

# *FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS OF*

# *GS | GOOD SHEPHERD CC*

## *A Brief History and Doctrinal Statement*

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### **Our Constitution**

Our Constitution is an important historical document defining who we are, what we believe and how we operate as a church. Mostly, it relates to theology and ministry philosophy.

### **Our Bylaws**

Our Bylaws are the rules of internal government for Good Shepherd, the corporation. They explain how we conduct business and relate more to procedural matters.

**Together these documents define who we are and how we operate.**



# HOW WE BEGAN

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Our identity as a local body of believers started as a week-night Bible study in the basement of a nearby home. It was simply a time to open God's Word and see what it had to say. We enjoyed that time together so much we began inviting friends to join us and soon outgrew our host home. In response to the obvious question, "What now?" we found ourselves growing excited at the thought of forming our own church with the Bible as our foundation and the Lord Jesus Christ as our Head.

We held our first service on May 1, 1977, in a small grange hall. As we continued to grow we moved to a local high school and later onto the campus we enjoy today.

# WE BELIEVE

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*...in the Bible.* We believe the Bible—the Old Testament and New Testament which together contain 66 books—is inspired by God and is without error. Therefore we believe it to be our only true and reliable written source for understanding and obeying God’s will.

*...you can understand the Bible.* We believe there’s only one correct method of interpreting any portion of the Bible and that’s to take a “literal” approach. In other words, Scripture means literally or exactly what it says unless a study of the original grammar, culture and/or history indicates some figurative meaning was intended by the writer and understood by the reader. Therefore, Scripture is not subject to change from era to era nor is it a matter of “what it means to me.” An accurate understanding by the reader requires both diligent study and illumination by the Holy Spirit to determine what the Scripture was intended to mean to its original readers, not what it can be made to mean.

*...God surely exists.* We believe the Bible teaches there is but one true and living God who is one in His unchanging nature, and yet who has eternally existed in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Though it’s hard for us as finite (limited) creatures to fully understand an infinite God, Scripture tells us each person of this trio - called the Trinity - has exactly the same nature and qualities, and each is equally worthy of our confidence, obedience and worship.

*...man’s sins separate him from God.* Man was originally created by God to enjoy close, personal fellowship with Him, but by his own sin and disobedience man has received the penalty of death and separation from God.

*...God offers loving forgiveness.* God, in His immeasurable compassion and grace, offers to save us from this condition through the death and sacrifice of His Son, Jesus. We must understand this gift is freely offered but not automatically bestowed. God gives this gift of forgiveness and eternal life to those who humble themselves, confess their sinfulness, repent (turn around), and accept this sacrifice of Jesus as their only hope for salvation.

# VISION

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**RELATIONSHIP** with Jesus and His Father through the Spirit.

**RELATIONSHIP** with His people. Living closely and openly with Jesus' called out community. Sharing and rejoicing in what Jesus is doing in our lives.

**RELATIONSHIP** with the lost hearts that Jesus came to love, rescue, and restore to a relationship with the Father. The point of all theology is **RELATIONSHIP**.

# DISTINCTIVES

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1. Everyone developing a deeper relationship with Jesus and His Father through the Spirit by being immersed in His Word and His presence. “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” -- Jesus; John 17:3

2. Clear, compelling, and sound teaching of God’s Word in every ministry – from the worship services to small groups in homes and everything in between. “You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine.” Titus 2:1

3. Experience the presence and power of Jesus as His body gathers together each week in worship.

4. Worship based Prayer – Every conversation, small group, event, worship service, and special call to intercession is to be laced with Christ- exalting, dependent prayer. Jesus has clearly told us “...apart from Me, you can do nothing.” John 15:5

5. A Culture of Faith in Jesus’ willingness and ability to heal hearts, relationships, and bodies. We do not want it said of Good Shepherd what was said of Jesus’ home town: “And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.” Matt 13:58

6. A Sent Community. A heart for and personal relationships with the lost both locally and globally. “Casting the net” as broadly and as often as possible to reach portions of our culture that would not otherwise be exposed to Jesus and His body. Matt 28:16-20

7. Never forgetting “the least of these.” The unborn, the oppressed and enslaved, widows and orphans, the imprisoned, the poor.. ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’ Matt 25:40

8. A body-wide Focus on Children. Children's hearts are marked for life and eternity in these precious, vulnerable years. One of our highest values and priorities is to keep children and the Children's Ministry in front of our people. Jesus said, "...let the little children come to Me..." Mark 10:14

9. A strong commitment to Student Ministries. Good Shepherd wants to continue to offer them the joy of intimacy with Jesus and serving Him instead of the world's enslavement. We can reach whole families through reaching their children and students.

