

Iranian Christian Church Constitution

With our reliance on the almighty God, we the Iranian Christians who are joyfully spreading the gospel to all peoples of the world and especially our own in Iran, by having complete belief in the teachings of the Holy Bible (including 66 books of the old and new testaments) are strengthening our salvation faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, this congregation made up of united Iranian believers as the body of Christ choose their programs and ways of worshiping as follows:

Article 1 – Name of Establishment

As of 1988 and in accordance with the laws of the state of California, this congregation has been registered as the “Iranian Christian Church”, and for the rest of this document is referred to as “the Iranian Church” or simply “Church”.

Article 2 – Nature and Management of the Church

- a) Mode of Operation: The management of this Church which is conducted by its member believers independently and without the influence of any external church organization but responsive to its mission system (refer to article 14) will continue its operation. Despite its independence from other churches, it is one part of the whole body of Christ, and will therefore cooperate and be in contact with other churches.
- b) Teaching: This Church accepts the Holy Bible with its 39 books of the Old and 27 books of the New testaments as absolute authority for its faith.
- c) Language: Most sessions and programs will be in the Farsi language. The English-speaking Iranian Church, however, is part of the Iranian Church.

Statement of Faith

1 – All scripture is by divine inspiration. This means Godly men under the power of the Holy Spirit have written every word throughout the Holy Bible. We believe that this inspiration including history, literature, teaching, and written revelations accurately represent the original inspired scripture.

(2 Pet 1:21; Exodus 20: 1; 2 Tim 3: 16; 1 Thes 2: 14; 1 Cor 2: 11-14; 1 Cor 14: 37; 2 Sam 23: 2; Deut 4: 35)

2 - The Almighty God has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.

(John 10:30,36; Galatians 4:6; Acts 2:17,18; Revelation 1:26 and 3:22 and 11:7; Isaiah 6:8; Matthew 3:16,17 and 28:19; John 14: 6; 2 Chronicles 13:14; Thessalonians 4:35; John 17:5; Romans 1:20)

3- Jesus Christ was placed in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit and was born from her. He lived among us as a perfect human being without sinful nature. At the same time, as the creator God, all the fullness of divinity was and is in him.

(John 1:1-13 and 1:14; Phil 2:25-11; Col 2:9; Matthew 1:16-25; Luke 1:30-35 and 2:7,11; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 2:14 And 1:8; Titus 2:13; John 10:30,38 and 5:17-23; Revelation 22:12; Hebrews 1:1-3; John 17:5; 1Timothy 3:16; Col 1:16,19; John 14: 9)

4- We believe in the divinity and true personality of the Holy Spirit who resides in every believer in Christ. He chose people with titles and for various services (such as pastors, teachers, etc.) according to his will and used them for the building and growth of the church, and also guided the church with his inspiration in confirming the service or status of such people.

(1 Corinthians 12:7-10; Acts 13:2-4 and 20:28 and 5:3 and 4; And 1:8; Ephesians 4:11-14 and 4:30; John 15:26 and 16:13-15; Romans 8: 26,27 and 8:9; 1 Chronicles 12:13 and 6:19 and 3:16 and 2:12,14; 2 Chronicles 5:5; 1 John 2:27)

5- In the beginning, man was created in the image of God, but as a result of sin, he was condemned not only to physical death, but also to spiritual death, which is far from being in God's presence. Therefore, all human beings are born with a sinful nature.

(John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5; Ephesians 2:1-3; John 1:12,13; Isaiah 53:6; Psalm 53:1-3; Isaiah 64:6; 1John 5:19; Romans 3:23; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:1-3; Jeremiah 13:23; Mark 7:20-23; Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:12; Jeremiah 17:9)

6- According to the prophecy of the Holy Bible, Jesus Christ sacrificed himself and provided atonement for our sins so that all those who repent and believe in him will be saved and justified because of the shedding of his blood.

(Isaiah 53; 2 Corinthians 5:21; John 1:29; Hebrews 9:28; John 14:6; Romans 4:4, 5; Acts 4:12; 1 Peter 2:24 and 3:18; Colossians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 15:1-3; Romans 5:6-8; Galatians 3:13; Romans 3:23,25; Col 1:13,14,20,21 and 2:10; Acts 13:38,39; 1 Cor.6:9-11)

7- Jesus Christ actually resurrected and ascended to heaven, and intercedes for his saints (true believers).

