

Constitution

PURPOSE

Let all things be done decently and in order (I Cor. 14:40), to the end that we may govern ourselves, through the leading of the Holy Spirit, to bring honor and glory to our Lord.

PREAMBLE

Relying upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the blessing of the triune God, we do hereby constitute ourselves a New Testament Baptist Church. This church shall be self-governing, independent of all other churches, conventions, or organizations, free from civil or ecclesiastical control in keeping with the New Testament.

ARTICLE I: Name

Waterville Baptist Church

ARTICLE II: Covenant

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly in support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to educate our family in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will if possible unite with a church where we can carry out the articles of this confession and the spirit of this covenant.

ARTICLE III: Confession of Faith

Section 1 – Of the Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible as originally written was verbally inspired and the product of Spirit-controlled men, and therefore, is truth without error. We believe the Bible to be the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions shall be tried. *2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21*

Section 2 – Of the True God

We believe there is one and only one living and true God; an infinite Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. *Exod. 20:2,3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Rev. 4:11*

Section 3 – Of Jesus Christ

- A. **Deity and Virgin Birth.** We believe that Jesus Christ is absolute deity, being co-equal with God; begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can be born of woman; and that He is both the Son of God and God the Son, True God and True Man. *John 1:1,2; Phil. 2:6; Gen. 3:15; Is. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14*
- B. **His Atonement for Sin.** We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, Who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement, through the shedding of His blood, for our sins; that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the just for the unjust; Christ the Lord bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; that having arisen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His wonderful Person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection. He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate and all-sufficient Savior. *Eph. 2:8; Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:24; John 3:16; Matt. 18:11; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:14; Is. 53:4-7; Rom. 3:25; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; John 10:18; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 1:4; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; Is. 53:11; Heb. 12:2; 1 Cor. 15:20; Is. 53:12; Heb. 9:12-15; 7:25; 1 John 2:2*
- C. **His Bodily Resurrection.** We believe in the bodily resurrection of our crucified Lord. *Matt. 28:6,7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; 1 Cor. 15:4*
- D. **His Ascension and Intercession.** We believe that the risen, glorified Lord ascended into heaven; that His present ministry is as our great High Priest and Advocate at the right hand of the throne of God. *Acts 1:9-11; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19; Rev. 3:21; Heb. 12:2; 8:6; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 John 2:1; Heb. 2:17; 5:9,10*
- E. **His Second Coming.** We believe in the personal, premillennial and imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; that the Scriptures teach it to be in two phases: first, the rapture of the Church, the body of Christ, into the glorious presence of the Son of God; second, the revelation of Jesus Christ, as He returns to reign upon the earth on the throne of His father David. *John 14:3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Acts 1:11; James 5:8; Heb. 9:28; Luke 1:32; Is. 9:6,7; Acts 2:29,30*
- F. **His Millennial Reign.** We believe that Jesus Christ will reign in righteousness upon the earth for one thousand years. *1 Cor. 15:25; Is. 32:1; 11:4,5; Ps. 72:8; Rev. 20:1-4; 6*

Section 4 – Of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the Agent in the new birth; that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer. *John 14:16,17; Matt. 28:19; Heb. 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Gen. 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5,6; Eph. 1:13,14; Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; Rom. 8:14, 16, 26, 27*

Section 5 – Of the Devil, or Satan

We believe in the personality of Satan, that he is the unholy god of this age, and author of all powers of darkness, and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire.

Matt. 14:1-3; 2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:10

Section 6 – Of Creation

We accept the Genesis account of creation and believe that man came by direct creation of God and not by evolution. *Gen. 1 & 2; Col. 1:16, 17; John 1:3*

Section 7 – The Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but of choice; and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse. *Gen. 3:1-6, 24; Rom. 5:19; 1:18, 32*

Section 8 – Of Grace in the New Birth

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and newness of life. *John 3:3; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 John 5:1; John 3:6,7; Acts 16:30-33; 2 Peter 1:4; Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:1; 2 Cor. 5:19; Col. 2:13; John 3:8; 1:12, 13; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9*

Section 9 – Of Conversion

We believe that repentance and faith are inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior.