10. Teaching and preserving the God-given distinctive masculine and feminine roles as outlined in the Bible.

11. Developing a Culture of Peace - Where we both learn and live the Lord's instructions on how to resolve our conflicts with each other.

12. A graceful, welcoming, and healing community for the broken and hurting... in our Good Shepherd community in general, and in certain ministries in particular: Celebrate Recovery, Divorce Care, Grief Share. "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest..." -- Jesus, Matt 11:28

# RESTATED CONSTITUTION OF GOOD SHEPHERD COMMUNITY CHURCH

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## ARTICLE I

### *Name*

The name of this organization, an Oregon nonprofit organization, is Good Shepherd Community Church of Boring, Oregon.

## ARTICLE II

### *Objectives*

The purpose of this church is to maintain the preaching of the whole counsel of God, according to the doctrines and teachings of Holy Scripture.

We recognize Jesus Christ as our Lord and the sole Head of this church. In keeping with His clear and sovereign intentions as stated in His Great Commission, we are committed to the making of disciples—teaching people to observe in mind, will and behavior His lordship over every area of life.

Our desire as a body of believers is to worship Christ as the only true God, to present Jesus to those outside of Christ, and to strengthen Christians in their spiritual growth. Our mission then is at least three-fold: worship, evangelism and education. In order to provide a Christian witness of the power of Christ in the East Multnomah - Clackamas County area, we offer to individuals and families, young and old, the opportunity to assemble throughout the week for worship, prayer, instruction, Bible study and Christian fellowship.

## ARTICLE III

### *Character*

We rest our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and believe the Bible to be the basis of the principles for our teaching and practice. The primary principles governing both teaching and practice may be summarized as follows:

- the preeminence of Christ as our Creator, divine Lord, and sovereign Master.

- the sole authority of the Bible, inerrant in all its parts, and its sufficiency as our only rule of faith and practice.
- the guidance of the Holy Spirit in interpretation, and the individual priesthood relationship of each soul in direct approach to God.
- the independent authority of the local church, subject only to the Scriptures and its corporate conscience before God, and the church's accompanying interdependence in fellowship with churches of like faith and order.
- regenerate church membership.
- the spiritual unity of all believers.
- the symbolic ordinances of believers' baptism and the Lord's Supper which are open to all believers in obedience to the command of Christ.
- a world-wide program of missionary fervor and evangelism in obedience to the final command of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- a commitment to the traditional, biblically-mandated family as the primary means of fulfilling the Lord's dominion mandate and perpetuating godly generations.
- a belief that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as either male or female, and that these two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God.
- a belief that God created marriage to be exclusively the union of one man and one woman, and that intimate sexual activity is to occur exclusively within that union.
- the separation of church and state, thus guaranteeing a free church.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### *Membership*

Inasmuch as the Scripture states that "we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another," the membership of this local church will consist of those who are born-again in the Lord Jesus Christ and who are consistently functioning as participants in this body. Membership in this church carries with it responsibility both to obey scripture and to model a moral life before other members, their families and the community. In certain instances it may become scripturally necessary to publicly name, discipline and/or dismiss from membership and fellowship, a member who is unrepentant of sin. Members may not resign simply to avoid this biblical process.

## **ARTICLE V**

### *Government and Affiliation*

A carefully balanced form of elder and congregational authority, believed to be that form which is closest to the teaching of the New Testament and to the practice of the early church, is the basis of the government of this church. Church government according to the Bible is not democratic but theocratic in nature. The biblical standard for church government balances the two principles of a) ruling elders and b) congregational recognition. The principles of Scripture balancing these two master-principles are founded upon this primary conviction: the single greatest human factor in the development, government and health of the church is the spiritual quality of its leadership a plurality of elders (I Timothy 3:1-7, Acts 14:23, Acts 6:1-7). Scriptural evidence for the authority of leadership (elders):