(Acts 10:40,41; 1 Cor. 15:3-6; Romans 4:25; Mark 16:9-18; John 20:11-29; Acts 1:3 and 2:24 and 3:15; 1 Cor.9:1 (Acts 1:9-11; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20,21; Hebrews 4:14; Luke 24:39; Ephesians 4:10; Hebrews 1:3)

8- Water baptism is necessary and should be done as soon as possible after receiving salvation. This step of faith is according to the order of Jesus Christ and through it we share in his death and resurrection.

(Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38 and 22:16; Romans 6:3,4; Col 2:12; 1 Peter 3:18,21)

9- The church or the body of Christ consists of all those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their savior and Lord through faith and have been born again, so that the effects of repentance and the growth of their faith can be seen in their lives.

(Ephesians 1:22,23; John 3:1-8; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12 and 5:24 and 6:47; Acts 13:38,39; Romans 4:5,24,25 and 5: 1; 1 Corinthians 1:30; John 17:21-23; Ephesians 2:19-22; Col 2:10; Hebrews 10:10-14; Ephesians 5:30-31; Galatians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 13:5; Col 1 : 27; 1 John 4: 4 and 5: 18; 1 Chronicles 10: 13; Jude 24; 2 Chronicles 5: 17)

10- Satan actually exists and is a real being.

(Revelation 12:9; John 14:30; 1 John 5:10; Luke 13:16; 2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 2:2; Revelation 20:10; Hebrews 2:14; Matthew 25:41; 1 Peter 5:8; James 4:7 (Eph. 6:11,12)

11- Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, will return soon and this is the blessed hope of us believers.

(Phil 3:20,21; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; Hebrews 9:28; 1 John 2:28; Titus 2:13; Matthew 24:44-46; Luke 17:26-30 and 18: 8; Revelation 1 : 7, 8 and 22 : 13)

12 - All the dead will be resurrected for judgment, and those who are justified and saved by faith in Jesus Christ will enter the blessed kingdom, and the rest will remain in eternal torment.

(1 Thessalonians 4:13,14; John 14:2,3; 1 Corinthians 15:35-57; Col 3:4; 2 Thessalonians 1:8,9; Matthew 25:41,46; Mark 9:42-48; Luke 16:26)

13- Our salvation means leaving our citizenship from this world and we are chosen as the ambassador and witness of Jesus Christ. Therefore, in this world, we are like foreigners, the only main purpose of life being to introduce God and bring the good news of salvation to all people.

(Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 16:15; John 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; 1 Peter 1:17 and 2:11)

14 - The prayer of faith causes the salvation, healing and filling of believers with the Holy Spirit and advances the kingdom of God.

(Luke 11:1-4 and 22:32; James 5:14-16)

15- Marriage according to the Bible and our belief is that it is a covenant between a man (XY) and a woman (XX).

By-Laws

Part 1: Membership

1- People who apply for membership in the Iranian Church must comply with the charter and principles of faith and the terms of membership commitment as described below. The minimum age to join the church is 18 years.

2- Method of accepting members: all applicants; They will submit their membership application to the church office.

Membership review committee; They review the applicant's application and provide their advice regarding the eligibility of the applicant.

3- After the preliminary examination of the eligibility of the applicant, the applicant will participate in the "membership class" where the obligations of membership, by-laws and church statutes will be reviewed. After passing the relevant class, the applicant is accepted as a temporary member for a period of three months. After the three-month trial period, membership will be re-examined, and in case of faithfulness to the membership obligations and the final approval of the membership review committee, the applicant will be announced as an official member. The temporary member will not have the right to vote.

4- After final approval of membership, the applicant will be introduced as an official member of the church in one of the worship meetings in the presence of other members and participants.

5 - The membership of all church members can be re-examined by the membership review committee. Grounds for review is based on active participation in services, prayer support and financial support in the church. The membership review committee will have the right to change the official membership of members who have not been faithful to the obligations of their membership conditions during the year to conditional status. This review will be announced in writing at least one month before the general meeting for the information of the members (For more information about these obligations, refer to the section labeled Part 13 membership obligations).

6 - If an official member of the church falls into sin, he/she will be called in by the pastor or another church leader with a forgiving and loving spirit to repentance. If the person does not repent, the said member will be removed from the official membership of the church by order of the church leadership. (Matthew 15:18-17, 1 Corinthians 11:5-13, Galatians 1:6-2, Titus 10:3-11)

7 - If a member slanders the pastor or a member of the ministers and leaders or another member of the church, he will be treated according to the verses of the Bible in Matthew 15:18-17.

