

# **Spirit of Truth Native American Church Constitution**

**(Revised in Council March 23, 2022)**

**(A Native American Church with direct authority passed from the Lakota Sioux Native American Church of Wounded Knee and Rosebud.)**

**We, the Charter Members of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church in Council, beginning in September 2021 and continuously to the present, by Original Constitution and as amended and revised to present, by the Unanimous Voice do make this**

## **Declaration of Good Conscience and Practice, Constitution, and Establishment of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church.**

**With respect to all in a sacred manner, we make a beginning of our speaking.**

### ***Preamble***

We the Spirit of Truth Native American Church believe in the Creator and that the Creator made all men and women who have lived, now live, and who will yet live, as free and equal beings. We recognize all of the Creator's works to be for our learning and benefit and most particular we see the Earth as our Holy Temple and everything the Creator has placed upon it to be for our learning and use.

We recognize the inherent, ancestral, sovereign rights granted to all people by the Creator, as also by human conscience, international law, and legal constructs of reciprocity, mutuality, and comity, which cannot be diminished or extinguished. We believe that we derive from and that we may become like our Ancestral Spiritual Leaders, as also through the Holy Order of the Church, we claim the right to restore our Sacred Religion based upon their teachings, which have been passed down to us through the traditions, customs, ceremonies, writings, and records of Indigenous Peoples, among which we acknowledge the Native American stories and records, Holy Bible, the Torah, the Vedic Texts, Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphics, Ayahtkuhyaht Text, and so forth, by way of example. We see all Holy Spirit inspired writings to be Scripture but do not recognize their infallibility. We understand that imperfections can arise due to translation errors, misinterpretations, willful intent, and so forth. We hold the Sacred Scriptures, no matter where they originate from, to be useful in our Spiritual Progression as long as they do not disagree with the message of the Messiah and are witnessed to us by the Holy Spirit to be true or founded on principles of truth. We believe the Spirit of Truth is the ultimate guide to follow on The Sacred Healing Way (also called The Way or Healing Way) in our journey to Salvation.

In accordance with the Principles and Teachings of the Sacred Records, from which we obtain our foundation, we believe that we are all Relations one to another and we are children of the same Creator. We affirm the UNITED NATIONS Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (U.N. Sub-commission on Prevention of

Discrimination and Protection of Minorities 1994/45, August 26, 1994. U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/1995/2, E/CN.4/sub.2/1994/56, at 105 (1994)), which was ratified into International Human Rights Law in 2007. We also affirm and applaud the Domestic Law of the United States, specifically 21c USC Chapter 42;2000;b(b) and USC Chapter 43;2000;c, to which we have committed ourselves, to uphold and defend.

Fundamental to our traditions is the truth that, as Children of the Creator, we are entitled to the freedoms of thought, religion, sacred objects and our sacraments, ceremonies, rites, observances, and so forth, and to pursue the same according to the dictates of our own hearts and the doctrines of our religion, insofar as those freedoms do not prevent others from likewise enjoying the same liberty.

We believe that men and women have been endowed with intelligence enough to govern themselves in such a manner as to guarantee to themselves these freedoms, to establish just and right ways to deal with each other, to maintain a tranquil and secure domestic life, provide for the defense of these rights when needed, and to ensure for ourselves and our posterity the blessings that our culture, traditions, and teachings bring.

Accordingly, we exercise the authority passed on to us by our ancestors as well as the rights guaranteed to all citizens of the United States and by the State of Missouri, to form our Church based upon the restoration of our Ancient Faith, and we ordain and establish this:

## **Constitution for the Spirit of Truth Native American Church as a Native American Church and Ministry**

We, the members of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, adhere to the Creed and Expression of our Faith:

1. We are devoted followers of ‘The Sacred Healing Way’, set out for us by the Creator and taught to us by the Creator’s Son the Messiah, Yeshua. (Also known by other names of Jesus, Holy Messiah, Lamb of God, and so forth). We strive to follow The Way by worshiping in Spirit and Truth and it is only in the truth that God is Love do we find ourselves on the path to true enlightenment and salvation. We believe the Messiah is the word of the Creator made flesh being born of a virgin. Yeshua chose to walk amongst us on this very earth to teach us how to follow The Sacred Way and love one another. It is through his taking upon himself our sinful lives in the Garden of Gethsemane and by the sacrifice of his life on the cross that his blood pays for our sin debt and allows us to follow The Way to break free from the eternal wheel of suffering, bringing all who believe in him Salvation. After being in the tomb for three days did Yeshua raise from the dead to bring eternal life to all who travel on The Way.
2. The Spirit of Truth Native American Church is a true and living church of Yeshua. Yeshua is the “head” of the church and the members are the “body of Christ”. (1 Corinthians 12:12-14) Through our belief in the teachings of Yeshua and through the Holy Spirit we choose to follow The Sacred Healing Way and participate in the Sacred Ceremonies that guide us on The Way. It is only through following Yeshua’s teaching and the Holy Spirit’s guidance that we may be one (John 17:11) as the Creator, Yeshua, and the Holy Spirit are one. Example: The scriptures teach that when we humble ourselves before the Creator, repent of our sins, profess that Christ is Lord, and then feel the desire or calling to be baptized we should go forth and find a member of the body of Christ with the authority to do so and be baptized by emersion to enter through the Gate onto The Way so we can follow it to obtaining Eternal Life.
3. We are a Religious Body dedicated to teaching the Ancient, Sacred Healing Ways, and the principles contained in the sacred writings of Indigenous Peoples around the world many of which are found in the sacred written records. As such, we believe that all people begin as equals, and they learn and progress line upon

line, precept on precept until they have reached an enlightened and transcendent state. No person stands above another; in this at least, all people are not merely created equal, but are equal in the sight of the Creator.