- leaders were Jesus' foundation for building the church (Matthew 16)
- leaders were responsible for the distribution and management of congregational assets (Acts 2:42, 4:32-35)
- leaders initiate, supervise and finalize the selection of additional leaders (Titus 1:5, Acts 6:1-6, Acts 14:23)
- leaders shape the process of decision-making (Acts 15:1-33)
- leaders bear inherent authority (I Thessalonians 2:6)
- leaders are to be highly esteemed (I Thessalonians 5:12-13)
- leaders are not to be selected or removed hastily (I Timothy 5:17-21)
- leaders are to reproduce themselves for the good of the church (II Timothy 2:2)
- leaders are to be obeyed (Hebrews 13:17)
- leaders are accountable to God for their "charge" (I Peter 5:1-7)

Scriptural evidence for the authority of the congregation:

- the congregation is involved in the nomination and recognition of leaders (elders) (Acts 6:1-7)
- the congregation is involved in thoughtful consensus measurement in major decision-making (Acts 15:1-32)
- the congregation is involved in removal of a member from the responsibilities and privileges of membership (Matthew 18:17) as well as the removal of unqualified leaders
- the congregation utilizes spiritual gifts in ministering to one another (I Peter 4:10)
- the Scriptural pictures of the church as flock, body and bride depict the congregational role as following the shepherd, head and bridegroom respectively.

Summary: Authority in the church is a plurality of mature men recognized by the people, leading the congregation at large in following together God's Word in a manner preserving the unity of the spirit until we all attain to the measure of Christ's fullness.

The congregation's primary authority rests in the initial recognition of the elders and their subsequent responsibility to the leadership of the elders. The congregation therefore recognizes the leadership (elders) in a selection process and thereby invests in the elders both the authority and responsibility to implement the objectives of the church. In the sense that the congregation may choose not to recognize a given elder candidate in the selection process, ultimate human authority rests in the membership. In this form of church government the distinctions of congregational authority and elder government/management are not confused. The elders will be recognized, for all intents and purposes, as the board of directors of this organization.

The church is a self-governing body, independent of all other churches. The body will seek to cooperate with other churches of like faith and order whenever such cooperation will assist in attaining its objectives and demonstrating the unity of the total church of Christ.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### *Officers*

The Scripture designates the officers of the church to be elders. The congregation will recognize as elders such men as are deemed advisable. Again, it is recognized that the single most important factor in building an effective church is the recognition and appointment of qualified godly men to the office of elder. Second-level servant-leaders in the church may be appointed as deemed appropriate and may be designated as deacons.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### *Constitutional Amendments*

This constitution may be amended by the consensus of the elders in conjunction with that of the congregation. The original constitution was adopted by the congregation in due assembly on June 20, 1982.

Identification: The Restated Constitution was adopted by a consensus of the board of elders effective September 21, 1999.

# BYLAWS OF GOOD SHEPHERD COMMUNITY CHURCH

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*These bylaws of Good Shepherd Community Church are intended to accurately reflect church procedures while conforming to mandatory requirements of the Oregon Nonprofit Corporation Act. Where ambiguity or discrepancies arise between these bylaws and the act, by law the church must conform to the act.*

## **ARTICLE I**

### *Our Purpose*

Good Shepherd Community Church has been organized for charitable, religious and educational purposes consistent with the definition of Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. Our purpose is further explained in our constitution and articles of incorporation.

## **ARTICLE II**

### *Regarding Membership*

#### Section 1. Constitution of Membership & Privileges

This church does not have statutory, voting members. Individuals who are born-again in the Lord Jesus Christ and who are consistently functioning as participants in this local fellowship are considered “members of the body” or members of the congregation. However, there is no formal recognition of membership, nor do these members have any special rights or privileges. In certain instances, regularly attending persons may be dismissed from the fellowship for disciplinary reasons, and would no longer be considered members. In the event of a question regarding the membership of any given person, the decision of the elders will be determinative.

#### Section 2. Voting

This church is not congregationally led, it is elder led. As a result, the congregation does not vote on issues. Issues, direction, purchases, etc. are decided by the elders.

Typically, the elders will determine a course of action. The elders may, particularly on significant matters, inform the congregation and ask for input.

However, the ultimate decision is the elders' to make.

### Section 3. Access to Records

The church will provide summary financial statements upon request. However, because of confidential nature of counseling records, staff salaries, member contributions, elder minutes and similarly confidential documents, such records will not be made available to members of the congregation or the general public.