Section 10 – Of God's Purpose of Grace

We believe that, before the foundation of the world, God, by his rich, sovereign, and free grace, did choose individuals to be saved, not on the basis of any foreseen merit or faith but solely according to His own eternal purpose and for his glory. *Rom. 9:11; 11:5; 2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:4-6; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2; John 13:18*

Section 11 – Of Justification

We believe that the gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification;

- A. That justification includes pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life, on principles of righteousness;
- B. That it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed to us. *Acts 13:39; Is. 53:11; Zech. 13:1; Rom. 8:1; 4:9; 5:1; Titus 3:5-7; Rom. 1:17; Hab. 2:4; Gal. 3:11; Rom. 4:1-8; Heb. 10:38*

Section 12 – Of Sanctification

We believe that sanctification (to be set apart) is the process by which God makes us partakers of His holiness; that it is a progressive work that is begun in regeneration and continued in our hearts by the work of the Holy Spirit, in connection with Bible-reading, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness and prayer, and completed at the return of Christ for His own. *1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Pet. 3:18; 1 Thess. 3:13, 1 John 3:2*

Section 13 – Of the Security of the Believer

We believe that all who are truly born again are kept eternally by God the Father for Jesus Christ. *John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; 1 Pet. 1:5; Phil. 1:6; Jude 1; Rom. 8:35-39*. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word; which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. *Rom. 13:13,14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15*

Section 14 – Of Separation

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded by God. *1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Rom. 12:1,2; 14:13; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11; 2 Cor. 6:14; 7:1; Phil. 3:20,21*

Section 15 – Of a Gospel Church

We believe that a visible church of Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His word; and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Its only proper officers are overseers or pastors, and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and Titus.

Section 16 – Of Church Ordinances

We believe there are two ordinances in the church instituted by Christ, which ought to be observed by all of us who have covenanted together: baptism and the Lord's Supper; that the only subjects for baptism are such as make a credible profession of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, that it is administered by immersing the body of the subject under water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and that the Lord's Supper is to be administered to such only as have been baptized, that it is giving and receiving the bread and cup, as our Lord has appointed, that His death may be shown forth and His second coming anticipated.

Section 17 – Of the Resurrection of the Just and Unjust

We believe that such as through faith are justified in the Name of Jesus Christ, and sanctified through the Spirit of God, are truly righteous in His esteem; that the just shall be resurrected at the rapture of the Church to the everlasting grace and fellowship of the Lord; that they shall reign with Him for a thousand years and shall sit in judgment with Christ; that their works shall be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ. *Mal. 3:18; Rom. 6:17,18; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:42-44, 52; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:11-15.* We believe that such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight, wicked and under the curse, that the unjust shall be resurrected to everlasting conscious punishment of the lost at the end of Satan's "little season;" that their works shall be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment.

ARTICLE IV: Membership

Section 1 – Admission

- A. Qualifications for admission: Membership is open to anyone who professes Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized by immersion as a public confession of his faith in Christ, and who has signed the Church Covenant evidencing his agreement with the Statement of Faith and Constitution. Such must go through the membership process and must not be under church discipline.
- B. Process of admission: Having made his desire known, a prospective member must fill out an application, receive instruction in the position of the church and the duties of membership, and be interviewed by the pastor(s) and deacons who will evaluate qualifications for membership. Upon their recommendation, the prospective member may be admitted to membership by a unanimous vote of the church at any regular service or special meeting. Any negative vote must be made known to the pastor(s) and deacons immediately. If the reason given is invalid, the motion shall be reconsidered and may be approved by a 3/4 vote. The new member will then be given the right hand of fellowship.

Section 2 – Duties

- A. In accord with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God.