4. We believe and adhere to all the principles of the Sacred Healing Ways of the Ancient Healers, as restored to President Paul H. Dean (aka Man Found Standing), and Vice-President Jedediah Currey (aka Way Walker) by direct revelation from the Creator, Elders, Mentors, Guides and Ancestors, and through the ancient tradition of the Creator, which include but are not restricted to:
  - i) Acquisition of truth through diligent study, observation of The Way, prayer, song, dance, guidance from Elders, teachings and guidance of the Messiah, guidance from the Holy Spirit, and through the right application of wisdom and all the gifts of the Creator. This is the First Great Principle and Covenant of the Ancient Spiritual Societies and Religious Orders which are herewith restored in the Spirit of Truth Native American Church.
  - ii) Self-determination and self-direction, as guaranteed by International and Domestic Law.
  - iii) The competent ceremonial use of exogenic substances, as well as all other forms of Sacred Healing, for the improvement and enlightenment of the Body of the Church, for the Work of the Ministry, and the saving of the Living and the Dead. This is the Three-Fold Mission of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church.
  - iv) The education of others in The Sacred Healing Way, so that all people may become Healers and Peacemakers. The Core Curriculum for the Spirit of Truth Native American Church's Medicine Men and Medicine Women is the first main tier of this education.
5. We believe in the Wisdom of the Creator. This wisdom, along with the gifts of our culture, our customs, our traditions, and our beliefs, as they are expressed in the sacred utterances and performances of The Sacred Way, are gifts given to us by the Creator and they can neither be given nor taken away by other persons, peoples, nations, or governments.
6. We believe that the wisdom of the Creator finds expression in nature and that the inherent wisdom of all living things reflects and manifests that expression. This is upon this tradition of the pre-conquest American Indigenous Peoples, and the teachings of the Ancient Healers that we do re-establish ourselves and revitalize our Culture. Diligent study leads to a more complete understanding of the will of the Creator for all people. Therefore, all people are endowed by the Creator with intelligence, and the use of that intelligence to learn all things is the ultimate expression of our society and our religion, and one of the ultimate gifts of the Creator that must be passed on to our Spirit of Truth Native American Church Brothers and Sisters, and to our posterity.
7. We believe that all people are free to choose and that the health of the body, the mind, the spirit, the community, the society, and the planet are direct consequences of the choices each person makes. All people have the inalienable right to freedom of choice and self-determination, in areas of family life, health, education, application of traditional values, beliefs, lifestyles and practices, as well as in community and national participation. The inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of the human family are the foundation of health, freedom, justice, peace, enlightenment, and harmony among all peoples. Without these values, humans are mere slaves, either of their fellow man and his expectations or society.
8. We believe that the Creator guides, succors, and saves all the works of Creation.
9. We believe that faith and acts of faith are the right applications of the wisdom of the Creator.

10. We believe that all people are free to anxiously engage themselves in any good work, for the power is in them because of the creation. All Peoples have the right to self-sufficiency through the inherent rights of self-determination and self-government.
11. We believe that all earthly organizations are manifestations of the order that permeates all creation and that, even if flawed, some element of truth may yet be found in them.
12. We believe in the Gifts of the Spirit and in miracles; such as cures, healings, prophecies, visions (aided by Sacrament and otherwise), personal revelations, the speaking in tongues, the interpretation of tongues, the translation of ancient languages, and so forth, and that it is the right of all people to heal and be healed without restriction or interference from any earthly government, for Natural Medicine and Natural Modalities of Healing are gifts of the Creator.
13. We believe that the Creator is actively involved with us and has revealed many things to us through the instrumentality of his creation, through his son Yeshua, through the Holy Spirit, through the current and ancient Spiritual Healers, through the Holy Sacraments, through Ceremony, and so forth. We believe the Creator does now reveal many things to us, and will yet reveal many things pertaining to all manifestations of Creation. No earthly power or organization may restrict the freedom to obtain and to apply personal revelation and we believe that the Creator has revealed The Sacred Way to us through the ancient, tried and tested method of those who lived in the Americas prior to its invasion, conquest, colonization and subjugation by other people from other lands. We believe that Yeshua taught many things to the indigenous tribes around the world and in the Americas after he left Israel. (John 10:16: And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one-fold, and one shepherd.)
14. We believe that all people can be united in all good and true purposes, having all Truth in common, and that all social, political, economic, and ethnic distinction, if it is designed to edify, is honorable. But if it is designed to enslave or subjugate, it is evil and must be abolished.
15. We eschew the despotism of orthodoxy and exercise the privilege of seeking and finding truth wherever that search may lead us, insofar as we neither abrogate personal accountability nor willfully injure any person in their search.
16. We believe in and uphold any law or regulation made by the government of any nation that is based on principles of truth and that is made not for the purpose of enslavement, or to place one nation or one person above another. If any law conforms to that standard we believe in, we uphold that law. If any law tends to enslave or place one nation or person in subjection to another, or restricts any person in the practice of their religion, or punishes any person for such practice, we claim the right to work within morally accepted norms to change it.
17. We believe it is our right as One People Walking the Earth to take care of ourselves, families, and the Spiritual Community as we feel called upon by the Spirit to do so. We oppose private, public, and government's influence, however well-intentioned, to interfere with our rights to govern ourselves and see their interference as a violation of the Creator's will and a form of enslavement. When a government tries to take ownership over our bodies or takes away the rewards of our labors with the promise to give them back to use sometime in the future, we see this as interference, a form of enslavement, and a violation of the Creator's will. Governments have shown to have a tendency to be wasteful, self-serving, and uncaring on most individual levels. We see that when people are allowed to care for themselves and uses the fruits of their labors, greater care of themselves, families, and Spiritual Community is the result in almost all cases. History has shown that the good intentions of governments have led to a form of enslavement and have always been disastrous to the people in the long run. Humanity has seen many millions of people needlessly die because of the many different government's enslavement policies. We regard the taking care of ourselves, families, and Spiritual Community in health, sickness, or old age as our religious obligation and object to interference by private, public, and governments. We are free Children of the Creator and are conscientiously opposed to any