The elders will make every effort to discuss pertinent and appropriate information with any member who has just cause for inquiry.

### Section 4. Meetings, Ballots, Proxy, Notice

Because there is no formal membership and no voting power among the congregation, there will be no regularly scheduled member meetings, no notice of such meetings, no ballots or proxy votes, and no member quorums.

## **ARTICLE III**

### *Board of Directors*

#### Section 1. Function & Authority

The church-designated elders constitute the board of directors. As such, the elders hold the highest authority in the church. They are ultimately responsible for the business and affairs of the church, the ministry philosophy that guides the church, and all ministry departments. Day- to-day responsibilities will be delegated to management staff.

#### Section 2. Number

The number of active elders may increase to whatever number is deemed appropriate by a majority of the board up to thirty, but may not fall below three. The elder board is composed of individuals, not slots. Since there is no set number of board members, if an elder terminates his role, the board may or may not consider a replacement (provided that the minimum number of three elders is maintained).

#### Section 3. Term

There is no term of office for an elder. Elders serve as long as they a) remain biblically qualified (as described below) and b) aspire to the role. As a result, there are no regular elections, no terms, no staggering of terms or rotation requirements. Lead Pastor, by position, is an active Elder for the entire time he holds that position.

#### Section 4. Qualifications

Not just anyone can serve as an elder. We believe the Bible indicates that only certain qualified men may fill this role. Qualifications are found in I Timothy chapter 3 and Titus chapter 1. Pastors may serve as elders if selected for that role by the elder board. They serve as full members of the board, having the same voting rights, privileges and responsibilities of any elder. And they serve in this capacity without compensation.

#### Section 5. Selection

New elders are appointed by the board, not elected by the congregation. Nominees are solicited from the congregation and reviewed by the elders. Final candidates are announced to the congregation to solicit support and input prior to appointment. If verifiable concerns are raised from the congregation **between the announcement and appointment of a nominee,**

the board may withdraw that name from consideration.

#### Section 6. Attendance

Elders are expected to attend all regular and special board meetings. However, absence alone is not a cause for removal.

#### Section 7. Resignation/Removal

An elder may resign at any time. Forced removal from the board will occur upon two-thirds majority vote of the other board members and may be rendered with or without cause.

#### Section 8. Vacancies

A vacancy does not necessarily exist when an elder resigns or is terminated from the board. See section 2.

#### Section 9. Meetings

Generally, the elders meet at least once each month. As a result, no particular meeting is regarded as “the annual meeting.”

#### Section 10. Special Meetings

Because the elders generally meet weekly to pray, study and conduct church business, most issues are addressed at regularly scheduled meetings. If there are pressing issues that cannot all be addressed in regular meetings, special meetings are called. The board chairman may call a special meeting on his own initiative or will call a special meeting at the request of two elders. Board members are usually informed of these special meetings during a regular meeting agenda. Those not present at the regular meetings will be informed of the special meeting by phone, in person or in writing at least 24 hours prior to the special meeting (unless the notified elder waives the timing requirement).

#### Section 11. Quorum Requirements

A simple majority of board members provides a quorum and a vote of a majority of the elders is sufficient to approve all actions, except as otherwise provided by the act, the articles of incorporation or these bylaws. (For example, removal of an elder requires a two-thirds majority vote, as described in section 7 of these bylaws.) However, generally, the elders do not make decisions by majority vote of a quorum. They make decisions by consensus. That means the vast majority must favor the decision, and anyone dissenting must be willing to defer to the wishes of the other board members. If that occurs, consensus is reached. If a dissenting member is adamant, or if several members are not supportive, usually the decision will not be made. This requires maturity, trust and deference on the part of all members to prevent rule by dissent. As a result, there is normally no simple majority vote. And if a majority of elders are not present at a meeting, decisions will be postponed or a phone poll of missing board members will be conducted if immediate action is necessary. Actions taken as a result of a phone poll will be ratified at the next regular meeting and will be entered into the minutes of that meeting.

#### Section 12. Assent/Dissent

Board members present at a meeting are presumed to assent to all decisions of the board. If there is the occasion for a board member to dissent but defer to the other members, he may ask that his dissent be noted in the official meeting minutes.

### Section 13. Compensation

Elders are not compensated for their participation on the board. Neither are pastors compensated for their role as board members.