- B. Under Christ this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend its services and meetings and vote (*those 18 or older*) on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters as may be submitted for a vote.
- C. Members should honor and esteem their pastors, pray for them daily, and assist them in carrying out the program of the church. Members shall endeavor to preserve the unity of the church.

Section 3 – Discipline

In order to maintain its purity and peace, a local church has the scriptural responsibility to prayerfully and lovingly restore errant members. Members whose behavior continues in violation of scriptural commands are to be disciplined.

- A. **Inactive Negligent Members.** Any member who is willfully negligent toward his church duties and demonstrates such negligence through absence from the Lord's Table for six consecutive months shall be subject to removal from membership. Following six consecutive months of absence from Communion, members lose their right to vote. The pastor and deacons shall assist negligent members in their walk with God, and seek to recover such members to active church membership. If they fail in this they shall inform the member of the finality of his continued negligence and recommend to the church his removal. If he responds, and the Discipline Committee is convinced that he has again become active, the Discipline Committee shall notify the church and the restoration of his right to vote shall be acted upon by the church.
- B. **Offended and Quarreling Members.** Offenses are inevitable and it is important that they be settled privately according to the pattern outlined in Matt. 18:15,16. Members are to seek reconciliation in a spirit of love when offenses occur whether noticed by the offender (Matt. 5:23,24) or the offended person. However, if the parties involved will not follow this pattern, or if, upon following it, reconciliation has not been reached, the pastor and deacons may need to become involved in order to preserve the peace of the church. No report of a derogatory nature against *any* member(s) is to be communicated to others or before the church in a business meeting until (1) the report is presented to the offender in private according to Matt. 18:15 and Gal. 6:1; and (2) it shall have been communicated to the Discipline Committee according to Matt. 18:16 and Gal. 6:1. This report is to be presented in writing and signed by the accuser.
- C. **Rebellious and Divisive Members.** Scripture warns against the harm of a "factious person" (Titus 3:10, "heretic"), and of the one who is "disorderly" (II Thess. 3:6). Persons who rebel against the spiritual leadership of the church, who gossip, who endeavor to influence others against leadership, who promote divisions and who make trouble in the church are to be disciplined according to scriptural guidelines. The pastor and deacons shall act (II Tim. 4:2) with love and grace, but they are required to deal with any member engaged in, secretly or otherwise, obstructing the work or disturbing the peace of the church. Conduct such as gossip or backbiting, falsehood, slander, conspiracy, and immorality are unscriptural and detrimental to the life of the church. Such persons are to be admonished by the pastor and deacons, after much prayer, with love and frankness according to Titus 3:10. If the attitude and actions persist, the Discipline Committee shall make a recommendation to the church body.
- D. **Accused Members.** If a member is accused by another member in good standing of violation of the Church Covenant or of doctrinal, immoral or unchristian conduct, such charges must be submitted in writing to the Discipline Committee by the accuser. When such charges have been presented, the Discipline Committee shall investigate the following: (1) whether or not the pattern of Matt. 18:15,16 is applicable and has been followed; (2) whether or not the charges appear to be valid. If the charges appear to be serious and valid, the offender shall be asked to meet with the Discipline Committee at a time that is reasonable, to receive a full and fair hearing. The accused shall have at least two weeks written notice of such hearing and be informed personally of the nature of the charges. If the accused does not appear in answer to the summons within a reasonable time, the Discipline Committee shall recommend to the church the exclusion of said member. By majority vote the committee may acquit the accused if the charges appear untrue, or if there is evidence of genuine repentance and restitution on the part of the accused, or they may vote for such discipline as the case may warrant. Discipline short of exclusion from membership shall be at the discretion of the pastor and deacons. If exclusion is recommended, the accused may appeal to the entire church for a hearing. The church shall then decide

whether to hear the case or whether it will act, without such hearing, upon the recommendation of the Discipline Committee. The purpose here is to give full protection to any member who may be accused and allow the membership the opportunity to protect the church from time-consuming details which could be harmful to the young and discouraging to the membership.