government requiring an individual to take on medical treatments or make payments to a private or public insurance that makes payment in the event of death, disability, old age, or retirement or makes payments toward the cost of, or provides services for, medical care, (including the benefits of any insurance system established by the Social Security Act). We are conscientiously opposed to mandated or forced vaccinations, the compulsion for us to mask ourselves with potentially harmful effects, or other government forced or mandated prevention or medical treatments. We recognize the Creator is our provider and not a government and we are conscientiously opposed to governments placing us into any form of slavery. As One People Walking the Earth we take care of ourselves and our Spiritual Families as we feel called upon by the Holy Spirit. All members have claim upon the Church for assistance when needed.

18. We repudiate any rights that any federally recognized tribe, band, or traditional organization may claim to possess, that gives them authority, or so they suppose, to enter into treaties or agreements that seek to bind the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, our Spiritual Family, our descendants or our followers in good faith. We honor, associate, and affiliate with such entities, but we are self-determinant, self-reliant, and self-governing.

In a sacred manner, we hereby reaffirm our commitment to our inherent values of Enlightenment, Salvation through our Lord Yeshua, Illumination of Truth through the Holy Spirit, Spirituality, Intelligence, Honor, Sharing, Kindness, Love, Compassion, Respect, Courage, Integrity, Healing, Equality, and so forth as passed on from generation to generation by the Ancient Healers.

In a sacred manner, we hereby reaffirm our commitment to the sacred teachings of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Sacred Healing Way, as passed on from Elder to Elder by the Ancient Healers, and of the teachings and principles contained in our traditions, customs, ceremonies, celebrations, Sacred Writings and Records which we consider to be scripture, and so forth, and do affirm our intent to restore the Sacred Spirit of Truth Native American Church Healing Way, as a Religious Belief System and Practice in its complete form, together with its sacraments and ceremonies, institutions, authority to govern itself, powers of administration, customs and traditions, sacred sites, and so forth, beginning with the Members of our Church, and then expanding to all the Peoples of the world who express an interest in it.

In a sacred manner, we hereby reaffirm our right to form Lodges or Chapters of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church and expand its Councils in any place that our conscience directs or the Creator commands, according to the application of our faith, the exercise of our Code of Ethical Conduct, and the diligent performance of our duty.

Therefore, as both a culmination and a beginning, we recognize these characteristics for our Ministers and our Church Membership wherever they may assemble; and, we go forward from this day with the following:

### ***Definitions:***

#### ***Consensus***

All election and decision-making in the Councils of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church shall be by the consensus of the Members in Active/Voting Status. When a particular Council has come to the end of all debate on any matter, the Talking Feather (as defined hereinafter) shall ask for a "thumb vote," meaning that all members of the Council shall demonstrate their agreement by raising their hand with thumb up, or in the alternative, they shall demonstrate their disagreement by raising their hand with thumb down. Should there remain any thumbs down, consensus shall not have been obtained and the matter must return to debate or it

must be withdrawn and studied. Council Members may raise their hand with thumb parallel to the ground, meaning that they disagree but require no one to agree with them, and this shall not be counted as a vote in the negative. When all thumbs are either up or parallel with the ground, consensus has been obtained. Unanimous Council or “Having all things in Common” shall pertain to all Councils of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church.

### ***General Assembly Vote***

After a Consensus has been reached in Council, when it is appropriate for the matter to be ratified by General Assembly, all the Members that are considered Active in the Church and who wish to participate, shall be allowed to cast one vote. The issue passes if two-thirds of the votes cast are in the affirmative.

### ***The Presiding High Priest or President of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church***

The President and CEO of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church is the Presiding High Priest, and President of the Church, and is the ultimate authority under this Constitution. The First President of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church is Paul H. Dean, aka 'Man Found Standing', upon the instance of the Creator, and as anointed by James W.F.E. Mooney. James W.F.E. Mooney received his ordination and appointment under the hand and blessing of Leslie Fool Bull, and was elevated to the President of the Oklevueha/Sioux Nation Communal Free Native American Church by Chief Fool Bull's successor, Richard He Who Has the Foundation Swallow, when the Oklevueha and the Wounded Knee Native American Churches conjoined. Both of these great men, may they rest in peace, were Chiefs of the Oglala/Lakota Eagle Clan, and Heads of the Native American Church of Wounded Knee and of Rosebud.

**Eligibility:** To be eligible for appointment to the Office of Presiding High Priest of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, a man or woman must have been ordained to the Ministry under the hands of the First Presiding High Priest or his Successor. Only an Ordained Minister of the Church may be elected to the Office of Presiding High Priest. The nominee must have served for a minimum of one (1) year as a Member of the Council of District Chiefs or Council of Area Chiefs, under the direction and the tutelage of the President of the Church.

**Stewardship and Authority:** The President is the highest Office in the Church. All other Officers act under authority obtained from the President. All other Officers of the Church act under authority obtained through the President, and they report directly to that Office.

The President is the Custodian of the Sacred Healing Way, Ceremonies, Sacraments, and Sacred Medicine associated with the Establishment and Exercise of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Religion, and the administration of all Spirit of Truth Native American Church Religious Institutions.

He or she holds the Keys to the Covenant of Spiritual Adoption and is the only Member of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church who is authorized to affect the Ordinance of Making Relations associated with the adopting New Members into the Church. The President of the Church is authorized to act upon the Request for Spiritual Adoption and to manage the Tithes of the Church associated with that office.

