

# Independence Reformed Bible Church Constitution

## ***Declaration***

Out of our sincere desire to glorify God and advance His kingdom here on earth, and trusting in His sovereign mercy and grace that we have become members of the true body of Christ, we do now, in the presence of God and men, solemnly and willingly submit ourselves to Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this local assembly, Independence Reformed Bible Church, and according to the terms of this Constitution.

Independence Reformed Bible Church, “IRBC”, is not a man-made institution but exists by divine mandate and is established and will persevere in accordance with biblical principles.

## ***Authority***

IRBC recognizes only one source of divine truth and that is the inerrant Bible — the divine revelation of the mind of God. Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church. His Word as revealed to us in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the ultimate and final authority in all matters of faith and practice (Ephesians 1:22; 5:23-24; John 8:31; Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Deuteronomy 11:1; 12:32).

We believe that IRBC stands directly under Christ and His Word, and that IRBC has the authority to conduct its ministry free from the control of other local assemblies, persons, or the state (Acts 20:17, 28; 5:29; Matthew 22:21).

We affirm the need, as a local church body, to seek fellowship with other local assemblies of like faith and practice that we might be support and encouragement to one another; and that at certain times it is advisable to seek counsel and wisdom from other Christian leaders (Acts 15:6-35; Proverbs 15:22; Romans 16: 5, 19).

## ***Confession***

We believe in the only true God, distinct in three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who out of nothing has made heaven and earth and all that is in them, and still upholds and governs them, so that nothing comes to pass, either in heaven or on earth, outside of His divine will (Genesis 1:26; 18:16-22; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 2:4-9; John 5:23; 8:57, 58; 10:25-30; 14:8-11; 17; 16:5-15; Acts 5:4; 9:3-5; Colossians 1:15-17; Philippians 2:5-11 I Timothy 3:16; 6:13-16; Titus 3:4,5; Hebrews 1:8; I John 5:7; Revelation 1:8, 17,18).

We believe that we are conceived and born in sin, and therefore, children of wrath by nature, wholly incapable of doing any good and prone to all evil; and that we, in thought, word, and deed, have frequently transgressed the commandments of the Lord (Genesis 6:5; 19: 4,5; Deuteronomy 32:15; Romans 1-3; Ephesians 2:1-3).

We believe that Jesus Christ, who is both true and eternal God and very man, who assumed His human nature from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary, is given to us of God as our Savior, and that we by this predestined faith and repentance receive remission of sins in His blood, and that we by the effectual power of the Holy Spirit have become children of God and members of both Jesus Christ and His Church (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3; 24:47; Romans 12: 3-8; Philippians 2:5-11; Ephesians 4:7-16).

We believe that the elect of the true Church are saved unto good works, for the proclaiming of the gospel, the formation of godly families through covenant marriage of one man and one woman, the subduing of the earth, and the discipling of all nations; all for the glory of the Triune God. When Christ’s worldwide redemption is sufficiently complete, He will return for His bride, the Church, and deliver her up to God the Father (Ephesians 2:10; Genesis 1:28; Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Corinthians 15:24).

## ***Doctrine***

Our common confession to God's truth must be based on the whole counsel of God which is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations or traditions of men (Acts 20:7; Deuteronomy 4:2; Jeremiah 23:16; Matthew 15:3; 22:29-32).

The true meaning of Scripture can only be discerned by a careful consideration of the context (both literary and historical) and the grammar of the text or passage in question. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself. Therefore, questions about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one) must be searched and known by other places in the Bible that speak more clearly (2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Corinthians 4:2; 2 Peter 3:16).

The Church is dependent upon the illumination of the Holy Spirit for a correct interpretation of Scripture, and only as each member is responsive to the Spirit speaking in the Word and humbly submissive to His instruction can we hope for a common confession of the truth (Psalm 119:18, 26; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 John 2:27).

IRBC stands in defense of the Orthodox Reformed Doctrine, which is based on the Word of God and expressed in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Cannons of Dort, and the Belgic Confession. This assembly further stands in defense of the London Baptist Confession of Faith and the Ecumenical Creeds, namely the Apostle's Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and the Council of Chalcedon. Regarding these confessions and creeds, we realize that these are not inspired, therefore, not infallible, yet are beneficial and accurate man-made documents given to the Church apart from Scripture.

We also reject all heresies and errors conflicting with this doctrine, and persevere in the fellowship of this Christian assembly, not only in the hearing of the Divine Word, but in diligent study and application of God's Word to our lives (Numbers 31:16; Proverbs 4:2; Matthew 7: 28, 29; Acts 2:42; II Timothy 3:16; 4:2, 3; Titus 2:1; 3:10, 11).

## ***Worship***

We affirm our duty and privilege to gather on the Lord's Day to worship God in the assembly of His people, to praise Him in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; to join in prayer with our brothers and sisters; to partake of the Lord's Supper and Baptism; to receive instruction through the preaching of God's Word; and to keep the Lord's Day for the glory of God and the refreshment of our bodies and souls (Psalm 95:1-7; 122:1; Colossians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Acts 2:42; Exodus 20:8-11; Revelation 1:10; Isaiah 58:13-14).

Worship services shall be held each Sunday. Since God has set aside Sunday as the Day of Worship, IRBC leadership will be responsible for the conduct of these services. A Sunday School may be provided for the teaching of the Word. Weekday Worship services may be called as necessary, but not to substitute for Sunday Worship.