- E. **Composition of the Discipline Committee.** The Discipline Committee shall be the pastor and deacons except for the following: In cases where the accused is a deacon or related by marriage or birth to a deacon, that deacon shall not serve on the committee. The pastor and the remainder of the committee may select a church member in good standing who is not related to the accused and meets Gal. 6:1 standards of impartiality to serve as a replacement on the Discipline Committee. If the accused party is the pastor of the church and the accusations are (1) moral conduct, (2) doctrinal error, (3) serious negligence of ministry, and: (a) The accusations are well-documented, (b) Two or three witnesses shall have presented the accusations in writing, (c) Accusations are scripturally defined as serious errors: then the pastor shall, for purposes of concluding the evaluation of the charges and for the protection of the church, remove himself from the Discipline Committee and immediately appoint a temporary pulpit supply acceptable to the deacons. If the pastor should fail to cooperate and follow this procedure, the Discipline Committee (namely, the deacons) have the authority to immediately appoint a pulpit supply to serve while the charges are disposed of according to Section 4d of this Article. Such information as needed, with reasons, will be presented to the church for their awareness, understanding and cooperation.

Section 4 – Termination

- A. The church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his death.
- B. The church may recognize by vote the termination of a person's membership upon his joining another church.
- C. Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (described in this article) upon a 2/3 vote at any regular or special business meeting. The church shall have authority to refuse a member's transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline, or for any other biblical reason.

ARTICLE V: Officers

Section 1 – Pastor

- A. **Qualifications.** The pastor must fulfill all qualifications stated in I Tim. 3. He must agree without reservation to our Constitution, our Statement of Faith, and be a member of a fundamental, independent Baptist church at the time this church extends a call to him.
- B. **Duties.** The Pastor's responsibilities shall be spiritual oversight, providing for the spiritual growth and edification of members. The pastor is expected to assume positive administrative leadership of the affairs of the congregation. However, he should carefully consider the advice of the deacons as those elected to positions of responsibility. Final authority rests in the hands of the congregation. The pastor shall administer the ordinances of the church. The pastor shall be a member ex-officio of all committees.
- C. **Calling and Dismissal.** Calling and dismissing a pastor requires a three-fourths majority vote of a quorum at a meeting called especially for this purpose. The pastor may terminate his services on thirty days written notice. Having resigned, a pastor shall not continue longer than 60 days. The congregation may dismiss a pastor on thirty days written notice. However, upon true evidence of heterodox faith or serious moral misconduct (Gal. 5:19-21), the congregation may by a three-fourths majority of a quorum dismiss the pastor immediately, provided he is compensated for a period of thirty days. In matters of dismissal, the pastor and his family will be denied the right to vote.

Section 2 – Deacons

- A. **Qualifications.** The deacons must meet the qualifications outlined in I Tim. 3. They must also agree without reservation to our Constitution and our Statement of Faith, and have been a member of

Waterville Baptist Church for not less than two years.

- B. **Duties.** The deacons shall be the leaders of the church and shall assist the pastor in the spiritual oversight of the congregation. They shall oversee the preparation of, and assist in administering, the ordinances of the Church. In the absence of the pastor the deacons shall administer the same. The deacons shall also function as the trustees of the church. They shall have the care of all physical church property, including grounds, buildings and contents, and shall be authorized to repair and replace as necessary.
- C. **The Deacon Board.** The deacon board shall consist of the pastor and the deacons. At the first meeting following election, the deacons shall elect from their midst a chairman and secretary. The chairman shall be the spokesman for the deacons and shall moderate all deacon and church meetings in the absence of the pastor. The secretary of the deacon board shall keep necessary records of board meetings and actions. At the first meeting following election, the deacons shall appoint from their midst chairmen for each of the standing committees of the church. The deacons shall constitute the membership, pulpit and disciplinary committees. They shall report their activities to the church, and shall make recommendations to the church at regular or special meetings.
- D. **Selection and Dismissal.** Terms of office for deacons shall be two years, arranged to terminate alternately. The deacons shall be elected by a majority of quorum present at the Annual Business Meeting. The deacons shall maintain the highest biblical standards and shall actively pursue their own purity and integrity, both individually and as a board. Any deacon who is willfully negligent toward his church duties, as demonstrated by his absence from regular services of the church and meetings, shall be subject to removal. A two-thirds majority of quorum in a congregational meeting shall be required for dismissal. Quorum for deacons' meetings shall be the majority of the number of deacons.