Through the teaching of the Sacred Healing Way, the President directs and oversees the training of all Spirit of Truth Native American Church Ministers, creates or calls for the creation of a curriculum to affect the same, and is authorized to receive and have the administration of tithes associated with that office.

The President is the Chairman of the Council of Administrative Chiefs and presides over the Annual Great Council of the Church.

Only the President may call, set apart, and ordain a Chief in any of the Lodges, Chapters, Roadman or Roadwoman Districts or in any of the Districts of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church.

A High Priest shall be divested only upon the action of a Disciplinary Council of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, presided over by the President of the Church or is assigned Medicine Chief.

Rights and Restrictions of the Office: The President of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church is authorized to act within the dictates of the Office of Presiding High Priest with all authority to direct the work of the Ministry, when such actions involve the Making of Relations (Spiritual Adoption), the training of Ministers, and the governing and direction and administration of the Church, its Chapters, its Districts, and of its Institutions and Societies. Otherwise, the President is authorized to act under the same restrictions in all things with the same authority that is extended to all Spirit of Truth Native American Church Members generally.

### ***The Sacred Healing Way***

The Sacred Healing Way is that body of knowledge based on the teachings which have been passed down to us through the traditions, customs, ceremonies, writings, and records of Indigenous Peoples, among which we acknowledge the Holy Bible, Native American stories and records, the Torah, the Vedic Texts, Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphics, Ayahtkuhyaht Text, and so forth, by way of example. We see all Holy Spirit inspired writings to be Scripture but do not recognize their infallibility. We understand that imperfections can arise due to translation errors, misinterpretations, willful intent, and so forth. We hold the Sacred Scriptures, no matter where they originate from, to be useful in our Spiritual Progression as long as they do not disagree with the message of Yeshua and are witnessed to us by the Holy Spirit to be true or founded on principles of truth.

We recognize Yeshua as the highest authority. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life and we recognize Yeshua is our advocate with the Father. It is only through following Yeshua's Sacred Healing Way that we may join the Creator. (John 14:6) We recognize the Holy Spirit guides us along the Sacred Healing Way and testifies of Truth. (John 16:13)

The Church compiles this knowledge into education for the systematic training of the Ministers of the Church. It is the criteria by which Spiritual Adoption is entered into and the basis and foundation of this Constitution. It consists of the Ancient Spirit of Truth Native American Church Law and of the ancient and otherwise accepted spiritual and physical ceremonies, wisdom, knowledge, practices, policies, teachings, modalities and so forth, which are expressed in our Records and Writings which the Spirit of Truth Native American Church regards as Scriptures.

### ***Spiritual Adoption or "Making Relations"***

Membership in the Spirit of Truth Native American Church is by and through the ancient religious tradition of the Covenant of Spiritual Adoption, which is also known as "Making Relations." The Spirit of Truth Native American Church follows this tradition. To enter into the Covenant of the Church, individuals must apply to the President for Spiritual Adoption. The individual declares the following as far as they currently understand them:

1. Natural Healing/Medicine is a part of my Spiritual Orientation and I wish to follow The Sacred Healing Way as set out by the Creator.
2. I will live by the practice of "First, Do Good".
3. I will faithfully study the spiritual and traditional healing materials put out by the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, or their assigned, and such education will be under the direction of the

President of the Church, by and through means he/she sees fit, and which is upheld by the Constitution and the Church's Code of Ethics.

4. I will dedicate time, talent, and resources, as the Spirit directs, to developing and forwarding the work of the Church and all of my payments or gifts made to the Church are free-will donations in accordance with the Constitution of the Church to be used to support the programs of the church and are given in the spirit of the Sacred Giveaway which is a bona fide Ceremony and Traditional Practice of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church.
5. As a member of the Church, I promise to follow the Ethical Code and Constitution of the Church.

Upon the satisfaction of the President of the Church, or the assigned Membership Committee, the President authorizes the adoption of the individual by ceremony, and documents are created for the new member. The Adoption Ceremony is begun by the President of the Church in private ceremony and is culminated at Great Council when all the names of the members are presented in the Annual Long Count of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church. The Adoption is for purposes of establishing the Covenant Relationship and Membership of an individual into the Spirit of Truth Native American Church and shall be used only for this designated dual purpose.

### ***Spirit of Truth Native American Church Member***

Men and women who have reached the Age of Accountability, been duly adopted by the President of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church in accordance with the ancient law of Spiritual Adoption, and by the direction of the Spirit of the Creator, who are studying or want to study the Sacred Peacemakers Healing Way, and who have made the covenant to sustain and uphold each other, the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Constitution, its Code of Ethical Conduct, Councils and Chiefs shall be considered Members of the General Assembly of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Entire, and of the Chapter and District in which they reside, or to which they have been assigned by the President. Anyone wishing to be a Member must be of the Age of Accountability and shall demonstrate their covenant by complying with the standards set by the Great Council for such compliance.

### ***Age of Accountability***

“Age of Accountability” is the age at which an individual is able to distinguish right from wrong. It is an important principle to be accountable for ones actions so you may walk more fully in the Sacred Way. The Sacred Teachings have established this Age of Accountability as the age of eight (8) years old. This age has a long-standing precedence in many religious cultures. Saint Peter, from the New Testament, found in 1 Peter 3:21, wrote about being baptized at this Age of Accountability and joining the ancient Christian Church when he said, “The like figure wherenunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:”

### ***Medicine Person***

Men and women who are Members already, have reached the Age of Agency, have achieved the completed the proper level of studying for being a Medicine Person (Bundle Ceremony Creation and so forth), have been baptized after the manner Yeshua taught, and have officially received their calling as a Medicine Man or Medicine Woman by the President of the Church.

### ***Age of Agency***

“Agency” is the right of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Members to vote in any Council and in the Councils and Assemblies of the Church. The Age of Agency is eighteen (18) years of age. The Age of Agency may be changed upon consensus of the Delegates participating in Great Council.

