



# How we Function:

## Red Oak Church

The primary purpose of this document is to serve as an instructive and informative guide to church life at Red Oak Church. The direction of this document is guided by Scripture and seeks to relay the timeless vision of Jesus Christ for His church in a way that is relevant for this local church today. As a family, we are not bound to perform according to this document, instead we submit to the authority of Scripture as the final arbiter on all issues (Psalm 119, II Timothy 3:14-17, II Peter 1:19-21). The elder body may at any time add to, subtract from or revise this document to better serve this church. While the Scripture is the final arbiter on all issues, the elders of Red Oak church will serve as the interpretive authority on Biblical truth.

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## **I. Leadership: Reflecting Biblical Authority**

### **Article 1.01**

#### **Structure and Definition**

The church is shepherded by Jesus Christ through godly elder leadership in accordance with the guidelines established in God's Word. (Colossians 1:18, I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, I Peter 5:1-4) The elder body has been entrusted by God with the governing care and oversight of this local church, through the avenues of teaching, protecting, leading, disciplining, equipping and caring for the corporate church body and her individual members. The elders bear the responsibility of obediently leading the church to carry out the timeless vision of Christ for His church in a way that is relevant for today.

### **Article 1.02**

#### **Qualifications**

The minimum qualifications for an elder according to God's Word are listed in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Each individual who aspires to be an elder should carefully study and examine those qualifications. In addition, each person desiring the position of elder will be examined based on those qualifications by the elder body and the church. Elders are to be male Covenant Members (Article 2) who fully subscribe to the Statement of Faith (Appendix 1) of Red Oak Church and are actively involved in ministry within the church.

### **Article 1.03**

#### **Appointment & Removal**

##### ***Step 1: Elder body invitation***

When Red Oak has need to add an elder to the elder body, the current elder body will prayerfully invite a qualified male Covenant Member of the church to begin the process of appointment.

##### ***Step 2: Personal Reflection***

Prior to responding to the invitation to the position of elder, an individual should determine if he meets the immediate expectations of being a Red Oak Church elder.



- **Motivated** - a person should desire the position of elder personally, not solely because someone else feels he will make a good elder. A desire to lead, shepherd and guide should be present through the working of the Holy Spirit in the individual's life. (I Timothy 3:1, Acts 20:28, I Peter 5:2)

- **Responsible** - a person should determine if he is willing and able to stand with the other elders of this church and give an account on judgment day for the souls of Red Oak Church. (Hebrews 13:17, James 3:1, I Peter 5:1-4)

- **Capable** - a person should be demonstrating the type of exemplary lifestyle that would allow the members of the church to rightly follow the example that he is setting, both in belief and conduct.

### ***Step 3: Expression***

Once a person has prayerfully considered the call to eldership and feels the Holy Spirit's confirmation upon his life to pursue such a role, he should express his desire by responding to one of the members of the current elder body.

### ***Step 4: Evaluation***

Once an individual has expressed a desire for the position of elder, he will continue to be carefully examined by the elder body to evaluate the level of qualification based on what is prescribed in God's Word. (Article 1.02) If a person is not found to be disqualified, he may enter into a season of elder apprenticeship, upon the unanimous approval of the elder body.

### ***Step 5: Testing and Training***

An elder apprentice will undergo a period of intentional discipleship with a current member of the elder body. This time of testing and training will include, but is not limited to, doctrinal instruction, personal accountability, opportunities for service and increased responsibility with the church. The time of elder apprenticeship will last for an indefinite period of time until the individual has demonstrated faithfulness and maturity in the eyes of both the elder body and the members of the church. The elder apprentice may also be asked to participate in the regular elder meetings on occasion to contribute wisdom and insight.

### ***Step 6: Confirmation***

After the period of apprenticeship, if there are no remaining issues to be resolved, the church will affirm the individual as an elder by the laying on of hands. (I Timothy 4:14, 5:22-25)

### ***Step 7: Service***

An appointed elder will serve indefinitely as a shepherd of this church. Upon the discretion of the other elders, a sabbatical season may be extended due to a legitimate need (e.g. illness, tragedy). During this time, the elder would transition to being inactive and would become a non-voting elder for a period of time determined by the elder body.