Section 3 – Sunday School Superintendent

- A. **Qualifications.** The Sunday School Superintendent shall be a man, having been a member in good standing of our church for at least one year. He shall be required to agree without reservation to our Constitution and Articles of Faith. He should show genuine concern for the salvation and instruction of all students in the Sunday School.
- B. **Duties.** The Sunday School Superintendent shall oversee the spiritual growth of the Sunday School pupils. He shall also administer all aspects of the Sunday School program. He shall hold regular meetings with the Sunday School staff, for the purpose of edification and discussion of problems relevant to the Sunday School. He, together with the pastor, shall be responsible for the appointment of teachers, assistants and other personnel necessary for the operation of the Sunday School.
- C. **Selection and Dismissal.** The Sunday School Superintendent shall be appointed by the pastor and deacons for a term of one year, to take office immediately following the Annual Meeting. Upon reasonable grounds, he may be dismissed by the pastor and deacons.

Section 4 – Clerk

- A. **Qualifications.** The clerk shall have been a member of our church for at least one year, faithful to the church in attendance and support. The clerk must possess those qualities needed in a secretarial position.
- B. **Duties.** The Church clerk shall be custodian of all church records and documents not given to another officer. The clerk shall keep a faithful and complete record of all regular and special church business meetings. The clerk shall keep an accurate membership list, and shall handle necessary correspondence as directed. The clerk shall give notice of all business meetings.
- C. **Selection and Dismissal.** The clerk shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a period of one year, to take office immediately upon election.

Section 5 – Treasurer

- A. **Qualifications.** The treasurer shall have been a member of our church for at least one year, faithful in attendance and support. The treasurer must possess those qualities needed in one entrusted with handling funds and maintaining financial records. The treasurer may not concurrently serve as a deacon.

- B. **Duties.** The treasurer shall be a custodian of all funds of the church. The treasurer shall maintain a detailed record of all receipts and disbursements, and shall be empowered to pay those regular bills which are his responsibility. Any unusual expenditures shall be disbursed only as approved by the deacons and/or church. All funds shall be kept in commercial institutions and a full report of all accounts shall be given at each quarterly business meeting and Annual Business meeting.
- C. **Selection.** The treasurer shall be elected at the Annual Business meeting for a period of one year. The treasurer shall take office within ten days after office, allowing for necessary arrangements to be made.

Section 6 – Ushers

- A. **Qualifications.** The ushers shall be male members, faithful to the church in attendance and support, and shall evidence a desire to serve.
- B. **Duties.** The ushers shall supervise the collection of all tithes and offerings, greet visitors, and carry out miscellaneous tasks and arrangements necessary for the smooth running of the church services.
- C. **Selection.** Four ushers (more if needed) shall be appointed by the pastor and the deacons.

ARTICLE VI: Missions

As a local New Testament Church we are commanded by our Lord to spread the gospel throughout the world by an active missions program, mainly through the establishment of local, indigenous Baptist churches. *Matt. 28:19,20; Acts 1:8; Mark 16:15; Rev. 14:6; Luke 24:47*

Section 1

Before committing regular support to any missionary or missions endeavor, a full review of said missionary, sponsoring agency and field shall be completed by the missions committee and approved by the deacons, and presented to the church for a vote. Missionaries desiring our support shall present their burden and work to the church. We shall support only fundamental missionaries, mission endeavors and mission agencies that are Baptist in doctrine, practice and name.

