

# D3 Church | **Constitution and Bylaws**

## **PREFACE**

At D3 Church, it is recognized that the Bible, God's Word, is the ultimate source of authority in all things. Thus, these governing articles (Constitution and Bylaws) are always subject to reconsideration regarding their full and indisputable agreement with God's Word. The following document is written as a guide and directive of how the leadership of D3 Church believes God desires them to govern themselves and the body toward the most effective fulfillment of the Great Commission.

## **NAME AND AFFILIATION**

The name of this organization is "D3 Church," which is derived from a commitment to be "Disciples Making Disciples Who Make Disciples." The Church gathers for weekly services and currently operates at 403 Hanson Street, Winnemucca, NV 89445. This will be a non-profit corporation of the State of Nevada. This church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of denominational control. Recognizing, however, the universal communion of followers of Christ and the benefit of a wider association, this church will be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention in its national, state, and local expressions.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of D3 Church is to glorify God by making disciples of all nations. We will seek to accomplish our vision through various ministries including but not limited to: gathering in communal worship services of celebration, administration of the Lord's supper and baptism, intimate prayer and discussion in community groups, in-depth study and discipleship of the radical life of a follower of Christ, counseling and support services, various community services, and other initiatives as deemed necessary by the governing body.

## **DOCTRINAL BELIEFS**

D3 Church is in full doctrinal agreement with the statements contained in the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000* of the Southern Baptist Convention and is dedicated to teach, preach, and disciple in accordance with these affirmations and the specific statements of belief as observed in Article II of the By-laws.

## **LEADERSHIP**

The group of Elders is the main governing body of D3 Church and as such, has the authority to appoint other Elders and support staff from active D3 members. Other individuals or groups may be created and empowered by the Elders to oversee and carry out tasks for the body. As the Elders are held responsible for all decisions within the church, all aforementioned individuals or groups will report and be held accountable to the church Elders.

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## **By Laws**

### ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

A. REASONS FOR MEMBERSHIP: Church membership is not required for anyone choosing to attend D3 Church and its functions. However, for the practical functioning of D3 Church, membership is encouraged. Membership is required for any leadership position within D3 Church, as it is essential that those in leadership positions within D3 Church be unified through the Holy Spirit and on Biblical doctrine. Membership is a mechanism by which that unity is determined and acknowledged. Leadership positions include Elders, Deacons, Community Group Leaders, and all other offices involved in administration or oversight of Church functions. Furthermore, membership is a covenant agreement between D3 Church and the member. It is an agreement that each party desires to be accountable to one another in walking with God and growing disciples of Jesus Christ.

B. CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP: Before a person may become a member of D3 Church, four criteria must be met. First, the person seeking membership must be a Believer. They must have recognized their sinful state and inability to save themselves from their sin, and understood and believed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Second, the person seeking membership must be (or have been) baptized by immersion, according to the example and the instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ. Third, the person seeking membership must enter into a covenant, stating that they will uphold the doctrine and philosophy of ministry, seek to live in unity with the other members of D3 Church, and submit to the authority of the Elders of D3 Church. The covenant agreement is used for the purpose of modeling Biblical covenant, which is an agreement between D3 Church and the member, reflecting the desire to be mutually accountable to each other. Finally, all persons seeking membership in D3 Church must be approved by the Elders.

C. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP: Members of D3 Church may be removed from official membership for any of the following reasons:

1. Death.
2. Request to transfer membership to another church.
3. Request to withdraw membership. This must be submitted to the elders with explanation as to the reasons why the request is being made.
4. Dismissal by Church Discipline.
5. Prolonged Non-attendance. If after a long period of non-attendance or after moving away from the area, effort will be made to ask if the member wishes to remain on the list of official membership. If a negative or no response is received, the membership will be terminated.

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## ARTICLE II: BELIEFS

The doctrinal outlook of D3 Church is reflected in both the BF&M 2000 and is summarized in the following statements:

### A. WE BELIEVE GOD WROTE THE BIBLE THROUGH MEN WITHOUT ERROR.

The Old and New Testaments, in their entirety, constitute the written Word of God and are without error in the original manuscripts. They were written by men, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and are therefore fully authoritative in all matters for the follower of Christ.

### B. WE BELIEVE THAT GOD EXISTS ETERNALLY IN THE TRINITY: FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT.

There is one God, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, love, justice, goodness, and truth, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who desires that we should know Him intimately and live a life of fulfillment through the pursuit of His glory.

### C. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY WHO BECAME A MAN, LIVED A SINLESS LIFE, DIED ON A CROSS, WAS BURIED, AND ROSE BODILY FROM THE GRAVE TO REDEEM SINFUL HUMANITY.

