

Constitution Update Proposal

SECTION A

Note From Josh: This Is A Response to Momentum, Not Crisis

It can be assumed that if a church attempts change like this, it's in a knee-jerk response to something **BAD** — *attendance has plummeted! The secretary ran off with the worship leader! The pastor used the church card for Thunder Tickets! etc.* **This is not the case at all.**

While not perfect, things are going **WELL**. Our church is growing (*some of that is "organic" — 2026 is shaping up to welcome 8 new babies!*), our relationships among elders, deacons, and members are joyful, we're exceeding our budgetary goals, and, though hard to quantify, there's a good spirit on Sundays.

This proposal is not in response to a crisis — **it's in response to momentum**. We view these changes (*more biblical, more efficient, more transparent*) as "catching the wind," so to speak.

Don't Allow Trellis Work to Distract from the Vine

Vines (*our members*), the **living things that really matter**, are supported by trellis (*constitutions, buildings, policies*) — **a dead thing that only matters insofar as it holds up the vines**. Whether you are for or against the proposal, nothing about this document is worth harsh words, unkindness, or breaking fellowship. For or against, **we will practice Jesus' command to love one another**.

SECTION B

How'd We Get Here?

Since 2004, I (*Josh*) have served CLC as a church member, custodian, deacon, worship leader, youth pastor, and now lead pastor. While that still places me fairly low on the totem pole among the longest-tenured members, I'm not a stranger to CLC's life, ministry, and governance.

In my first 8 years as pastor, I worked at a snail's pace to make some small and some large changes — either practical (*e.g., striking the fee to use the organ*) or biblically wise (*e.g., adopting a Statement of Faith, Membership Commitments, and adding a Membership process*). **The purpose behind this newest proposal is the same: for CLC to function more biblically, efficiently, and transparently.**

Rather than continuing the practice of an amendment here and there — a trellis process that consumes countless hours and energy — I, along with the rest of our elders and, as of April 8th, 2026, the board, believe we are in a healthy and trusting enough place to attempt a more large-scale revision to our governing documents.

Timeline: 3 years of prayer, study, discussion, and thought from your elders and deacons.

2023 — Process begins. First draft presented to elders (*Keith Denton, Darrell Mendiola, Max Reese, Stony Fath, Scott Farrow, & Reece Simpson*). Year spent refining.

June 2024 — Presented to board. Positive and negative feedback received; revisions made.

October 2024 — Revised proposal presented again; tabled due to pending 2025 elder/deacon nominations.

January 2025 — New eldership (*Larry McMillen, Keith Denton, Darrell Mendiola, Stony Fath, & Reece Simpson*) renews discussion for all of 2025, incorporates feedback, and presents the 4th iteration at **Feb 11** board meeting.

April 8, 2026 — Board votes to bring the proposal to the congregation.

SECTION C

What Are the Main Differences?

As you read through the proposal, you'll find the bones are very much the same, matching the current constitution. Some practices we currently follow but haven't written down are now codified.

The buck still stops with the congregation, elders, deacons, and members still perform their same basic roles; there's still a Financial Board; there's still committees (though titled teams); and there's still accountability at every level.

We highly encourage members to read the proposal in its entirety, along with the scriptural references. This section is just a flyover view.

1. Elder Selection Process *Articles 6 & 13*

This is, without a doubt, the most important proposed change. In our current process, a nominating committee of 4 board members and 3 non-board members is appointed 6 weeks out from the election and must have nominations to the congregation 10 days prior to elections.

We believe this present system does not give adequate time to the congregation or the potential elder to discern whether they are indeed qualified for the role — and is disobeying 7 *Timothy 5:22*.

The proposed **elder-candidacy process [ARTICLE 13B]** allows the candidate & his family, the elders, & the congregation to discern together if this is a role the candidate desires and is qualified for. Members have a more active role in recognizing church leadership, and potential elders can test the waters before being thrown off the high dive. Further, elders take responsibility as the nominating committee. We feel this responsibility should fall to the elders for two reasons:

1) Elders are particularly charged to assess character, doctrine, and to raise up other Elders (*2 Tim. 2:2*) and **2)** The honest discussion regarding nominees' character and lifestyle required for nominations is appropriate for elders, and not necessarily appropriate for deacons or church members.

2. A Specialized Financial Board *Articles 9, 10, 12E, 13D, 14*

Our current constitution has the potential for a financial board of 12 elders, 36 deacons, and 3 trustees. Rather than having 51 men attend a meeting to read through a 10-page financial report, that responsibility falls to the elders and the **3 specially elected Finance Deacons** — men recognized by the members as gifted in finance and accounting — who also serve as Trustees.

All deacons (and members!) are still welcome to attend financial meetings, but attendance is no longer required.

3. Flexible Ministry Teams

Article 11

By removing standing committees from the constitution and replacing them with flexible teams, ministry is able to happen, and practices and policies are able to change at the discretion of that year's team — without requiring a constitutional amendment.

4. Quarterly Member Meetings

Article 12C

The purpose is **more congregational involvement in the life of the church**. Similar to our current board meetings, all members will hear ministry team reports, a financial snapshot will be shared, and elder/deacon candidates will be presented and/or elected.

5. More Accountability Structures

Articles 6 ft.16, 12 ft.27, 13, 14

If you haven't noticed, there are a lot of Reese and Reese-adjacent people running around here. Along with the large additions of financial protections and procedures found in **Article 14** and clear paths to remove members and leadership acting improperly in **Article 13**, the proposed constitution includes **many conflict-of-interest and nepotism protections** not found in the current version.

SECTION D

Closing Thoughts & Schedule

Thank you for reading this far, gold star! As stated in Section B, our goal for these changes is for CLC to function more **biblically, efficiently, and transparently** — it's up to the members to discern whether we've achieved those goals. In order to give the members adequate time to read, ask questions, and share concerns, but also not drag this out forever (**we want to focus on vine work, not trellis, remember?!**), the schedule for the proposal is as follows:

APRIL 15	APRIL 19	MAY 17	MAY 31
Proposal emailed to members	Proposal handed to members	Read-through & Q&A at 8:45 am	Vote

Questions? Reach out to any Josh or any board member.