### ***Lodge Chapter***

The Lodge Chapter is the Primary Organizational Unit of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church for purposes of members meeting together, holding ceremonies, administration of the Sacraments, to serve as a venue for the teaching of the Sacred the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Healing Way, as well as to examine and teach all good things. The District Chief looks upon the Medicine People at the Age of Agency in his District and calls and or releases the Principle Stone Carrier as needed or as directed by the Spirit, who presides over the Chapter Council, consisting of a First Advisor and a Second Advisor. Each Lodge Chapter may provide two Delegates for the Great Council. A Lodge Chapter must consist of a minimum of three Medicine People and have a Unifying Purpose. Once a Lodge Chapter reaches at or about five hundred (500) members, it will be divided into two separate Lodge Chapters to better assist all individuals of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church. All Lodge Chapters must keep records of all donations given directly to them. The donations must include the date, the type of donation, and who was the donating party when appropriate. They must also keep records of all expenses paid by the Lodge Chapter. The expenses must include the date, amount paid, and purpose of the expense. Once a year, between January 1<sup>st</sup> and January 30<sup>th</sup>, all donations and expenses from the previous year must be reported to the President of the Church or his assigned.

### ***The Spirit of Truth Native American Church District***

The Spirit of Truth Native American Church policy allows the dividing of a geographic region, such as the United States for example, into administrative zones called "Districts." The President of the Church calls a Medicine Person in Good Standing and at the Age of Agency to preside over the District as Chief, under his/her direction and authority. The District Chief calls as many Counselors/Advisors as he/she deems necessary, and they form the District Council. The District Council is charged with carrying out the Policy of the Church, as promulgated by the President and/or mandated by the Great Council. The District Chief is also charged with the authority to organize Lodge Chapters within the District and to call Medicine People in Active/Voting Status to the Office of Principal Stone Carrier of the Chapter.

The District may consist of as few or as many Lodge Chapters as the District Chief deems appropriate as long as the Loge Chapters are established in accordance with their guidelines. Normally a District will consist of twelve (12) or more Lodge Chapters with a minimum of one thousand (1,000) members. Normally a District will be divided into two separate Districts once memberships reach about twenty thousand (20,000) members. District Councils are held regularly and are presided over by the District Chief. When a District is formed, the Lodge Chapter Councils report directly to the District Chief.

Each District may send one Medicine Person Delegate to Great Council.

The President of Church appoints and/or releases the District Chief. The District Council may be removed from office before the end of its term by the President of the Church. Membership in the District Council is an honor rather than a profession and any member elected to the District Council must personally approve of his or her election. No person shall receive remuneration for service in the District Council, nor shall any person be coerced into service.

All Districts must keep records of all donations given directly to them. The donations must include the date, the type of donation, and who was the donating party when appropriate. They must also keep records of all expenses paid by the District. The expenses must include the date, amount paid, and purpose of the expense. Once a

year, between January 1<sup>st</sup> and January 30<sup>th</sup>, all donations and expenses from the previous year must be reported to the President of the Church or his assigned.

### ***Council of Administrative Chiefs***

The Council of Administrative Chiefs of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church consists of the Chiefs or "Special Assistants" whom the President is authorized to appoint to assist him/her in the carrying out of the Office of President, the appointed Chiefs of the General Societies of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, and the Roadpersons appointed to preside over the Districts of the Church. These Members are called "Chiefs" because each of them is called into a Stewardship, or to represent an Order or Society of the Church. Each Administrative Chief acts in their assigned stewardship under the direction of the President of the Church, and is in effect, the mouthpiece of the President, who is ultimately accountable before the Creator for all their actions. The President may release any Member of the Council of Administrative Chiefs as appropriate. The Administrative Chiefs have no authority other than that which they receive from the President.

Eligibility: To be eligible for election to the Office of Administrative Chief of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, the nominee must be a Duly Adopted Member of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, received the Calling of Medicine Man or Medicine Women, be of Active/Voting Status, and they must be called by the President of the Church.

### ***General Assembly***

As outlined in the definition of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Member, every Member of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church is automatically a Member of the General Assembly, first of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Entire, then of the Chapter District in which they resided. The General Assembly of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Entire is entrusted with the task of ratifying the vote of the Great Council Delegates in the event of the Election of a President and other highly important decisions. The General Assembly of the Units of the Church are task-specific and operate following the model herein outlined, whenever appropriate to the task and purpose of the Unit.

### ***Great Council***

Annual Conference of the Church. The President calls for the Great Council and the Chapters, Districts, Societies, Institutions, and so forth, send their Delegates to participate. The Great Council is authorized to elect a successor to an existing (death, expulsion, or retirement) of the President, sustain the Church Leadership in their callings, and debate and adopt amendments to the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Constitution. Only the President may call a Great Council unless the President is not available due to death, expulsion, or retirement and then the Council of Administrative Chiefs may call for the Great Council.

### ***Council Eligibility***

Council Members must have reached the Age of Agency, be a Medicine Person, and bound themselves by covenant (outlined herein) to the Spirit of Truth Native American Church. The President may set standards for competency, and the Members may be required to work to maintain eligibility. Such requirements shall be in accord with the principles of this constitution and with the spirit of the Covenant of Spiritual Adoption. Members who refuse to comply with the direction of the President, under this constitution, are not eligible for Council Service.

### ***The Talking Feather***

The Talking Feather is the Chairperson of the Council. They determine the agenda, call the Council to order, and determine the order of speakers in Council. The Talking Feather may also adjourn the council if order cannot be maintained or when all counsels are complete.

### ***Proxy***

In the event that a duly elected Delegate to Council is unable to attend, he/she may assign their voting rights to a Delegate In Attendance, or to the Talking Feather of the Council in question.