Section 2

Missions funds shall be comprised of ten percent of the general fund, plus any additional missions endeavors.

Section 3

The overall church mission program shall support only church-supported missions. The missions committee shall strive to maintain a list of the needs beyond regular support of our church missionaries, to which surplus funds, love offerings and special mission projects may be directed.

ARTICLE VII: Meetings

Section 1 – Worship

- A. Meetings for spiritual worship shall be maintained on the Lord's Day and at such other times as the church, under the Holy Spirit's direction, deems best. They shall be Christ-centered and feature primarily the Word of God.
- B. There shall be a mid-week meeting for Bible study and prayer.
- C. Any special meetings, such as Missionary Conferences, Vacation Bible School, Evangelistic Meetings, baptismal services, may be arranged as the Holy Spirit may direct the pastor(s). Joint church services may only be held with other fundamental, gospel-preaching churches.
- D. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be normally observed on the first Sunday of each month. The elements shall be bread and grape juice.

Section 2 – Business

- A. Church business meetings are an important way church members advance the gospel of Jesus Christ. The purpose of such meetings is to inform the church body of significant developments and to discuss and vote on proposals brought before the church. All meetings shall be done “decently and in order” and shall follow Roberts Rules of Order, unless otherwise specified in this constitution. With both the pastor(s) and deacons voting, a By-Law may be temporarily suspended by unanimous vote.
- B. Church members may submit in writing items to be considered at future business meetings to the pastor(s) or deacons, which will be discussed at their next scheduled meeting. If approved, it will go on the agenda for the next business meeting. An agenda of the items to be voted on will be posted on the church bulletin board previous to the meeting. Votes will be taken only on items on the agenda.
- C. Business meetings shall be held each quarter on the second Wednesday in January, April, July, and October. The first quarterly meeting of the year will be the annual meeting; at such, the church will elect church officers (by ballot) for the coming year and vote on the proposed budget. When the need arises, adjustments of the schedule for any such business meeting may be made at the recommendation of the pastor(s) and/or deacons with the consent of the church. Reports from selected departments shall be presented throughout the year. The fiscal year shall be from January 1 to December 31.
- D. Special meetings may be called by the pastor(s), deacons, or at the *written* request of 15% of voting members of the church, signed, and given to the clerk. Announcement of any special meeting, stating the time and purpose, shall be made at any worship service on the two Sundays immediately preceding such special meetings. Business may be transacted only on the item(s) for which the special meeting is called.
- E. Emergency business meetings may be called in order to conduct business on matters of extreme importance. Such meetings may only be called when there is complete agreement between the pastor(s) and deacons.
- F. A quorum of 25% of the voting members is required to conduct any business meeting. A majority vote shall be required to pass any measure unless stated otherwise. In all cases, votes will be counted only from those members present and voting. A spirit of oneness and unity should be continually sought and maintained.
- G. The moderator of all church business meetings shall be the pastor, his appointee, or in his absence, the chairman of the deacons.
- H. The pastor(s) and deacons shall meet as often as is necessary to discharge their responsibilities of the church. Meetings may be called by the Pastor or chairman of the deacons. The deacons will reorganize annually and elect a chairman and secretary from their number. The pastor shall serve as moderator of all deacons' meetings. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the deacons shall serve as moderator.

ARTICLE VIII: Committees

Committees shall be appointed from the active membership of the church. Unless otherwise stated in this constitution, the chairman of each committee shall be the deacon charged with the chairmanship of said committee. The pastor shall be a member ex officio of all committees.

Section 1 – Missions Committee

- A. The missions committee shall consist of the deacon charged with the oversight of this committee, the president of the ladies' missionary fellowship (if any), and two other members of the church appointed by the chairman.
- B. It shall be the duty of this committee to periodically review the missions program of the church, to make recommendations to the budget committee and to the church for amounts of finances to be budgeted for missions endeavors, and to make recommendations of new missionaries to be placed in the missions budget. This committee shall serve as a communications link between the church and our supported missionaries, channeling needs, requests and information from the missionaries to the congregation. A potential candidate for missions support shall be thoroughly investigated by this committee. No missionary shall be supported who is not under a fundamental Baptist agency. The missions committee shall report on its activities to the congregation at each quarterly and annual meeting.