### ***Resignation of an Elder:***

To resign from the elder body, an elder must notify the other members of the elder body in writing. The letter should state the reason for resignation. The elders will determine the most fruitful and edifying way to notify the church of the resignation.

### ***Removal of an Elder:***

Any elder may be removed from the office of elder for valid cause (moral failure, doctrinal issue, etc.). Any changes or discipline of elders must be consistent with the standards set forth in Matthew 18:15-20 and I Timothy 5:17-20. The elder body will determine specific procedures for removal. The elders shall have the sole authority to remove another elder. A written notice of proposed removal of any elder shall be given to such elder at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which an action to affect such removal is to be taken to ensure that the elder is given a reasonable opportunity to defend himself. The elder shall have the opportunity to answer the charges in the presence of his accusers, but shall not be present during the discussion and vote on his removal. Such removal shall take place only upon and after a passing unanimous vote of the elders at such meeting. The elder under consideration for removal shall not have voting right.

### ***Replacement of an Elder:***

In the event that an elder resigns or is removed, the process for appointing a replacement will remain consistent with the process of appointing an elder laid out in this document (Article 1.03), the exception being the resignation or removal of the lead elder/teaching elder (senior pastor). In the event that the lead elder/teaching elder resigns or is removed, the remaining elder body will conduct a thorough search for the replacement, starting from within the current elder body. The elder body will determine the most appropriate means for this search at the given time. Once a candidate is determined by the elder body, the individual will be presented to the church. The church will have one month (4 weeks) to bring any concerns or issues to the elder body for consideration. After the period of one month, if there are no remaining issues to be resolved, the church will affirm the individual as the new lead elder/teaching elder.

## **Article 1.04**

### **Expectations**

#### ***A Lover of the Word:***

- An elder is to lead the church as a part of the elder body in a direction that is biblically based and Christ exalting. (Acts 14:23, 16:4, 20:17-31, I Timothy 5:17, James 5:14, I Peter 5:1-5)
- An elder is to pursue doctrinal stability in the areas that Scripture is clear and handle the Word rightly through public proclamation, private counsel and exemplary lifestyle. (Acts 6:4, I Timothy 4:11-16)
- An elder is to be ready to teach at any given time as a minister of the Word. (I Timothy 3:2, 5:17-18, II Timothy 4:1-5, Titus 1:9)
- An elder is to protect the church from false teachings and ensure that the church is instead fed the Word in a clear, unadulterated manner. (Acts 20:28-31, Titus 1:9-11)

#### ***A Lover of the Church:***

- An elder is to be pursuing discipleship relationships within the church. (Titus 1:1-8)
- An elder is to be mission minded and actively hospitable. (I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8, I Peter 4:9)
- An elder is to pray regularly for the overall health of the church's growth and mission. (Acts 6:4)
- An elder is to oversee member care and when necessary, church discipline. (2 Tim.4:1-5, 5:2-3)
- An elder is to help plant new churches as the need arises. (Titus 1:5)

## **Article 1.05**

### **Function**

#### ***Meeting as Elders:***

The elder body meets regularly for the purpose of a) decision making concerning the weekly function of the church, b) accountability and encouragement with other elders, c) spiritual



oversight/vision/direction of the church, d) member care, e) theological training, f) prayer, and g) budget development.

### ***Serving as Elders:***

The elder body serves this body of believers by a) maintaining a lifestyle of continued learning, b) being active in relational discipleship, c) teaching at various times in different formats, d) searching for false doctrines that spring up in mainstream Christianity and working to inform the church of their error, e) developing a teaching direction for the church with the teaching elder, f) meeting with other men in the church for accountability and encouragement, g) participating regularly and faithfully in the activities of the church and h) helping with the spiritual and physical needs of specific families assigned to their ministry.

