

# Lugoff First Baptist Church

106 Longtown Road  
Lugoff, South Carolina 29078



April 16, 2023

Dear Church Family,

Sometime ago the church selected a team (Tony Ogburn, Marcus Mann, Betty Fort) to review and make any necessary revisions to our church Constitution and By-Laws (C&BL) which have not been updated since 1995. This team along with the church staff and deacons have completed this review and are submitting it to the church family for their review and approval.

There will be a meeting on April 23, 2023, at 5:00 PM to allow for any church member to give their input and ask questions about any changes that are being proposed. Provided there are no additional updates made, there will be a special called business meeting at the end of the worship service on April 30, 2023, for the express purpose of voting yes or no to the updated document. If changes need to be made, the new revision will be made available for review on May 7, 2023, and a new business meeting date will be set.

The following is a brief summary of the major updates to the Constitution and By-Laws:

1. Article VII The Church (pg. 4-6)

a. Updated to include specific qualifications of a deacon.

2. Article XVIII The Family (pg. 6-7)

a. This is a new addition and is a statement on marriage and sexuality. It also includes our church policy regarding marriage ceremonies.

3. VI Church Year (pg. 8)

a. Redefines the church year to be as stated in the Financial Policy

4. Section 3 Item II Election and Term of Deacons (pg. 14)

a. Establishes a new procedure of electing deacons by allowing the Pastor and Deacons to nominate candidates.

5. Section 4 Trustees (p. 16)

a. The Deacons and Pastor will submit a name to the nominating committee to be presented to the church.

6. Article IV Section 3 Business Meetings (pg. 22)

a. Item 2 has been added to specify at least one scheduled business meeting per church year.

7. Article VI Committees, Teams, and Coordinators (pg. 25-26)

a. There are numerous revisions and updates which primarily define committees, teams, and their responsibilities.

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH of Lugoff**

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

**CONSTITUTION**

and

**BY-LAWS**

REVISION 3

REVISION HISTORY

1 - 1985

2 - 1995

3 - 2023

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# **CONSTITUTION**

## **PREAMBLE**

We declare and establish this constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith and so that this body may be governed in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches of the same faith.

### **I. NAME AND SEAL**

The name of this Church is the First Baptist Church of Lugoff, South Carolina.

This corporation, having been duly incorporated under the law of the state of South Carolina, adopts as its corporate seal a circle containing the words "the First Baptist Church of Lugoff, South Carolina." Such a seal shall be affixed to all official documents of the church.

### **II. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose for which this church is established is the support and maintenance of the public worship of God and for missionary work pursuant to the faith and usage of the Baptist denomination.

The objectives for this church are as follows:

To be a dynamic spiritual organization empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshiping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.

To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.

To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.

To be a church which ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and the world in Jesus' name.

To be a church whose purpose is to be Christlike in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

### **III. BASIC BELIEFS**

We affirm the Holy Bible (technically known as the Canon of Scripture) as the inspired word of God and as authority in all matters of faith and practice. We affirm the articles of faith adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000, known as The Baptist Faith and Message and found in Attachment I of this document. We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The following amplifications to the Articles of Faith are provided to more clearly explain Lugoff First Baptist's application of the scriptures.

#### **Article VII, The Church**

The biblical leaders of the church are pastors and Deacons. The qualification of that leadership is provided in 1st Timothy 3 :8-13 and Acts 6:3.

A deacon must have a good reputation. The phrase "of good reputation" is synonymous with the word "reverent." To be "reverent" is to be "honorable" and "devout." A deacon's reputation should be seen in his home and in his work outside the church. A deacon must be a man of his word. A deacon is a man who can be trusted. He must not say one thing and do another. This qualification is one of trust.

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A deacon must try to live above reproach. Realizing our sinful nature is present in all we do, we believe a Deacon must strive to live a life that does not call into question his integrity and growing relationship with God. There are many things of this world that have the appearance of evil. If we as men of God participate in these we could cause a Brother to become confused and stumble.

A deacon must be a generous giver to his church. This is to say that a deacon should tithe. The Bible says, "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." If you do not give to the service of the church, your heart will not be there to serve.

A deacon must have a good grip on God's word. This means that a deacon should be a student of God's word. When a deacon knows God's word then he will do God's word.

A deacon must be proven. A man is not ordained as a deacon in order to acquire these qualifications. He is ordained because he already has them. A man who is nominated as a deacon should have already been shown to be faithful in his service, church attendance, tithing, witnessing, prayer, and Bible study.

A deacon should be blameless. Again, this does not mean sinless but means that there is nothing of which someone can accuse him and that he lives with a clean conscience.

A deacon must be a one-woman man. Based on the standards and emphasis placed by God on

the marriage relationship, the phrase, "a one-woman man," means he is not involved in sexual impurity and, if married, is committed to his wife. The literal understanding of the scripture indicates that the Deacon shall have only one living wife (i.e. if divorced not remarried).

A deacon must be a good father. This does not mean that a deacon's children are to be blameless or perfect, but they have been taught and nurtured in the scriptures, guided safely, and disciplined appropriately.