Section 2 – Music Committee

- A. The music committee shall consist of the deacon charged with the oversight of this committee, the choir director or music director (if any), and two other members of the church appointed by the chairman.
- B. It shall be the duty of this committee to select and recommend appropriate music for choir and congregational use. All musical selections and presentations shall be in accord with biblical, conservative standards. The music committee shall also oversee special music projects and be in charge of scheduling special music for the services of the church. The music committee shall also be responsible for periodic inspections of church-owned musical instruments and shall recommend to the church all necessary tunings, repairs and replacements.

Section 3 – Property Committee

- A. The property committee shall consist of the deacons charged with the chairmanship of this committee, one other deacon, and at least one other church member appointed by the chairman.
- B. It shall be the duty of this committee to oversee all church property, including land, buildings, vehicles, and equipment; to organize church workdays, to make recommendations to the church concerning maintenance, repairs, renovations and improvements on church buildings, grounds and vehicles. It shall also make emergency expenditures with regard to church property as authorized by the deacons and/or congregation.

Section 4 – Financial Committee

- A. The financial committee shall consist of the deacon charged with the chairmanship of this committee, the treasurer, and one other church member appointed by the chairman.
- B. It shall be the duty of this committee to count all monies received by the church. This shall be done by the close of the Sunday evening service, and within the church building. The treasurer and the chairman of this committee shall be responsible for recording all financial transactions of the church, payment of bills on time and for signing of checks. This committee shall report on all monetary activities of the church to the congregation at the annual meeting, quarterly meetings, and other meetings as directed.

Section 5 – Miscellaneous Committees

- A. **Auditing Committee.** The auditing committee shall consist of two church members elected by the church at the third quarter business meeting. It shall be the duty of this committee to review all the records kept by the financial committee for accuracy, and to report to the Church at the annual meeting. No member of the financial committee may serve on this committee.
- B. **Budget Committee.** The budget committee shall consist of the financial committee, one other deacon and one other member elected by the church at the annual meeting. It shall be the duty of this committee to function during the third quarter of the church year to review the existing budget and make projections and recommendations for changes in the budget for the following year and to prepare a budget for presentation at the annual meeting. This committee shall function on an emergency basis in the event of a financial crisis to recommend budget revisions to the church.
- C. **Nominating Committee.** The nominating committee shall consist of two deacons and two other church members to be elected by the church at the annual meeting. It shall be the duty of this committee to function during the third quarter of the church year to select nominees from among the membership for election by the church at the annual meeting. The list of nominees shall be posted two weeks in advance of the annual meeting.
- D. **Discipline Committee.** The discipline committee shall consist of the pastor and the deacons, within the guidelines of Article IV, Section 4 of this Constitution. It shall be the duty of this committee to fully investigate matters of possible church discipline and make recommendations to the church congregation if necessary. In pursuit of holiness within the body, and within the bounds outlined in Scripture, this committee shall be empowered to interview all parties and sources relevant to each case in ascertaining all available facts.
- E. **Pulpit Committee.** The pulpit committee shall consist of the deacons. It shall be the duty of this committee to pursue the collection, investigation and recommendation of names for pastoral candidates.

ARTICLE IX: Teachers

Section 1

All teachers shall give public testimony of being born again believers, shall live separated Christian lives, have a desire to teach, being zealous for the winning of souls, and shall agree without reservation to our Articles of Faith, and shall show faithful support of the total church program. All teachers must be members of the church.

Section 2

- A. Teachers shall diligently prepare for their respective classes and present the lesson material to their pupils.
- B. Teachers shall also be responsible for attending staff meetings.