## **Article 1.06**

### **Authority**

The elder body meets regularly to maintain oversight of the church family. Oversight and decision making for the church's ministry, operations and finances fall to the elder body. In making decisions that are deemed major or extraordinary and require a vote, a passing vote by the elders must be equal or greater than eighty percent (80%) of the current elder body, though 100% agreement is always the goal the elder body strives for. Percentage will be determined based on the amount of elders at the given time. The exception being in the vote of removal of a fellow elder, in which the passing vote must be unanimous. The wisdom and insight of the church may be sought at the discretion of the elders concerning these major decisions. Decisions where the elder body will consult the church will include but are not limited to a) appointment of elders, b) matters of church discipline and c) financial matters concerning budget revisions and the taking on of debt.

## II. Membership: Reflecting Biblical Community

### Article 2.01

#### Definition & Requirements

A covenant member of Red Oak Church is defined as one who has met the following requirements for membership as defined by God's Word and the elder body of Red Oak Church.

- Salvation and Baptism - The individual has become a genuine follower of Jesus Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit by responding in faith and repentance to the gospel. (Mark 1:14-15, 2 Thess. 2:13, 1 Jn. 5:6-12) In submission to the authority of Jesus Christ, the individual has also obeyed (or is willing to obey) the Scriptural mandate to be baptized. (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 2:38)

- Membership Course - The individual has completed the membership course, designed to familiarize the individual with the leadership, doctrine and structure of Red Oak Church.

- Covenant Agreement - The individual has willingly committed themselves to the responsibilities outlined in the Member Covenant (Appendix 4) of Red Oak Church.

### Article 2.02

#### Appointment & Removal

##### *Appointment of Membership:*

Any individual may express a desire for covenant membership by signing up for a membership course. An individual may be appointed to covenant membership at Red Oak Church after meeting the requirements of membership (Article 2.01) and upon recommendation of the elder body to the members of Red Oak Church.

##### *Removal of Membership:*

Members of Red Oak Church may be removed from membership for reasons of a) death, b) the member's request for removal, c) a transfer request of membership to another church or d) the church's decision based upon the procedures outlined for church discipline for the cause of unrepentant sin. (Article 2.05)

## **Article 2.03**

### **Benefits**

#### ***Church Discipline:***

A covenant member of Red Oak Church enjoys a unique relationship with other members of this church in the area of accountability, encouragement and restoration in our battle to overcome sin. Covenant members understand that just as a loving father disciplines his son, God has set in place through His Word the benefit of church discipline, among other things, to protect his children from becoming hardened to sin. (Matthew 18: 15-20, Galatians 6:1-2, Hebrews 12:6) The procedures for church discipline are outlined in Article 2.05.

#### ***Discipleship:***

A covenant member of Red Oak Church is given the opportunity to enjoy spiritual growth with other covenant members through the avenue of small groups. (Matthew 28:18-20) Special attention is given to provide opportunities for our covenant members to learn from spiritually mature men and women with Red Oak Church. (Titus 2:1)

#### ***Service Opportunities:***

A covenant member of Red Oak Church is provided opportunities to use their talents, gifts and abilities to serve the covenant member body and the lost within our community. Special attention is given to our covenant members to equip them to serve within our current church ministry structure. (Ephesians 4:9-16)

#### ***Specific Care:***

A covenant member of Red Oak Church is afforded the assurance of being loved and cared for during times of distress and need. In step with the example set forth by the early church (Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-37), Red Oak Church seeks to provide intentional care for its covenant members. In cases of great need, guidelines for care have been outlined in Article 3.02.

## **Article 2.04**

### **Responsibilities**

#### ***Specifics:***

The responsibilities of a covenant member of Red Oak Church are outlined in detail within the church's Member Covenant. (Appendix 4)



### ***General:***

In general, a covenant member of Red Oak Church is expected to demonstrate love and devotion in the following areas.

- **God:** A covenant member's chief concern is to glorify God in all areas of life by treasuring Him above all things. A covenant member is expected to demonstrate love and devotion to God through striving to live faithful and obedient lives according to His Word, while waiting for Jesus to return. (Hebrews 10:23-24)
- **Church:** A covenant member is expected to demonstrate love and devotion to God's church by committing their time, resources and energy to the building up of their brothers and sisters in Christ. (Romans 12:3-8, 14:19, I Corinthians 12:4-31, Ephesians 4:11-16, Colossians 1:27-28, I Peter 4:10-11)
- **The Lost:** A covenant member is expected to demonstrate love and devotion to the lost of this world by living and sharing a gospel that draws others into a relationship with their Creator. (Matthew 5:16, II Corinthians 5:18-20, Philippians 1:27, I Peter 2:12, 1 Peter 3:15-17)