8- If a member does not participate in worship meetings for a period of 3 months without any valid reason and is not in a relationship with the church and does not support the church with his prayers and gifts, he will automatically be removed from the official membership of the church.

Part 2: Christian Rituals

The Iranian Church observes the two Christian rites that were personally founded and ordered by our Lord Jesus Christ.

1- Getting baptized: Water baptism for those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior (John 3:23). Baptism is done by completely submerging the body in water.

2- The Lord's Supper: Participating in The Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:26-28) (1 Corinthians 11:17-34)

Part 3: The legal and executive power of the church

The church is managed by the leadership of the senior pastor and the cooperation and advice of other pastors and elders and ministers (leaders) of various services and the supervision of the church supervisor.

Senior Pastor:

The senior pastor is chosen by the overseer in consultation with all the current pastors and elders of the church for an indefinite period. He is a permanent member of all the various committees and commissions of the church. If the senior pastor resigns, he must submit his resignation letter to the church at least 2 months before leaving the church.

Note: according to national laws; The senior pastor, with the advice of the pastors and other leaders, will appoint a committee called "Executive and Legal Committee" and the official representative of the Iranian Church from among the ministers, elders and pastors, and this committee will appoint a representative leader (President) from among themselves. They will also choose the treasurer and secretary with the

approval of the senior pastor. The duties of the official representative of the church as well as the treasurer and secretary are as follows:

a) Official representative of the church:

The official representative of the church under the supervision of the senior pastor is obliged to deal with the legal affairs related to the church when necessary. After the written approval of the administrative and legal committee, he can sign any necessary legal agreement that commits the church to perform it. The signature of the treasurer and secretary is required in all official documents, commitments and legal contracts.

b) Treasurer

The treasurer is in charge of all funds and gifts received and paid, as well as movable and immovable properties of the church based on the decisions of the administrative and legal committee. He has the duty to regularly prepare all the details of the relevant accounts and present them to the administrative and legal committee in the meetings upon request. Account books should be closed on December 31 every year. The treasurer has the duty to prepare the financial report of the church for the administrative and legal committee once every three months.

c) Secretary:

The Secretary of the Administrative and Legal Committee is responsible for writing the minutes of all the meetings and decisions made in the Board of Elders of the Administrative and Legal Committee and the official meetings of the members. He/she is to read and answer the correspondence and reports received by the church and the administrative and legal committee. This person is responsible for inviting, holding and writing the reports of the general assembly meetings and is obliged to provide these reports to the members upon their request.

Part 4: Description of the duties, and qualifications for the selection of pastors, elders and deacons

1 - Pastors of the church

The chief shepherd of the church is our Lord Jesus Christ. A church can have one or more pastors.

a) Pastors are the spiritual leaders of the church. The pastor and his family must meet the conditions mentioned in 1 Timothy chapter 3, Titus chapter 1 and 1 Peter chapter 5.

b) Pastors must be people confirmed in the personality of Christ, they must be strong in faith by upholding the principles of God's word, and qualified to preach and teach God's word.

1 Timothy chapter 3 and Titus chapter 1, 1 Timothy chapter 4: 11-15, and 1 Peter 5: 1-4

C) Pastors should preach the word of truth as completely and simply as it is mentioned in the Holy Bible.

(II Timothy 4:1-2).

d) Pastors should encourage the members and provide ways for the members to use their spiritual gifts. They should not only supervise those seeking help and take care of people who have various needs, but they should also be exemplary in doing these things.

e) Pastors should present their reports about their service to the church in the annual meetings of the church.

f) The senior pastor is an official member of the church, a member of the administrative and legal committee, and the spiritual supervisor of all church boards and committees.

2 - Elders

The elders are experienced and active people in church services. An elder and his family must meet the conditions mentioned in 1 Timothy chapter 3, Titus chapter 1 and 1 Peter chapter 5; The duties of elders are as follows, although they are not limited to them.

a) Be ready to help pastors in all tasks and cases and be active in church services

b) They are obliged to take care of the spiritual life and social needs of the church members reflecting an example of humility (Acts 6:3-4, Matthew 25:35-40).

c) Be vigilantly ready to provide spiritual help to all people who are looking for salvation.