He is the only Son of the One True God, begotten, not made. He became human, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and made His dwelling among us, living a full life without sin. His perfect life and death on the cross provide the only atonement that satisfies the righteous requirements of God for the sinner. The death of Jesus Christ fully and finally paid for sin, and was redemptive, substitutionary, and efficacious. The historic fact of Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead testifies powerfully to His deity, and is itself humanity's ultimate hope. Jesus Christ will make a personal and imminent return to the earth; this return is a sanctifying "hope" having vital bearing on the life of every Christian.

### D. WE BELIEVE THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE THIRD PERSON OF THE TRINITY AND IS THE SUPERNATURAL AGENT IN SALVATION, RECEIVING ALL CHRISTIANS INTO THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH AT CONVERSION, INDWELLING AND SEALING THEM UNTIL THE DAY OF CHRIST'S RETURN.

The Holy Spirit bears persuasive testimony to the realities of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is the personal, divine third member of the Godhead. He

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convicts the world of sin and its consequences; He brings repentance and faith to the believer; He indwells the believer with the radical life of Jesus Christ; He gives gifts to every believer for mutual service within the body of Christ; He unites each believer in the Body of Christ and seals them in that relationship; He bears the fruit of Christian character in the lives of every believer; He guides, instructs, and empowers the believer for godly living and service. He is worshipped with the Father and the Son.

- E. WE BELIEVE ALL HUMANS ARE SINFUL AND IN NEED OF SALVATION. SALVATION IS THE GIFT OF GOD BROUGHT TO HUMANS BY GRACE ALONE, AND RECEIVED BY PERSONAL FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. A TRUE CHRISTIAN WILL BE KEPT BY GOD'S POWER FOREVER.

God has created every person in His image, but we have fallen into sin, and are therefore lost; only through the regeneration by the Holy Spirit can we obtain salvation and spiritual life. All humans are sinners and face the judgment of God. The shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification and only those who place faith in Jesus Christ and initiate a relationship with God on the basis of the work of Christ are delivered from the wrath of God toward sin required by His holy character. Those who receive Jesus Christ by faith are said by Holy Scripture to be justified, regenerated, redeemed, and adopted into the divine family as co-heirs with Christ of all the blessings of the Godhead. We proclaim that all persons must consciously repent of their sins and confess that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord.

- F. WE BELIEVE THAT GOD HAS CREATED ALL HUMANS IN HIS IMAGE. HE HAS CREATED THEM UNIQUELY FEMALE AND MALE.

All humans are created in God's image; therefore all human life is sacred. In creating humans as male and female, God communicated His image in harmonious interpersonal relationships, equality of personhood and importance and a distinction in role and authority.

- G. WE BELIEVE THAT THE CHURCH IS A SPIRITUAL ORGANISM MADE UP OF ALL BELIEVERS EVERYWHERE FOR ALL TIME.

All Christians in all times and in all places have been united into a single body by an operation of God. This resultant union is called the Body of Christ, the Universal Church.

- H. WE BELIEVE IN THE AUTONOMY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AND RECOGNIZE BELIEVERS BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Christ commanded that all Christians band together in assembly for instruction, worship, service, and fellowship. These assemblies are called

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local churches. Only those who are members of the Universal Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church. Baptism of believers by immersion and the Lord's Supper are the only two ordinances to be observed by the local church in the present age. These ordinances are not to be regarded as means of salvation.

### I. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS WILL RETURN TO EARTH TO JUDGE ALL PEOPLE AND TO RULE AND REIGN WITH HIS SAINTS FOREVER.

All people will be resurrected to give account of their lives before God. The believer in Christ will be resurrected to everlasting blessedness and joy in the presence of God. The unbeliever will be resurrected to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment.

### J. We hold these truths in humble conviction.

## ARTICLE III: ELDERS

A. **QUALIFICATIONS:** The leadership of D3 Church shall be vested in a governing group of Elders/pastors. To be considered as an elder, a man must have been called by God into leadership at D3 Church (Acts 20:28), and be a man of the highest Christian character according to the qualifications of Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9):

#### 1. Relation to God

- a. A man – masculine leader
- b. Above reproach – without any character defect
- c. Able to teach – effective Bible communicator
- d. Not a new convert – mature Christian

#### 2. Relation to Family

- a. Husband of one wife – one-woman man, sexually pure
- b. Pastors and Shepherds his children
- c. Manages family well – provides for, leads, organizes, loves

#### 3. Relation to Self

- a. Temperate – mentally and emotionally stable
- b. Self-controlled – disciplined life of sound decision-making
- c. Not given to drunkenness – without addictions
- d. Not a lover of money – financially content and upright

#### 4. Relation to Others

- a. Respectable – worth following and imitating
- b. Hospitable – welcomes strangers, especially non-Christians for