## **Article 2.05**

### **Church Discipline**

In order for a church to faithfully proclaim the gospel message of repentance and faith to a lost world, those who make up the church must embrace that very message as a way of life. On occasion, a covenant member of Red Oak Church may wander away from the fellowship of other believers and find himself ensnared by sin through ignorance or willful disobedience. It then becomes necessary for the church to actively seek the repentance and restoration of that member. On occasions of serious, willful disobedience, this responsibility especially falls to the elders of this church.

#### ***The Purpose of Church Discipline:***

The purpose of church discipline is the spiritual restoration of fallen covenant members and the strengthening of the church body as a whole. The goal is not to throw people out of the church, feed the self-righteous pride of those confronting the sin, encourage divisiveness or embarrass people. Instead, the hope is to restore a sinning believer to holiness and bring him back into a pure relationship within the church body. Red Oak Church encourages regular confession of sin, prayer for each other and accountability between its covenant members so that sin is defeated regularly in our lives and the steps of discipline laid out in Scripture are not needed. We recognize that we are all susceptible to being blinded to sin (Hebrews 3:12), and we all need the aid and encouragement of other believers in our lives. (Hebrews 10:22-25, James 5:16)



Therefore, church discipline has been set up as protective measure by our loving Father for those who grow hardened to their own sin and are in need of being rescued from it by Him through a loving church. (I Corinthians 5:5, Galatians 6:1-6, Hebrews 12:6-11)

### ***The Necessity of Church Discipline:***

Church discipline should be considered in the following cases\*.

- **Circulation of false doctrine (I Timothy 1:18-20)**
- **Actions resulting in disunity (Titus 3:10)**
- **Repeated and consistent disobedience to the teaching of God's Word (II Thessalonians 3:14)**
- **The violation or relaxation of standards of purity within the church (I Corinthians 5:1)**

\*Cases of clear, explicit sin or foolishness, not cases of personal preference (Romans 14:10)

### ***The Process of Church Discipline:***

In Matthew 18:15-17, Jesus set forth the four-step process of lovingly confronting a brother or sister that has fallen into sin.

- **Step 1 (One-on-One)** - We are to begin the process of restoring a fellow church member on an individual level, by confronting the sin alone. The person ought to boldly go in humility and gentleness, calling the person to repent by clearly addressing the sin. If the sinning member repents through private confrontation, the member should be forgiven and restored. (v.15b)
- **Step 2 (Two-Three Witnesses)** - If the sinning member refuses to repent privately after being rebuked, and instead chooses to remain hardened in their sin, the next step is to take one or two more members along to confront the member again. (v.16a) These members should be considered spiritually mature in nature and have a genuine love for the sinning member involved. (Galatians 6:1) The purpose of bringing other loving members is to confirm that in fact a sin is being committed and to confirm that the sinning member has been properly rebuked and has not repented. If the sinning member repents through group confrontation, the member should be forgiven and restored.
- **Step 3 (The Church Body)** - If the sinning member refuses to repent privately after being rebuked again, and instead chooses to remain hardened in their sin, the next step is to make the matter known to the covenant member body. This should first be done by making the matter known to the elder body so that they can properly oversee its communication to the covenant member body. This step should be seen as a last resort, and only carried out after a sufficient time has passed showing that the sinning member has no change of heart or any



intention to repent. The elder body will seek out the sinning member in some form before taking the step of making the sin known before the church. The purpose of making the matter known to the church is to call all covenant members of Red Oak Church to seek out the sinning member aggressively and plead for his repentance. If the sinning member repents through the church's confrontation, the member should be forgiven and restored and the church should be made aware.