## ***Assembly***

We believe that the elect of the true Church are saved unto good works, for the proclaiming of the gospel, the subduing of the earth, and the discipling of all nations; all for the glory of the Triune God. We believe that there is only one Church and only one membership thereof: namely, the one body of Christ (Romans 12:4,5; 1 Corinthians 10:17; 12:12,13; 12:20; 12:25; Ephesians 4:4-5; 5:28-30; Colossians 3:15) In that membership we submit one to another, spur one another on to love and good works, and utilize the gifts of the spirit for mutual edification (I Peter 5:5; Hebrews 10:24).

Those in this local assembly called Independence Reformed Bible Church are expected to be able to give testimony to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and receive or have received Christian baptism according to the command of Christ and His Apostles. They are enjoined and admonished to submit themselves to Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this assembly, to be in substantial agreement with the terms of its constitution and doctrinal standards, and to regularly avail themselves and their dependents of Sunday worship activities. (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Acts 2:41, 47; Romans 16:17; Matthew 18:17; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14; 1 Corinthians 5:12-13; Hebrews 10:25).

Members in the true Church assent never to ascribe more authority to this assembly and its teaching of decrees, than we do to the Word of God. Rather, we will rely on the Bible for the regulation, foundation, and confirmation of our faith, believing without any doubt, all things contained in the inerrant authoritative Word of God.

We also promise to maintain a local assembly where the pure doctrine of the Gospel is preached, and where church discipline is exercised.

Furthermore, we promise to labor fervently and devotedly in the building of the Kingdom of Heaven through the preaching of the Law-Word of God unto Reformation, Reconstruction and Dominion as commanded in both Genesis 1:28 and Matthew 28:18-20.

### ***Leadership***

Christ mediates His rule in His Church through a plurality of godly men called “Elders.” These men are prepared by Christ, and having distinguished themselves in both conduct and doctrine as being worthy of imitation, they are to be chosen, ordained, and appointed to serve as overseers by competent Christian elders who are in accord with this constitution. The work of Elders is to shepherd the church of God by teaching the Word of God, administering the sacraments, governing the church’s affairs, acting as judges on her behalf, evangelizing the lost, by giving whatever care is necessary for the spiritual well-being of the members, including preaching and teaching the Scriptures for the defense of the faith and the edification of believers, and by equipping the saints for the work of Christian ministry. They are, in accord with their gifts, to govern the local assembly and to labor in the Word and doctrine (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 4:6-16; 5:17; 2 Timothy 2:23-26; 3:14-4:5).

Deacons may be appointed by Elders of this local assembly to assist in caring for the needs of those in fellowship and to help in the administration and work of the local assembly (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 6:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Corinthians 6:1-6; James 5:14).

Elders and Deacons together shall steward by majority decision whatever assets and property that may be accumulated by IRBC for the benefit of Christ’s kingdom and His church. Records of decision-making, acquisition, and disposition of assets and property shall be maintained as the Leadership of this assembly deems prudent.

### ***Responsibilities***

The Church, as the ground and pillar of truth, is responsible to discern, declare, and live the truth of the Word of God. As a local assembly, we will hold forth a common confession as a light and testimony to the truth in this dark world (1 Timothy 3:15; Jude 3; Matthew 5:14-16; Deuteronomy 4:5-8).

The duty of the Christian is to glorify God by seeking first the kingdom of God, by keeping God’s commandments, by denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and by living soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age. We affirm that the believer in Christ is to make his calling and election sure by giving all diligence to the disciplines and graces of the Christian life such as: frequent, earnest, and fervent prayer, both for his

own life and that of others; fasting; meekness; virtue; knowledge; patience; brotherly kindness; and love, including love of enemies. These disciplines and graces are to flow from a life dedicated to the pursuit of God, and desiring to please and obey Him (Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:14; Philippians 2:12-13; Romans 8:1-4; 2 Peter 1:4-10; Proverbs 25:21-22; Matthew 5:16; 6:33; John 14:15; Deuteronomy 4:6-8; Titus 2:12; Romans 12:1-2).

### ***Discipline***

We affirm that we are to obey Christ by admonishing one another for unfaithfulness to the Word of God and to hold one another accountable to the terms of our covenant with God. Those who sin are to be admonished according to the teaching of Scripture. Those who repent are to be forgiven and restored. Such admonishment is necessary for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren.

Should admonishment fail, Church discipline is necessary for the deterring of others from like offences, for purging out that leaven which might infect the whole church, for vindicating the honor of Christ, and for preventing the wrath of God which might justly fall on the assembly if we allow His covenant to be profaned by notorious and obstinate sinners (Matthew 18:15-20; Galatians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; Titus 3:10-11; James 5:19-20).

### ***Ordinances***

IRBC acknowledges that baptism is an ordinance commanded by Christ. We acknowledge, also, that the physical act of baptism in itself has no saving effect. God's election and the subsequent regeneration by the Spirit effect an inward change of heart requiring a public confession of the change. IRBC encourages believers to be baptized in obedience to the command of Christ. Fellowship in IRBC, however, will not be withheld to true believers in Christ because of their method of baptism (Matthew 3: 15, 16; Luke 3:16; John 4:1; Acts 2:41; 1 Corinthians 1:14-16; 10:2; Colossians 2:11-13).

The celebration of the Lord's Supper was instituted by Jesus Christ as a remembrance of His passion for His people and His saving work on our behalf. IRBC will offer to professing believers the regular opportunity to partake of the Lord's Table as a bond and pledge of their communion with Him and with each other. IRBC acknowledges that the elements in this ordinance, namely bread and wine, represent the body and blood of Christ, yet in substance and nature they still remain truly and only bread and wine (Matthew 26:26-28; I Corinthians 11: 17-24).

---

Originally Declared and Confessed on the Fourth Day of July, 2013 A.D. and Amended and Clarified this Thirty-first Day of December, 2019 A.D.

*Joel P. Saint*  
*John F. Bingaman*

*Denver, PA*