6:13, 8:12-13, Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:10)

Section Twelve: Of Separation

We believe that all believers in Christ should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior. God commands separation from religious Apostasy as well as worldly and sinful pleasure, practices, and associations. (Rom. 12:1-2; II Cor. 6:14; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11)

Section Thirteen: Of the Righteous and the Wicked

We believe there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked. The righteous are made so by their faith in Jesus Christ and sanctification by the Spirit of God. Those who do not exercise faith in Christ are esteemed eternally separated from God. The Saved are destined to spend eternity with God, while the Lost's destination is everlasting conscious suffering apart from God. (Prov. 11:31; Romans 6:16-8:23)

Section Fourteen: Of the Family

We believe in the Biblical model of marriage and procreation the way God originally intended marriage and family at Creation: One man, born a man, and one woman, born a woman, united forever before God in holy matrimony. This model is intended to represent Christ and the Church and must not be perverted. Any form of sexual or covenant relationship outside of this context (adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, etc.) is sinful and condemned in Scripture. (Gen. 2: 18, 24-25; Matt. 19:4-9; Romans 1:24-29, 7:2; I Cor. 6:19-20; 7:1-5; Eph. 5:22-33; Heb. 13:4)

Section Fifteen: Of Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of Divine appointment for the interest and good of human society. Civil government is to be prayed over continually. Government at the local, state, and national level is to be conscientiously honored and obeyed except only in things that oppose the will of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Daniel 3:17-18; Romans 13:1, 7; Acts 5:29, 25:5; I Peter 2:17)

Section Sixteen: Of the Return of Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ ascended into heaven following his physical death, burial, and resurrection, and He will return bodily to this earth. Currently, He resides as High Priest for each believer, making intercession on their behalf before the Father. His Second Coming will be preceded by the rapture where the dead in Christ will rise and the living believers will be changed and "caught up in the air". We believe in a millennial kingdom where Satan will be bound and Christ shall reign on earth for 1,000 years. Following the Millennium, Christ will cast Satan and his followers into the lake of fire for eternity and a new heaven and new earth will be enjoyed by Christ's followers for all eternity. (Isaiah 9:6-7, 11:4, 32:1; Matt. 28:6-7; Luke 1:32; Acts 1:9-11; I Cor. 15: 42-44, 51-53; I Thess. 4:16-17; Heb. 2:17, 5:9-10, 8:6; Rev. 20:1-6).

Article V Membership

Section One: Acceptance:

Avoy Christian Church will be composed of individuals who: agree with our Confession of faith (Article Four), are able to show evidences of faith in Christ before the Pastor, Deacons, and the Congregation, and have been baptized by immersion. All new members must be received upon unanimous congregational vote.

Section Two: Obligations:

Members are expected to: (1) Uphold the teaching of our confession of faith. (2) encourage and participate in the church activities. (3) use their God given gifts for the edification of the body of Christ (4) give monies to the support and furtherance of the church. (5) pray for other believers, pastor, deacons, and officers of the church. (6) promote unity, edification of the church, and to glorify the local ministry of Jesus Christ to their community by their life and testimony. Those who do not adhere to these expectations will be considered inactive members. Only active members may vote in any church business meetings.

Section Three Discipline:

In the event that a church member is caught in sin or is considered “inactive” by the church leadership, certain steps must be taken in accordance with Scripture to attempt to restore this person to relationship with the church (Matt. 18:15-35, II Cor. 2:1-11, II Thes. 3:14, 15, Gal. 6:1-5). One spiritually minded church member already aware of the situation must lovingly correct the issue with the member in question. If the person is restored through repentance, the matter is resolved. If the person is not repentant, then the corrector and a member of the leadership team is to attempt to restore that person to fellowship. If the matter is still not resolved, the church as a whole will be made aware of the situation and person in question. If the church as a whole cannot restore this person, then that person will automatically have his or her membership removed.

Section Four: Dissolution:

Members will be removed from their position of membership if: (1) The member requests to be removed from membership. (2) If this church gives a letter of recommendation for this individual to enter a church of like faith. (3) If a member remains inactive for a period of three months and the church unanimously votes to remove him or her from membership. As in the case of discipline, the church must be active in restoring the person in question to relationship with the church before a vote can be made. (4) If the person in question receives the final level of discipline as recorded in Scripture (see section III)

Article VI Offices

The offices of Avoy Christian Church are the following: Pastor, Deacons, Trustees, Church Clerk, Treasurer, Building Fund Treasurer, Sunday School Superintendent, and Advisory Board.

Section One: Pastor:

1. The Pastor is to be selected for his spiritual qualifications as I Tim. 3:1-7 states. A 75% vote is needed for him to be called to the church and voted into office.
2. The Pastor is to administer the affairs of the church. To moderate all business meetings. He should teach and preach the entire counsel of the Word of God. To care for the members in a spiritual way, to exhort, remind, and encourage the members to obey the Word of God. (I Peter 5:1-4, I Timothy, Titus, Eph. 4:11-16).
3. To give an account of the prior six months service of the church, and to give his plans, goals, and recommendations for the next six months.
4. The Pastor is to submit his resignation upon a vote of confidence from the deacon board or conviction that his life and conduct does not agree with the Scriptural requirements for a pastor (1 Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9).