- **Step 4 (Excommunication)** - If the sinning member refuses to repent publicly after being rebuked by the church, and instead chooses to remain hardened in their sin, the final step is to remove the sinning member from the fellowship of the church. (v.17b)

The sinning member is not to be mistreated; instead, the sinning member may no longer participate in the benefits and blessings of covenant membership and should be treated as one in need of the gospel. (I Corinthians 5:9-13) The purpose of excommunication is to protect the purity of the fellowship, to warn the remaining covenant members of the seriousness of sin (I Timothy 5:20) and to preach further opportunity for repentance to the sinning member. The church should continue to pursue contact with the sinning member for the purpose of repentance and restoration, while avoiding contact for the purpose of fellowship. (I Corinthians 5:9-11, II Thessalonians 3:6, 13-15, Titus 3:9-11, II John 9-11)

### III. Finances: Reflecting Biblical Stewardship

#### Article 3.01

##### **Budget**

Red Oak Church desires to glorify God faithfully by being wise stewards of the funds entrusted to us by Him. The funds given by our covenant members are sought to be used in a way that is faithful a) to meet the needs of our church family, b) to minister in our surrounding area and c) to further God's kingdom abroad.

##### ***Financial Direction:***

The financial direction of Red Oak Church is set by the current elder body through much prayer and discussion. Insight and wisdom may, at times, be sought from ministry leaders and individual church members throughout the process each year. Any changes to the current church budget will be presented in December so that adequate time may be given to the church family to raise any concerns or questions before the church affirms those changes. The changes to the budget would be reflected in the new fiscal year, January 1st - December 31st.

##### ***Financial Oversight:***

- **Elder Body** - members of the elder body are considered "signers" on all church bank accounts and all elders have equal access to the church financial records. No one single elder is given greater insight or authority over the financial matters of Red Oak Church.
- **Treasurer** – For purposes of administration and weekly oversight, one elder is chosen at any given time to serve as the Church Treasurer. The Treasurer maintains an eye on the current financial condition of the church and offers insight as to the amount of funds available at any given time for ministry and service.
- The Treasurer also oversees the regular function of the church budget by distributing necessary funds for the expenditures of the church. These payable actions include sending regular monthly support to missionaries, distributing staff salaries and also overseeing and reconciling the church's monthly bills. The Treasurer also oversees and keeps record of all contributions made to Red Oak Church.

## **Article 3.02**

### **Benevolence**

Red Oak Church desires to glorify God faithfully by being generous as He blesses us and directs us – especially to widows, orphans and the needy. (I Timothy 5:3-16, James 1:27, 2:15-16, I John 3:16-18)

As in all matters of the church, we seek to let God’s Word guide us in the matters of benevolent issues for Red Oak.

#### ***Who Red Oak Church Helps:***

- **Members** – one of the benefits of membership at Red Oak Church is the assurance of being loved and cared for during time of need. In step with the example set forth by the early church (Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-37), we believe the call to provide for those in our church family.
- **Believers** – we desire to help those who may not be a part of our local church body but are part of the universal body of Jesus Christ. In step with the example set forth by the early church (I Corinthians 16:1-3, II Corinthians 8:1-5, Galatians 6:10), we seek to provide for those we hear of in need, both individuals and churches, that are true followers of Jesus Christ.
- **The Needy** – as it is wise to do so, we desire to help those who are in genuine, temporary need. These needs and the help afforded are determined on a case-by-case basis.

#### ***When Red Oak Church Helps:***

Red Oak seeks to help those in need as funds are available and as it is wise to help legitimate needs.

#### ***How Red Oak Church Helps:***

All needs and requests for help are handled by the elder body, which will work together with the church body to carry out distribution of help to those in need.

- **Step 1 (Identifying Needs)** – as needs arise both within and outside our church, those needs should be expressed by church members to a current member of the elder body. This ensures that those in leadership are informed in a timely manner so that adequate help can be provided to those in need. Sufficient time needs to be given for examination, verification and approval of help.



- **Step 2 (Evaluating Needs)** – as needs are brought to the attention of the elder body, the elder body will determine the validity, scope and urgency of the need and the best course of action to help. At times this may mean calling upon the family of the one requesting help to provide the resources needed (I Timothy 5:3-8), or sitting down with the individual to help equip them to help themselves long term. (II Thessalonians 3:6-13) Each situation is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- **Step 3 (Meeting Needs)** – in situations where it is determined that the church will provide help requiring monetary funds, proper documentation is recorded and logged. For those who are part of our church family, we especially seek to help in areas related to food, clothing, shelter and health as may seem wise and as funds are available. Those not part of our church family are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Anyone requiring long term financial help may be asked to submit a household budget so that the elders can give counsel and financial advice as needed to promote financial responsibility to those who are in need. Those requesting long-term financial help must maintain full-time employment if physically and mentally able to do so.