1 Corinthians 9:16

d) Constantly make sure that the administrative and teaching affairs of the church are in accordance with the principles of the Bible. If they see a teaching or a program that contradicts the teaching of the Bible, they have the duty to report it to the senior pastor.

e) They are obliged to be active and efficient in their areas of responsibility and help the church by giving personal or family counseling.

Note: Elders and pastors are considered official members of the church, according to the terms of membership, if they do not participate in worship meetings for a period of 3 months without any valid reason, and are not in a relationship with the church, and do not support the church with their prayers and gifts, they will be removed from the official membership of the church and will lose the benefits of serving as an elder or pastor in the church. Elders and pastors who temporarily withdraw from official church activities due to personal issues will not participate in church leadership issues. The request to return to service will be reviewed by all elders and pastors.

3- Deacons

Deacons will take on duties such as financial affairs, bookkeeping, etc. according to the needs of the church. All deacons must meet the conditions stated in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Deacons must be official members of the church, and the senior pastor with the advice of pastors and elders may call upon additional deacons to serve based on needs; Their duties are determined and announced by the senior pastor and leaders of each service before their election.

Part 5: Elections

God personally calls the pastors and elders of the church to serve, and the church members will only confirm them in the way mentioned below. (Ephesians 14:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:28).

Section 1) Selection of new pastors and elders:

The new pastors and elders are chosen according to the principles of the Bible Titus 1:5 by the senior pastor with the approval of the supervisor and the advice of the current elders and pastors, and are introduced to the church congregation by hand-placing prayer.

Note: The church can have as many elders and pastors as God chooses. The term of office of elders and pastors is unlimited unless because of their own resignation or unrepentant sin, they choose to leave this position.

If an elder or pastor resigns, he/she is obliged to submit their resignation in writing to the senior pastor of the church with date of resignation stated in the letter.

In the case of a complaint against an elder or pastor, this issue will be examined when two or three witnesses testify on that issue. If it is proven that the servant or elder is wrong, then he/she will be reprimanded by the senior pastor and the cooperation and advice of other pastors and elders. If this rebuke does not bring a positive result, then this issue will be discussed with the church supervisor and the supervisor will issue a final opinion on this matter. (Please refer to the part 14 - the answering section for elaboration)

Section 3 - The annual general assembly of the church

In February of each year, the church will hold its annual general assembly. In this gathering, pastors and service leaders of various special committees that are active in specific fields will report their work to the church members. After that, annual reports, leadership issues, and next year's budget are reviewed. In this meeting, the proposed budget is presented to the members by the administrative and legal committee and approved by the senior pastor, and the members declare their support for the church budget by voting for approval.

Part 6: Church fiscal/calendar year

The financial and administrative year of the church starts from January 1 every year.

Part 7: The general assembly of the church

The way of conducting church meetings is according to the latest version of the book titled "Robert's Rules of Order", 10th Edition, 2000.

Explanation: According to these principles, 50% plus one of the members must be present for each voting session.

Any voting that is not specifically explained in this statute will follow the 50% plus one rule. Due to health protection issues, if necessary, the general meeting of the church can be done through the Internet.

Part 8: Changes

Any changes in the constitution of the church and its amendments must be proposed in the general assembly of the church and must be approved by at least 50% plus one-member present. Any change must be presented to all members in writing two weeks before the meeting so that they can vote on it in the general meeting.

Part 9: The formality of the meetings

Any annual meeting (or other special meetings) will be official when the number of official members present and entitled to vote is at least fifty percent plus one.

Part 10: Committees

According to the advice and approval of the senior pastor, the church can form any number of committees or groups that are needed for different and special tasks in the church.

Part 11: Financial affairs

The service of this church depends entirely on the prayers, services and gifts of the members and other friends of the church. The financial resources of the church are provided by receiving free gifts, tithes, and also miscellaneous gifts that are given faithfully and to support the work of the church according to (1 Corinthians 2:16 and 2 Corinthians 9:7).

In the annual general meeting, the following items will be approved by 50% plus one vote of the members.

- 1- Changing the bylaws
- 2- The annual budget of the church

Part 12: The official property of the church

We pray that God will always keep this church in unity and love with his grace. However, in the event of a dispute, the property and assets of the church will remain the property of this church, and the responsibility for maintaining it will be the responsibility of those members who remain loyal to this church and follow its statutes.

If there are only five members or less left in the church, the church will be dissolved by itself. In that case, the movable and immovable property and the capital of the church will be given to a non-profit Christian evangelical group that works to serve Iranians and is recognized by the American tax law with the approval of the supervisor. It is preferred that this group or church be in the United States, but if such a group is not found in the US at that time, the property of the church will be given to a similar group anywhere else in the world.