Section Two: Deacons:

1. Qualifications for deacons based upon I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-6. The deacon board shall consist of a minimum of three qualified deacons at any time. This may increase in action taken by the congregation. Their term will be for 3 years, at which time they will face re-election.
2. The duties of the deacons shall be to assist at the communion and baptismal services, to look after the poor and unfortunate of the Church and Community, to assist the Pastor in the services of the church, and to diligently pray for the ministry of the church.

Section Three: Trustees:

1. Trustees shall be elected from among the church membership at the annual business meeting for a period of two years.
2. The trustees shall have charge of the church property: the repairs, additions, insuring, and renting of the same, but shall not make major repairs or additions without a vote of the church, unless an emergency exists.

Section Four: Church Clerk:

1. The Church Clerk shall be elected from among the church membership at the annual business meeting for a period of one year.
2. He/she will be responsible to keep an accurate record of proceedings at all business meetings, to officially correspond for the church, to keep a record of all church members, and to perform such other clerical duties of the church.

Section Five: Treasurer:

1. The treasurer shall be elected from the church membership at the annual business meeting for a period of one year.
2. The treasurer shall receive funds from regular offerings, keep a record of all funds received and disbursed, make payments as directed by the church, make available the records to the pastor and/or deacons upon request. All disbursements as far as possible should be made by check.
3. The treasurer's books shall be audited annually by a committee of two selected by the church. This should be done between January 1st and the annual business meeting.

Section Six: Building Fund Treasurer:

1. The building fund treasurer shall be elected from the church membership at the annual business meeting for period of one year.
2. He/she shall receive all funds directed for the Building Fund. A record of all transactions should be kept. Upon request of the Pastor and Deacons, the funds should be made available.
3. The building fund treasurer's books shall be audited annually by a committee of two selected by the church. This should be done between January 1st and the annual business meeting.

Section Seven: Sunday School Superintendent:

1. The Sunday School Superintendent shall be elected from the church membership at the annual business meeting for a period of one year.
2. He/she is responsible for the teaching ministry of the Sunday School department: to provide adequate material for the classes, provide counsel to the Pastor and deacons about the Sunday School program (either by himself/herself or delegation), and to help provide material to the teachers that will help them instruct their classes properly.

Section Eight: Advisory Board:

1. The Advisory Board shall consist of the Pastor, Clerk, Treasurer, Trustees, and Deacons.
2. The Advisory Board shall meet when needed to consider the general interests of the church. The function of the board shall be advisory only in nature.

Article VII Committees and Appointments

Special committees and appointees are to be established as needed. They include, but are not limited to the Pulpit Committee, the Director of Music, and the Sunshine Committee.

Section One: Pulpit Committee:

1. The pulpit committee is composed of the deacons and trustees when the church is without a pastor.
2. The Pulpit Committee shall have the work of supplying the pulpit and arranging for the regular services of the church, and shall be the medium through which a Pastor shall be engaged or dismissed upon the vote of the church.

Section Two: Director of Music:

1. The Director of Music is appointed as necessary.
2. The Director of Music is to have charge of the music of the church and by systematic planning, seek to develop the singing ability of the people in the church by bringing them into the services of the church. The Director is responsible for arranging musical accompaniment for each congregational service.

Section Three: Sunshine Committee.

1. Members are to be elected each year at the annual business meeting.
2. The members of the Sunshine Committee are to head up leadership at all church dinners, provide flowers for funerals of church members, provide cards for people in extended hospital care, and set up communion on Sundays set aside for communion services.

Section Four: Avoy Cemetery Committee

1. Members are to be elected each year at the annual business meeting.
2. The Cemetery Committee shall be responsible for the Avoy Cemetery Association bank account attributed to the cemetery. They shall distribute funds for the maintenance and upkeep of the property.
3. The Cemetery Committee shall be responsible for contacting and cooperating with funeral homes when a burial is required, overseeing the up keep of the grounds, selling lots, maintaining records and maps of lots, contacting families with needs regarding the cemetery, and establishing pricing of lots.
4. A report shall be presented by the Cemetery Committee at the annual business meeting.

Article VIII Use of Facilities:

The properties of Avoy Christian Church may be used for Church or local programs that do not conflict with the church's convictions outlined in the articles of faith. The events and those wishing to host events must seek approval from the advisory board. No church leader or member is to participate in or perform a wedding ceremony in the church building that conflicts with the definition of Biblical marriage as outlined in Section Fourteen of the Articles of Faith.

Article IX Meetings

The members shall gather for the worship of the Lord each Sunday and Sunday School will meet for Bible instruction each Sunday unless otherwise hindered. The members will meet for prayer, Bible study, or business meetings at the advisory board's discretion. Additional services may be held as deemed necessary.

The annual business meeting of the church will be held in the first month of the second quarter and the semi-annual business meeting of the Church will be held in the first month of the last quarter of each year. A quorum is 50% of the Church Membership.

Article X Amendments

This constitution may be amended at any regular business meeting of the Church by a two-thirds vote, provided notification of such changes have been examined and approved by the pastor and deacons and that notification of such action has been given to Church members at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

Article XI Dissolution

In the event of the dissolution of the Avoy Christian Church, all material holdings of the Church will be disbursed to an organization that adheres to the principals of the Avoy Christian Church, prior to its dissolution.