## **Beliefs**

### **Appendix 1**

#### **1. The Tri-une God**

We believe in one God, eternally existent in 3 persons – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These persons are one in nature, being fully God and yet distinct. This God is the creator and sustainer of all things, in heaven and on earth. He is perfect in His unchanging character of holiness, justice, wisdom and love. He is infinitely worthy of worship, and He is sovereignly bringing about all things for His own purpose and Glory.

#### **2. Revelation**

Since the beginning, God has made himself known through his spoken Word. We believe God's self-revelation to be continued in the words of the Old and New Testaments. We believe the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, and that they were without error in their original documents. We affirm these Scriptures alone as the source of authoritative instruction, correction, and knowledge necessary for one who would follow Christ for salvation.

#### **3. Creation and Mankind**

We believe that God created all things for his own Glory. God created male and female distinct in their gender; created in His own image and likeness for the purpose of His own Glory. Adam and Eve were given dominion as agents to care for and govern his Earthly creation.

#### **4. The Fall**

We believe that Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the garden, perverting God's image in mankind and falling from his purpose. In this way, the corruption of sin entered mankind, bringing death and judgment. This corruption and its penalty have passed down to every subsequent human being. Because of this innate corruption, every human naturally stands as God's enemy and are subject to God's just wrath and an eternity in Hell, without hope or power outside of God's divine work of restoration through Christ Jesus.

#### **5. The Gospel**

We believe that before the foundation of time, God had determined a plan to save the elect from the corruption of sin through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, the divine Son. We believe that Jesus left his heavenly throne and came to earth both fully human and fully Divine. This Gospel is the



good news of Jesus' virgin birth, sinless life, sacrificial atoning death, and bodily resurrection for the forgiveness of sins of the elect. In love, God commands all men to repent through Christ the Redeemer.

## 6. New Life

We believe that Christ, by his atoning death on the cross, fully paid for the debt of sinners, satisfying the wrath of God. In this, believers receive the righteousness of Christ, forgiveness from the guilt of sin, freedom from the penalty of sin, and regenerated life. Believers are saved from the penalty of sin, while still battling the reality of sin in our fallen world, looking forward to the sure hope of Christ's return – the complete glorification from sin.

## 7. The Church

We believe in the Church, the body of Christ-following believers, functioning together with Christ as the head. This is to be a functioning group of believers, meeting together for worship, the hearing of the Word, and the Spread of the good news of the Gospel.

## 8. The Ordinances

We follow the Lord's command and example in baptism and the observation of the Lord's Supper. We believe baptism to be the obedient immersion in water, symbolizing death of the old man, and new life in Christ. We also follow the Lord's example, remembering his death in the observation of the Lord's Supper – symbolizing Christ's body and blood – to remember his death until he return.

## 9. The END

We believe in the future, personal, bodily return of Christ. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, and the eternal reign of Christ.

## 10. Marriage

We believe that term "marriage" has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.





We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, or who would agree to the Member Covenant should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church.

In light of these things, Red Oak will only perform wedding ceremonies to Covenant Members who hold to this and the other tenants of belief as laid out in this document.