### ***Vacancies***

When vacancies occur in the representation of any Lodge Chapter Council, the Principle Stone Carrier shall appoint a Medicine Person of the Lodge Chapter in Active/Voting Status to the vacated office. If the Principle Stone Carrier fails to re-establish the Lodge Chapter Council, the Council is automatically dissolved and the President seeks a recommendation for a new Principle Stone Carrier from the General Assembly of the Lodge Chapter. If the General Assembly of the Lodge Chapter fails to bring forth a recommendation, the Lodge Chapter is automatically vacated and dissolved, without further administrative effort, and the members lose the benefit of Lodge Chapter until a new Lodge Chapter is organized.

When vacancies occur in the representation of any District Council, the District Roadperson shall call a Medicine Person from the District to the vacated position. Should the vacancy involve the elected District Roadperson, the President of the Church shall call another into the Office of District Chief before any other Council position may be filled or extended.

### ***No Immunity***

All Chiefs and Members of the Councils shall be held to the same performances as they impose upon the members of the Church. They shall have no immunity. Even the President of the Church may be expelled from the Spirit of Truth Native American Church for base and grounds described herein.

### ***Impeachment and Expulsion***

Impeachment is censure placed upon an Officer of the Church by a Disciplinary Council. In Impeachment, a Member is removed from office but not from membership. Expulsion is the removal of a person from the membership rolls of the Church. They are severe sentences that can only be recommended by a Disciplinary Council of the Church. The President must decide whether to act upon or suspend the recommended sentence of Impeachment or Expulsion.

### ***Covenant Donation***

The Covenant Donation or Sacred Giveaway Offering, as outlined herein, is the responsibility of every Member and constitutes part of the demonstration of the Covenant made at Spiritual Adoption. It is placed into the stewardship of the Principal Stone Carrier of any organized Lodge Chapter, the District Chief/Roadperson of any organized District, and where there are no organized Lodge Chapters or Districts, it is the Stewardship of the President of the Church. The leadership in any Organization of the Church should remit a tithe of the regular offerings they receive from the membership directly to the President of the Church to further the entire the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Missions.

### ***Active***

Members should be in compliance to the Covenants they have made and at least have 40 hours of continuing education each year to be considered as an Active Member. Continuing education will be derived from the assignment from the President of the Church, Church Education, Scriptures, Attendance at Meetings and Ceremonies, Training in Church Approved Fields, and so forth. Every individual has the right and must decide for themselves according to the Spirit and their desires if they should be considered an active member and choose to have voting status in the General Assembly. An individual's status is considered a personal matter between the individual and the Creator and should be upheld by all members as such.

### ***Council***

Any gathering or body of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church which is organized in accordance with this Constitution, and which has authority to make recommendations to any General Assembly of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church.

### ***Counsel (for disciplinary)***

The findings, decisions, directives, or recommendations which any Counsel of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church might recommend to the General Assembly for purpose of vote or election.

## **Constitution Articles for the Spirit of Truth Native American Church as a Native American Church and Ministry**

**Article One:** Even though this Declaration and Constitution is set forth to establish the Spirit of Truth Native American Church as a Church, it should be recognized that we recognize the Spirit of Truth as our religion. The Spirit of Truth is the teachings that God is love, that love is our salvation, and salvation comes through God's son Yeshua. Councils shall assist to protect each individual member's rights to have a personal relationship with God and his Son, Yeshua, and provide a healthy atmosphere for members to love and respect each other. Counsel shall not seek to modify the Spirit of Truth Native American Church doctrine to please groups or individual members. Members of the church shall respect each other and not cause injury to one another. Any member that harms another will be brought before the Council of Ethics to account and face the Council's judgment for restitution. Also, any member that harms another person to the point that renders another person unable to earn his or her living, or threatens to do so, will be put out of the church. The Spirit of Truth Native American Church shall always respect and uphold individuals' spiritual progress and support them on the Sacred Way / Spiritual Path. However, the Church retains the right to regulate the Ministerial Actions of its Ministers also called Medicine Men and Medicine Women.

**Article Two:** Where men and women, who are engaged in the Peacemaker's Sacred Healing Way and wish to become the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Members or Ministers, undertake to celebrate ordinances which are intended to regulate their religious practice through the ancient traditions of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Council, the authority to do so shall be vested as follows: 1) the President of the Church (where counsel pertains to the general administration of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church and Secular Policy, Elected Councils of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church; 2) The Lodge Chapter Council (where counsel pertains solely to the organized Lodge Chapters of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church); 3), the District Council (where counsel pertains to the organized Spirit of Truth Native American Church District); 4) and the Great Council (where counsel pertains to all the Members as a body).

**Article Three:** Districts and Lodge Chapters of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church shall be organized, amended, and expanded upon according as the President and/or Great Councils are moved upon by the Creator as they are guided by Holy Spirit. Lodge Chapters and Districts of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church shall be organized following the model provided by the Creator, i.e., appointment by the Presiding High Priest (President of the Church), as found in our Scriptures. This model may be amended and expanded upon according as the President of the Church is moved upon by the Creator.

**Article Four:** There shall be no form of bond servitude or slavery among the Spirit of Truth Native American Church. This shall apply both to persons, as well as economies. Should a member of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church be found guilty by Disciplinary Council of offense not worthy of expulsion, and service is required of that person to retain his/her membership, the member shall render that service without compulsion. That person shall also be given the alternative of not performing the service and, should the alternative be chosen, that member shall be expelled from the Spirit of Truth Native American Church.

**Article Five:** No title of nobility shall be granted by the Spirit of Truth Native American Church. Rather, all men and women shall stand as equals before their Creator. There shall be no class or caste. Titles of elected or honorary vocation or profession, such as “Elder” or “Chief” shall not be construed as title of nobility, for they are derived by the Common Consent of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church (consensus) and may be removed by the same principle.