Part 13: Membership obligations

1. Commitment to spiritual growth

- Be exemplary in prayer, studying God's word, and living with the fullness of the Holy Spirit.
- Be accountable in your spiritual life.
- Want a holy life.
- Be teachable and eager to be corrected.
- Participate in church meetings, home groups, classes and seminars with a learnable spirit and be eager to change.

(Colossians 2:7 and Ephesians 4:11-15 and Philippians 3:7-14 and Hebrews 5:12-14 and 1 Peter 2:1-5)

2. Commitment to service

- Recognize your spiritual gifts.
- Take time to use your gifts and talents to serve and build the body of Christ.
- Be eager to save the lost and grow believers.
- Serve as an example with humility and the spirit of a slave.
- Be eager to accept responsibility and be faithful in his service.

(Romans 12:4-11 and 1 Corinthians 12:1-31)

3. Commitment to the statutes and regulations

Be of the same heart and mind and goal with the other members with the commitment to support, follow and obey the principles of faith, statutes, and ordinances. (Philippians 2:1-3 and Amos 3:3)

4. Obedience to leaders

According to the word, obey God by obeying the leaders he has placed in the church. Be an example in showing the spirit of humility and obedience. He/she should share any kind of difference of opinion with the leaders properly (with a spirit of humility and readiness to accept and obey their decision) and not sow the seeds of hypocrisy in the church.

(Romans 13:1-6 and Hebrews 13:7-17)

5. Commitment to God in financial matters

According to the holy word, he/she should give at least one tenth of his income to the church with the right spirit, and give financial and other material gifts with guidance from God according to the blessing that God gives.

(Malachi 3:8-10 and Luke 11:42 and 1 Corinthians 16:2 and 2 Corinthians 8:1-15 and 2 Corinthians 9:1-15)

6. Commitment to prayer and living in the spirit

- Live in prayer with the Holy Spirit.
- Spend time in prayer for the spiritual services of the church, believers and leaders.

- Participate in fasting as much as possible.
- Be eager to go deep in prayer and the word of God.

(Philippians 4:6-7 and 1 Timothy 2:1-2 , James 5:13-18 and Ephesians 6:10-18 and 2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

7. Commitment to resolving disputes

- Have a forgiving spirit and not allow his anger and bitterness to last even a day.
- Resolve any kind of dispute and confrontation according to the word.
- Always make peace.
- Be careful so that bitterness does not take root in the believers and be ready to help every believer to be freed from that spirit.

(Matthew 18:21 and Ephesians 4:26-27 and Matthew 5:9 and Hebrews 12:14-15)

Part 14: Accountability

1- Personal accountability: Pastors, elders and servants (service leaders) will be accountable to the senior pastor for their personal life, family, service method and teachings.

2- Church accountability: The senior pastor together with all the pastors and elders of the church, by a majority vote, choose a person or persons or an institution whose faith principles do not conflict with the faith principles of the Iranian church, as overseer to voluntarily undertake problem resolution as stated below:

a: The church gives the overseer the right that based on his/her own judgment or at the request of the pastors and elders and leaders of the church, when necessary, to examine the teachings and movement affairs of the church and advise the senior pastor in order to improve things. The overseer also keeps the senior pastor accountable in all matters of personality and efficiency.

b: When there is an unsolved problem in the church and especially in its leadership, the overseer will act as the ruling to solve this problem according to the request of the pastors and elders. The final vote of the overseer will be accepted by the senior pastor, pastors, elders and leaders.

c: The senior pastor in his personality and efficiency is not only indirectly answerable to the pastors, elders and leaders and members of the church, but also directly to the overseer of the church*. The overseer, with the request, advice and approval of the pastors, elders and church leaders, has the authority to dismiss the senior pastor in case of mistakes, inaction and sin. The senior pastor should submit his/her resignation to the church and leaders without resistance and delay.

* At present, the elders and pastors of the church have chosen Reverend Hormoz Shariat as overseer and the church congregation has been informed.

This constitution and bylaws of the church were completed and approved by the members of the church on October 15, 1988 AD. In February 1995, February 2002, March 2011, February 2016, changes were made in it with the approval of the members.

Date of latest revision: February 28th, 2016. Revised 1-11-22 and Approved 2-27-22.