## Values

### Appendix 2

- 1. The Gospel:** We want to live in the power of the Gospel (Romans 1:16-17) and lead others to experience the freedom and reconciliation it offers (II Corinthians 5:18) as they crossover from death to life. (John 5:24)
- 2. Discipleship:** We want to lead people to experience an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ and understand how to grow in a personal knowledge of Him through His Word. We want to see people become fully surrendered disciples of Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20, Ephesians 4:11-14, Colossians 1:28-29)
- 3. Theology and Doctrine:** We want to lead people to a deep knowledge and understanding of the nature of God through the teaching of Scripture. Not only must we understand God's Word for our own spiritual health, we need it to avoid the false teachings of others as we contend for our faith. (Acts 2:42, I Timothy 4:1-11, Titus 1:9, 2:1, Hebrews 6:1, Jude 3)
- 4. Worship:** We want to create a church culture that recognizes worship as a life devoted to God's glory, whether we are praising God through song, fellowshiping with the body in obedience or serving others with our resources and giftedness. (I Corinthians 10:31)
- 5. Mission:** We want to expand the kingdom of Christ by teaching people to live on mission for that kingdom by spreading the good news of Jesus into every aspect of their lives. As a result of Gospel ministry and focus, we want to see churches planted both in our area and to the ends of the earth. (II Corinthians 5:11, 18-20)
- 6. Biblical Leadership (Elders and Deacons):** We want to embrace the Biblical teaching of church leadership so that each person can be equipped to do the work of the ministry in obedience to God's Word. (Ephesians 4:12)
- 7. Unity:** We want to be a people who live in unity for the sake of the gospel so that others will see the love we have for each other and be drawn to radical change that Christ produces. (Acts 2:44-47, Phil. 2:1-4, Eph. 4:1-6)
- 8. Purity:** We want to strive together to fight sin by maintaining a strong sense of accountability, recognizing that no one is immune to the temptations of this world. Through a clear, biblical understanding of church discipline (Matthew 18:15-20, Galatians 6:1-2), we want to help encourage each other to remain faithful as we see the day of Christ's return drawing near. (Hebrews 10:25)
- 9. Family:** We want to lead families to glorify God by equipping fathers to lead spiritually in obedience to their unique role God has called them to. In the absence of male



leadership in some homes, we desire to raise up godly male leadership throughout the church to lead this spiritual family. (Ephesians 5:21-6:4)

- 10. The Second Coming:** We want to be a people who live in light of the imminent return of Jesus Christ by purifying ourselves daily and encouraging one another to good works. (Titus 2:11-13, Hebrews 10:23)

## Elder Covenant: Overseers of Christ's Church

### Appendix 3

As elders of RED OAK CHURCH, we affirm this covenant with one another by God's grace, for the good of Christ's church and ultimately, for God's glory.

As shepherds and overseers of this local church, we embrace the trust given to us by God to govern, protect, lead, teach, equip and care for the corporate church body and her individual members by seeking to perform the following duties:

1. To be willing to stand with the other elders and give an account on judgment day for souls in our church. (Acts 20:28, Hebrews 13:17, James 3:1, I Peter 5:1-2)
2. To be the type of person that people want to follow and obey. (Hebrews 13:7, 17, I Peter 5:2-3)
3. To lead and guide the church with the other elders in a direction that is biblically based and Christ-exalting. (Acts 14:23, 16:4-5, I Timothy 5:17, I Peter 5:2)
4. To pursue doctrinal stability in the areas that Scripture is clear and handle the Word rightly in all matters of life, whether through public proclamation, private counsel or exemplary lifestyle. (Acts 6:4, Ephesians 4:11-16, I Timothy 4:11-16)
5. To be ready to teach at any given time as a minister of the word. (I Timothy 3:2, 5:17-18, II Timothy 4:1-2, Titus 1:9)
6. To protect the church from false teachings and ensure that she is instead fed the Word in a clear, unadulterated manner. (Acts 20: 28-30, Titus 1:9-11)
7. To be pursuing discipleship/mentorship type relationships within the church. (Titus 1:1-8)
8. To participate regularly and faithfully in the activities of the church. (Philippians 3:17)
9. To be actively hospitable toward the church. (I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8, I Peter 4:9)
10. To pray earnestly for the sanctification of individual members and the overall health of church's growth and mission. (Acts 6:4)
11. To equip the members of this church for the work of the ministry. (Ephesians 4:11-16)
12. To join other elders in pursuing deep, meaningful relationships within the elder body and striving to encourage, protect and provide for one another as we shepherd together to serve as an example to the flock. (John 13:35, Romans 12:10, II Corinthians 13:11, Galatians 5:13, I Peter 1:22)
13. To join members in fulfilling the obligations of church membership stated in our church member covenant. (Philippians 3:17, I Timothy 4:12, Titus 2:7-8, I Peter 5:3)



## Member Covenant: A Church United Together

### Appendix 4

As members of RED OAK CHURCH, we affirm this covenant with one another by God's grace, for our good and ultimately, for God's glory.