### Section 14. Action without a meeting

If circumstances warrant, any action normally conducted or decided in a board meeting can be taken without a meeting if a) the intended action is provided to each elder in writing, b) that written document is signed and returned to the chairman of the board, and c) the decision is unanimous.

### Section 15. Copyright Ownership

Generally, the board relinquishes to the author any and all claims to any material that has been produced by staff members and might be published or amended and reproduced for sale or other distribution. This includes sermons, teaching series, articles, books, tapes, musical scores or other computerized data. However, the board does not relinquish copyright ownership to the extent that doing so would jeopardize Good Shepherd's tax exempt status.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### *Officers*

The offices of the church include the chairman and the secretary. Each office may be held as long as the officer aspires to the position and is functioning adequately according to the board. Although there is no term and no rotation requirement, the officers will normally be confirmed or replaced at the first board meeting of each calendar year.

### Section 2. Duties of Officers

- a. The chairman will serve as the official representative of the church in all legal matters unless another party is specifically named by the board to act as representative or signer for a certain matter. (The chairman must be an elder.)
- b. The secretary will keep official minutes of each meeting, and keep on file and authenticate all pertinent minutes and other appropriate documentation used in making decisions and/or taking action. (The secretary must be an elder.)
- c. Other offices may be created as the board deems appropriate, and any existing officer may perform any additional duties assigned by the board.

### Section 3. Compensation of Officers

No officer is compensated for his services. Expenses may be reimbursed that are incurred as a result of conducting church business as an officer.

### Section 4. Resignation/Removal

An officer may resign at any time. Removal from office is required upon a two-thirds majority vote of the board which may be rendered with or without cause.

### Section 5. Vacancies

Upon resignation or removal of any board officer, the elders will fill that vacancy within 30 calendar days.

## **ARTICLE V**

### *Right of Participation*

The church does not discriminate against anyone wishing to attend based on age, sex, race, handicap or national origin. The church does, however, reserve the right to restrict membership or participation to individuals who believe in and strive to live the Christian life as taught by the church.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### *Depositories, Signatures and Seal*

#### Section 1. Depositories

All funds of the church will be deposited in the name of the church in such financial institutions as the board selects with checks, drafts and other orders being signed by those individuals delegated that responsibility by the board.

#### Section 2. Contracts

All contracts, deeds or other instruments will be signed on behalf of the church by the board chairman unless the board specifically selects another party to sign a particular document as representative of the church.

#### Section 3. Seal

The church has no seal.

#### Section 4. Borrowing

No board member or officer or agent of the church has authority to borrow funds on behalf of the church without the express written approval of the board. Nor will any loans be made by the church to any board member or officer.

#### Section 5. Gifts

Any gift offered to the church may be accepted by the board on behalf of the church for the furtherance of its general purposes, and all gifts are subject to the board's acceptance.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### *Amendments*

These bylaws may be amended at any time by the elders.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### *Indemnification*

#### Section 1. Directors and Officers

In compliance with ORS 65.387 to 65.414, the church will indemnify, to the fullest extent allowed, any elder or officer who is named in a legal proceeding by reason of that individual being a member or officer of the board.

#### Section 2. Advance of Expenses

The church may pay for or reimburse the reasonable expenses incurred by an elder who is part of a legal proceeding before final disposition of the proceeding is accomplished.

### Section 3. Insurance

The church may, at the discretion of the board, purchase and maintain insurance covering all board members against any liability claims against board members as a result of their position or actions taken in that capacity.

### Section 4. Purpose and Exclusivity

This indemnification is in addition to and not in lieu of any other rights elders might be entitled to under any statute, rule of law or equity, provision of the articles of incorporation or vote of the board.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### *Committees*

Committees may be created or dissolved as deemed appropriate at any time by the consensus of the board. (A committee of the board will consist of two or more elders.) Committees other than committees of the board may also be organized or dissolved by the management team subject to board approval. Committee members and authority will be determined by the board (or by the management team with board approval).

### **Identification**

*The Bylaws were adopted by a consensus of the board of elders effective September 21, 1999.*

*Bylaws amended: November 3, 2010*

*Bylaws amended: December 15, 2010*

*Bylaws amended: March 3, 2021 (Elder term limits removed)*

*Constitution amended: October 5, 2022*





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