Section 3

- A. Teachers shall be appointed by the pastor and Sunday School superintendent.
- B. Teachers may be dismissed upon failure to fulfill above qualifications and/or duties.

ARTICLE X: Funds

Section 1

All monies raised by the church and its auxiliary organizations shall be from tithes and offerings. The deacons shall have the right to refuse gifts of a questionable nature.

Section 2

All monies shall be kept in a financial institution and accurate records shall be kept on a fiscal yearly basis. Regular bills will be paid on schedule, all other bills must be approved by the deacons.

Section 3

All monies shall be counted in the church by the close of the Sunday evening service by the treasurer and a deacon or by two deacons. All monies received shall be recorded in a permanent record.

ARTICLE XI: Auxiliary Organizations

Auxiliary Organizations shall be Christ-centered, and have as their goal the furthering of the total church program. All auxiliary organizations shall be subject to and governed by this Constitution.

ARTICLE XII: Separation

As a fundamental local Baptist church, we will not join ourselves to or be associated in any way with the National or World Council of Churches, the ecumenical movement or any other church, group or organization which is contrary to the teachings of Scripture or our Articles of Faith, or which will infringe in any way upon our independence.

ARTICLE XIII: Amendments

Section 1

Any proposed amendment shall be posted at the church three months in advance of any quarterly or annual business meeting. The congregation shall be made aware of the posting of proposed amendment at church services three successive Sundays prior to such vote.

Section 2

Amendments to the constitution may be voted on at any quarterly or annual business meeting, if proper notice has been given and procedures followed.

Section 3

The proposed amendment(s) shall be incorporated in this Constitution after a three fourths majority vote of those members present and voting.

ARTICLE XIV: Dissolution Clause

In the event of dissolution, none of the assets or funds or income may be given to any officer, trustee, or individual. Any assets or funds remaining after payment of debts shall be devoted to such religious purposes as shall be determined by the Church at any annual meeting or any special meeting called for that purpose.

Upon dissolution, said assets will be distributed to one or more religious organizations exempt pursuant to Section

501 © (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Article XV: Statement on the Family

We believe that marriage of one man to one woman is the plan of God and sacred in His sight (Gen. 2:18-25; Malachi 2:13-16; Matt. 5:31-32; 19:3-9; 1 Cor. 7:1-16); that the roles of husband, wife, parent, and child are clearly defined in the Scripture (Eph. 5:22-23; Col. 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:1-7); that a sexual relationship is sacred and fulfilling only within the bonds of marriage and is condemned outside of the marriage relationship (1 Cor. 7:3-4; Heb. 13:4); that children are a blessing of God, and that the responsibility for them rests solely upon their parents; that they are to be brought up in a loving and structured environment with conscientious instruction in the truths of God and His principles of life (Psalm 127:3; Eph. 6:4; Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Psalm

78:4-7; Proverbs 22:6; 17:6). We believe that any form of adultery, bestiality, bisexuality, fornication, homosexuality, incest, lesbianism, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex; and that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 19:5, 13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; 20:13-21; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8).

Record of Changes since 1999.

Amended April 5, 1999. Added "Dissolution Clause"

Amended April 5, 2004. Added section on "Marriage and Sexuality"

Amended May 17, 2011. Reworded article on Deacon board—required number of deacons; reworded Sunday services; reworded statement on marriage and sexuality.

Amended May 9, 2012. Reworded article on the date of the annual meeting.

Amended January 11, 2017. Reworded statement "On Conversion," added articles on a "Gospel Church" and "Church Ordinances," deleted a line on "Church Membership," and reworded Article XIII "Amendments."

Amended July 7, 12, 2017. Rewrote portions of Article V. Section 2.B-C.

Amended October 11, 2017. added Article VII. Section 3. On suspending a bylaw (incorporated into Section 2.A. in April 11, 2018)

Amended April 11, 2018. Rewrote Articles IV (Membership) and VII (Meetings)

Current as of January 1, 2019.