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evangelism

- c. Not violent – even-tempered
- d. Gentle – kind, gracious, loving
- e. Not contentious – peaceable, not quarrelsome/divisive
- f. Good reputation with outsiders – respected by non-Christians

B. DUTIES: Elders at D3 Church are chosen to consistently and effectively carry out the biblical duties ascribed to the office of elder, including:

1. Prayer and Scripture study (Acts 6:4)
2. Ruling/leading the church (1 Timothy 5:17)
3. Managing the church (1 Timothy 3:4–5)
4. Caring for people in the church (1 Peter 5:2–5)
5. Giving account to God for the church (Hebrews 13:17)
6. Living exemplary lives (Hebrews 13:7)
7. Rightly using the authority God has given them (Acts 20:28)
8. Teaching the Bible correctly (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:2)
9. Preaching (1 Timothy 5:17)
10. Praying for the sick (James 5:13–15)
11. Teaching sound doctrine and refuting false teachings (Titus 1:9)
12. Working hard (1 Thessalonians 5:12)
13. Rightly using money and power (1 Peter 5:1–3)
14. Protecting the church from false teachers (Acts 20:17–31)
15. Disciplining unrepentant Christians (Matthew 18:15–17)

C. LEAD ELDER/PASTOR: The group of Elders determines the lead elder, who functions as the first among equals and is the lead pastor for the church. It is the duty of the lead elder to help lead the group of Elders and the rest of the church in obeying God’s leading as revealed in Scripture.

### ARTICLE IV: DEACONS

A. QUALIFICATIONS: A Deacon is a lead servant in the ministry of our church. He/she works with his/her fellow Deacons in extending the overseeing ministry of the Elders into the physical needs of the people and property of the church and responsibilities of this body. Under the Elders’ leadership, he/she is to care for and maintain the orderly administration of our fellowship in which God has placed her/him as a Deacon. Deacons are not in a position of authority in areas of teaching, correction, or discipline.

1. In accordance with the biblical requirements found in 1 Timothy 3:8-12, Deacons at D3 Church must be respectable, sincere, temperate and trustworthy. They must not be greedy or drunkards. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience, and manage their

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families well. Deacons will be tested to ensure that their lives qualify them for the task of service.

2. The first Deacons in Acts 6:1-7 were “full of the Spirit and wisdom;” D3’s Deacons must also demonstrate fullness of the Spirit and wisdom.

B. **RESPONSIBILITIES:** Deacons are appointed as needed by the Elders. They may serve as long they and the Elders jointly desire and take breaks from service as needed. They will be responsible for the tasks of:

1. Promoting the unity of the Church.
2. Developing and meeting regularly with ministry groups.
3. Meeting specific designated needs in the congregation and broader community.
4. Providing encouragement and help to the Elders in their ministry.
5. Assisting in administering the ordinances of the Gospel.
6. Overseeing the care and maintenance of the Church properties.

### ARTICLE V: CHURCH DISCIPLINE

A. **CHURCH MEMBERS:** Members of D3 Church are expected to conduct their lives in accordance with biblical standards out of a love and respect for God. When a member of D3 Church knowingly ignores the direct commands and prohibitions of Scripture, that member will be disciplined according to Scripture. All discipline will be administered according to biblical principles (Matthew 18:15-17). The purpose of discipline is always restoration, not destruction. Therefore, discipline will be applied through biblical counsel, admonition, and with loving concern.

B. **ELDERS/LEAD PASTOR:** The Elders of D3 Church are not infallible. If an Elder’s attitude or conduct becomes that which undermines his role as a leader, then the Elders who serve with him have the responsibility to the members of D3 Church to confront him and practice the steps of church discipline with him, seeking to restore him biblically, if at all possible. If he refuses to repent, or if his sin has already disqualified him, then the other Elders are obligated to remove him from his position and inform the members of D3 Church.

### ARTICLE VI: PROPERTY AND ASSETS

A. **AQUISITION:** D3 Church has the power to acquire, either by gift or purchase real or personal property and other assets. D3 Church may hold real or personal property as is deemed necessary for the functioning of D3 Church. The Church has also has the power to dispose of property and assets. All property will be held in the name of D3 Church.

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B. DISSOLUTION: In the case of the dissolution of D3 Church, this organization and all of its assets remaining after payment of all costs will go to causes furthering the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the evangelical tradition, which have qualified for exemption under Section 501(C)(3) of the IRS Code. None of the assets will be distributed to any member, elder, or pastor of D3 Church.

### ARTICLE VII: AMENDMENT

A. This D3 Church Constitution is always subject to amendment by a unanimous decision of the group of Elders whenever they deem it may benefit the effectiveness of its purpose or the increase of its biblical faithfulness to do so.