Having both been led by the Holy Spirit through divine grace to repent and believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (Acts 2:38, 16:31, 20:21, Romans 10:9-10) and having been baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit on the profession of our faith, (Matthew 28:19, Acts 2:41, Romans 6:1-4) we covenant together to glorify God by delighting in Him as our treasure above all things (Philippians 3:8) and by learning and teaching others to hold fast to Christ, and to the hope of His return. (Hebrews 10:23)

Together, we will draw near to God in worship (Hebrews 4:16, 7:25, 10:22-25, 11:6) as we hold fast to the hope set before us (Hebrews 3:6, 4:14, 6:18, Revelation 2:25, 3:11) and joyfully submit to the Word of God as the all-sufficient authority of our lives. (Psalm 19: 7-11, 119:105-112, II Timothy 3:15-17, 4:2-4) We will gather together in our common union in the Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13, Philippians 1:27) and we will engage the lost in our common love for the gospel, so that they too may turn from darkness to light. (Acts 26:18, II Corinthians 4:6, Ephesians 5:8, I Peter 3:14-16, Rom. 10:14-17, Acts 1:8) We will participate regularly in the celebration of the Lord's Supper as we remember Christ's work on the cross and anticipate His future return for His bride. (Luke 22: 7-23, Acts 2:42, I Corinthians 11:23-32)

Together, we will spur one another on to love and good works. (Hebrews 10:24) We will meet with one another consistently (Hebrews 10:25), pray for one another regularly (Philippians 1:3-5) and serve one another selflessly (Romans 12:9-13). We will strive to love each other purely by recognizing the love of Christ and the work of the Spirit in the lives of others. (John 13:34-35, Philippians 1:6) We will edify one another with our speech (Ephesians 4:29-32) and encourage one another with our examples (I Corinthians 10:31-11:1, Philippians 3:17, 4:9, I Timothy 4:12) as we share each other's joys and bear each other's burdens. (Romans 12:15, I Corinthians 12:26, Galatians 6:2) We will consider each other's interests above our own (Philippians 2:3-4) by humbly and gently confronting one another, receiving correction from one another and pursuing reconciliation with one another (Matthew 5:23-24, 18:15-20, Galatians 6:1) as we seek to obey and follow our Lord and remain unstained from the world. (Luke 14:25-33, I Corinthians 15:58, Colossians 1:21-23, James 1:26-27)

Together, we will guard and protect the doctrinal unity and purity of this church. (Romans 16:17, Ephesians 4:11-16, I Timothy 1:3, 4:6, Titus 1:9, 2:1) We will adhere to our church's



position on primary theological issues as laid out in our *Statement of Beliefs* and will not be divisive over secondary issues. We will test the instruction from the Scriptures given by the elders of our church in a biblical manner (Acts 17:11, I Thessalonians 5:19-22, Hebrews 13:9, I John 4:1-6), while humbly submitting to their God-ordained role of shepherd in our lives. (Acts 20: 28, I Timothy 3:1-13, 5:17-20, Hebrews 13:7, 17, I Peter 5:1-4) We will honor the commands of Scripture and the leadership of this church by assuming individual responsibility to know Christ deeply and His Word richly (Philippians 3:10, Colossians 1:9-12, II Peter 3:17-18) in a reproducible way. As new believers are added to this church family, we will work together to teach them all that Christ has commanded them to do. (Matthew 28:18-20, Titus 2:1-8) We will give cheerfully and generously to the support of this church, the aid of the needy and the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8, Mt. 28:16-20, Gal 2:9-11) We will seek to grow together toward biblical unity as long as we are in fellowship on this earth. If we move from this local body, we will unite with another local church as soon as possible where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word. (Hebrews 10:25)

May the grace and the love of our sovereign God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all as we walk in Him, awaiting the appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. (II Corinthians 13:14, Hebrews 6:18-20, 10:36-39)

Signed by \_\_\_\_\_ as a member of Red Oak Church.

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_