**Article Six:** The District Council shall exercise oversight over its own Spirit of Truth Native American Church District. Should any Spirit of Truth Native American Church District member have any disputation with any other, and that dispute cannot be settled between the parties, the matter shall be taken up by the Disciplinary Council or Arbitration Council as provided in the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Code of Ethical Conduct. Disputes within an organized Lodge Chapter shall be handled in the same manner - the Principle Stone Carrier, First Advisor, and Second Advisor constituting the Council. Decisions by such Councils are final. This pattern shall be followed by all other organizational units of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, as provided in the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Code of Ethical Conduct.

**Article Seven:** No person shall be allowed to represent or speak for and on behalf of another in any disputation in the Councils, but must present his or her own case in his or her own words. Proxy is not considered "disputation" and is the exception rather than the rule. It is generally understood that where fear of bodily or emotional harm might result because of personal appearance in such Councils, the individual's voice may be heard through a designated Proxy, but such Proxy may only read the information provided by the Party and must not “represent” the Party.

No priestly class of attorneys and judges shall be created or allowed to develop within the communities. Instead, the Council shall appoint a clerk who shall have the keeping of the records of the counsels rendered by it and shall assist the Council in its own analysis of the counsels as the Council shall deem necessary. The clerk shall not have any vote in the Council and shall not speak for any member or for the Council in any matter before the Council. The clerk's term of office shall be whatever the Council deems appropriate and, since the clerk is not an elected officer of the District, he or she may be released by the Council at any time without cause. Neither the Council nor the Clerk shall receive any remuneration for their services to the District or Chapter, but such service shall be attributed to them as part of their covenant donation.

**Article Eight:** Every member is entitled to their living and is free to enter into personal contracts, do personal business, and own and dispose of personal property as he or she sees fit. Members are reminded that all benefits, services, or security the Spirit of Truth Native American Church might offer in time of need, are provided by the Covenant Donations of the Church. One should consecrate regularly to the Principle Stone

Carrier of the Lodge Chapter, and/or the Roadperson of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church District, the Chiefs of the Administrative Departments, and/or the President of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, from out of the surplus of one's work product, either in money, kind, or in service, whichever may be deemed most appropriate. Since the Spirit of Truth Native American Church does not have a paid clergy, all donations are used to run the programs of the Church. Neither the Principle Stone Carrier of the Chapter, the Roadperson of the District Council, the President of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, or the Councils shall decide the nature, amount, or appropriateness of any member's Covenant Donation. They may make recommendations when desired, but they may not dictate the amount or kind of the offering.

It is our practice to make provision for dependent members from the Covenant Donations. All provisions will be reasonable in view of their general level of living and will be done for a period of time deemed to be substantial. Any dependents of a member of the Church, regardless of their own personal membership status, will be provided for until such a time as they are legally able to provide for themselves. No individual shall be compelled or forced to enter into the membership of the Church. It is an individual's right, given to them by the Creator, to choose their own path of worship. All membership privileges, as well as security in a time of need, shall first be extended to covenant members and their dependents before being offered to those who are not members of the Church.

The members of the Church shall have the power to solicit and accept appropriations from the Principle Stone Carrier of their Lodge Chapter, their District, and from the President of the Church. All Lodge Chapter and District expenses, if any, shall be paid by the Principle Stone Carriers or the District Roadpersons with funds obtained from the Covenant Donations of the Lodge Chapter or District members. The District Chiefs and the Principle Stone Carriers shall safeguard the accounts and make money or kind available to the Councils as appropriate. The President of the Church shall have authority to administrate the funds received through such programs as are under his/her personal direction and distribute them as the Council for that project deems appropriate. These are dedicated funds under the direct administration of the President. Administrative Chiefs shall follow this pattern also. Donations that have not been used or assigned for use by the end of a given calendar year should be remitted to the President of the Church to assist the Church Entire.

The President and the Great Council shall have the power to apply for and accept appropriations from the District and Lodge Chapter Councils. The President and the Councils shall have no power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, or membership fees, but may set up dedicated, voluntary funds for specific purposes which shall be accounted separately from the Covenant Donation.

If the District members want programs and services, they will provide for them through the Covenant Donations and Dedicated Funds. The Councils shall impose no programs and services upon the members for which they are not willing to voluntarily donate. This is in accordance with the ancient practice of the Sacred Giveaway and is a vital tenet of our traditional beliefs, faith, spirituality, and sacred practices. It is generally understood that the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Members shall not expect or demand programs or services from the Spirit of Truth Native American Church or its Officers that they are not willing to support through Covenant Donation.

All Lodge Chapters, Districts, and all other Organizations must keep records of all donations given directly to them. The donations must include the date, the type of donation, and who was the donating party when appropriate. They must also keep records of all expenses paid and the expenses must include the date, amount paid, and purpose of the expense. Once a year, between January 1<sup>st</sup> and January 30<sup>th</sup>, all donations and expenses from the previous year must be reported to the President of the Church or his assigned.

**Article Nine:** Men, women, youth, and children are members only of the District and Lodge Chapter of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church in which they reside unless otherwise assigned by the President of the Church by special dispensation. If a person resides where no Lodge Chapter or District is organized, he or she may become a member of the nearest duly organized Unit of the Church until such time as one is organized in their own area.

Members recognize that it is their responsibility to see to it that Lodge Chapters are organized in every place where the Spirit of Truth Native American Church resides and that regular Lodge Chapter Programs are ongoing. Should they decide to move from one Lodge Chapter to another, they shall not be considered a Member until they have met with the Principal Stone Carrier of that Lodge Chapter and have committed themselves to that Lodge Chapter's unifying purpose, by covenant, and to faithfully support the Lodge Chapter through participation in that Lodge Chapter's meetings or the Sacred Giveaway.

If a member wishes to be a member of the District but not of a given Lodge Chapter, they are free to do so. Commitment to the District shall be by Covenant as heretofore set forth. In other words, there are no membership dues or fees per se. The Members support the Lodge Chapter and District individually with Sacred Giveaway Donations, which are considered Offerings and Tithes of the Church and its Affiliate Agencies. When a Member has allowed their activity in the Church to lapse, or when they have quit one Lodge Chapter and wish to become part of another, they should personally meet with the Principal Stone Carrier of the Lodge Chapter they wish to attend to receive fellowship, guidance, and Lodge Chapter assignments if appropriate.

**Article Ten:** The peace and order of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church is the responsibility of each Member singly as also in unity. Resolution of disputes shall first be attempted between the parties, as is fitting in a Covenant Society. If disputes arise that cannot be resolved between the parties, they shall be taken before the appropriate Disciplinary Council of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church as provided herein.

No crime shall be deemed violent unless by it a person willfully and knowingly renders another physically unable to make a living, or acts in a manner that might give threat of doing so. Murder, rapine, abuse of a child or of a weaker person, sexual abuse of any kind, upon man, woman or child, as well as any act of mayhem, and so forth shall be deemed as a criminal action and the person(s) engaging in those action(s) as criminal(s). Such criminals shall be expelled from the Spirit of Truth Native American Church and delivered to the appropriate authority, or to nature in the event that no other authority exists. Re-entry will only be at the discretion of the President of the Church. Notwithstanding, be it known therefore, the Spirit of Truth Native American Church maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding such things which shall be exercised without mitigation. This is the generally accepted understanding of the term "Injury" as it is used in the Spirit of Truth Native American Church Councils.

**Article Eleven:** Spirit of Truth Native American Church Districts and Lodge Chapters are self-governing. No District or Lodge Chapter shall exercise rule or compulsion over another. All Districts and Lodge Chapters may participate in the Great Council by sending duly elected Delegates to them. Any District or Lodge Chapter may, by a vote of consensus, decide not to participate in Great Council. Those who decide not to participate shall still be considered alone among friends and shall not be shunned. Nevertheless, they shall not enjoy the spiritual blessings and privileges afforded those participating in Great Councils.

**Article Twelve:** Councils shall offer no counsel regulating or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Councils for a redress of grievances.

**Article Thirteen:** The enumeration in this Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the members. Neither shall any enumeration of any rights serve to make those rights automatically under the regulatory power of the Councils. In other words, to be able to enumerate the rights and privileges of the people shall not give the Councils the authority to take away or restrict those rights.

**Article Fourteen:** The right to vote shall be dependent upon age and upon the commitment by the member to the District and/or Lodge Chapter in which the Member resides, and shall not be denied or abridged in any way, on account of race, color, religions joined, creed, sexual orientation or other purely personal and

private matter, or whether they are male or female. It is generally understood that a member's failure to maintain active participation in the Church should automatically abrogate the right to vote in any Council of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church or to receive the Spirit of Truth Native American Church services, but does not cancel Membership or constitute base and grounds for expulsion from the Spirit of Truth Native American Church. However, every member must choose for themselves, as directed by the Spirit, their own right to vote or receive the Spirit of Truth Native American Church services.

**Article Fifteen:** The right of Members to choose their method and kind of medicine, Sacrament, Ceremonies, and so forth shall not be denied or abridged in any way and the Councils shall not enact any counsel that shall place one profession or modality of healing over any other, except when such professions or modalities tend to render a person unable to earn a living, or when they threaten to do so.

The President of the Church shall have the right to create and control curriculum for the training of ministers and administrators in the Church, but they shall not have the right to dictate any person's choice of modalities, individual sacraments or ceremonies, insofar as such things do not constitute or tend toward injury, or threat of injury as provided herein.

**Article Sixteen:** Spirit of Truth Native American Church may provide schools for the education of children, but the right of Members to choose to provide education for their own children shall never be denied or abridged.

**Article Seventeen:** There shall be no "Parens Patre" counsels. The natural, or duly adopted, parent of a child shall at all times be considered sovereign of his or her own home. No Council of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church shall at any time consider itself greater, wiser, more prudent, or more intelligent than the parent, except in the case of violent crime, as defined herein. The parent who is convicted by Council of violent crimes against a child shall not be considered competent to parent, shall be cast out from among the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, shall have no place within any Lodge Chapter or District of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church, shall be surrendered to the appropriate authority, or to nature in the absence thereof, and the child so injured shall be surrendered to the non-offending parent. In the event that both parents do commit violence upon their child, they shall be surrendered to the buffetings of nature and of a hostile world and the child shall be given sanctuary by the Church and shall be succored as deemed appropriate by the District through the principle of Making Relations, where allowed. Where such adoption is not allowed, the child shall be surrendered to the appropriate (civil) authority. It is our practice to make provision for anyone given sanctuary by the Church from the Covenant Donations. All provisions will be reasonable in view of their general level of living and will be done for a period of time deemed to be substantial. Anyone given sanctuary by the Church, regardless of their own personal membership status, will be provided for until such a time as they are legally able to provide for themselves and sanctuary is no longer desired.

**Article Eighteen:** This constitution may be amended by the Great Council Conference of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church and such amendment shall take effect only upon consensus of the Delegates of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church assembled in Conference. The President of the Church is authorized to edit and clarify this Constitution when necessary, so long as the original intent of the Great Council is not contradicted by such editing.

**Article Nineteen:** No Tribal Councils or Governments, be they federally or otherwise recognized, individual Church Member, Lodge Chapter Council, District Council, or General Council shall have authority to enter into contracts or treaties which bind the Spirit of Truth Native American Church as a whole. Only the Talking Feather of the Great Council of the Spirit of Truth Native American Church may enter into such arrangements.