A deacon must be the spiritual leader of his home. It is in the home that a deacon develops his spiritual leadership by setting the proper example, showing love to his wife and children, resolving conflict, and serving humbly, as well teaching. Because the deacons of FBC serve alongside the pastor, they must be held to a high standard and accountability. His personal character, family life and devotion to Christ must come under serious scrutiny of God's word. A deacon must be worthy of his calling.

### **Article XVIII, The Family**

#### **Statement on Marriage and Sexuality**

We believe that the term *marriage* has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no one engage in intimate sexual activity outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication,

homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the Church as the local Body of Christ and to provide a biblical role model to the Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Church in any capacity or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the Church.

Based on this understanding Lugoff First Baptist Church and its staff will not officiate ceremonies or provide facilities for same sex marriages/unions.

#### **IV. CHURCH COVENANT**

The covenant of this church shall be as adopted and printed herein:

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 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 to the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotion; to educate our children *in Bible doctrine and principles*; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances.

To walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings; to be faithful to our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to abstain from the sale of and use of intoxicating substances; 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 as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

## **V. POLICY AND RELATIONSHIPS**

This government of this Church is vested solely in the body of believers who compose it. It shall be subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body but shall recognize and sustain the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches.

The Church may adopt its own standards and qualifications for all of its workers, leaders, teachers, and officers, and officers of the various auxiliaries consistent with the

principles and standards as reflected by the Word of God.

So far as we may be consistent with the principles and teachings of God's Word, this church shall cooperate with and have representation in the denominational causes sponsored by the Southern Baptist. These include the Southern Baptist Convention, the South Carolina Baptist Convention, the Kershaw Baptist Association and other affiliated auxiliaries and causes of the Baptist churches of the city, county, state and nation. The Church will elect at any of its regular congregational meetings as many messengers or representatives as are allowed at any regular convention meeting or council.

## **VI. CHURCH YEAR**

The Church year shall be as stated in the Financial Policy and Procedures Manual as approved by the church body, and all officers shall assume their duties in the first month of the church year unless otherwise stated.

## **ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP AND PRIVILEGES**

### **SECTION 1 Membership**

The membership of this church shall consist of such persons who:

- (1) have confessed Jesus Christ to be their personal Savior and Lord and, after due examination as to their Christian experience are baptized by immersion into the fellowship of the Church;
- (2) if coming from other Baptist churches who ascribe to these articles of Faith, shall be accepted upon receipt of letters of dismissal and recommendation, or satisfactory substitutes thereof; and
- (3) if coming by statement of their Christian experience shall be accepted upon the unanimous vote of the Church - all such persons voluntarily and enthusiastically entering into the Church covenant;
- (4) individuals not physically able to be immersed may be accepted upon their statement of faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, upon majority vote of the Church present.

### **SECTION 2 Conduct**

Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life; to attend the services of this church on a regular basis; and to give regularly for its support and its causes; and to share in its organized work. They shall subscribe to the covenant adopted by this Church, and abide by all of the vows contained therein.

### **SECTION 3 Transfer of Membership**

The continuance of membership shall be subject to the principles and usages of the Baptist denomination and especially as follows:

- (1) Any member who desires a letter of dismissal to any other Baptist Church is entitled to it upon request. All such letters are to be sent to the church and are not to be issued to the individual.
- (2) In the event a member unites with a church of some other denomination, membership in this church automatically ceases and his name shall be erased from the roll.

### **SECTION 4 Fellowship**

A Christian may worship with us and join the organizations and partake of the Lord's Supper without moving his/her membership; however, he/she will not have voting privilege or assume a leadership role in the church.

## **ARTICLE II DISCIPLINE**

### **SECTION 1 General**

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff, and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of the members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member

to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18:15-17. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of the members present is required; and the church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be guided by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and the vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

### **ARTICLE III CHURCH OFFICERS**

#### **SECTION 1 General**

- (1) The officers of this Church shall be a pastor, the ministerial church staff, deacons, trustees, a moderator, a treasurer, and a clerk.
- (2) In addition to the above, secretarial help may be hired by the pastor. The secretary works for the Church; however, secretaries report to the pastor, who is the administrative head of the Church, unless otherwise directed in a written job description. Part or all of the administrative duties of the church may be delegated by the pastor to other ministers. If the church has a personnel committee, the pastor will receive counsel from that committee when searching for a secretary. Should conflicts or difficulties occur in work performance, the pastor, as administrative head, may relieve the secretary from employment after sharing the problem with the personnel committee. All other hired employees under the supervision of the Pastor (such as janitorial) will be hired and supervised in the same manner as outlined for secretaries.

#### **SECTION 2 Pastor or Staff Minister**

##### **(1) A. Calling and Election**

When a vacancy occurs, a pastor or staff minister shall be selected and called by the Church in the following manner: A search committee shall be elected by the Church to recommend a

suitable minister, and its recommendations will constitute a nomination. Such committee may consist of any number of members desired by the Church, but must include at least one or more representatives from the Deacons, Sunday School official, Discipleship Training, Women's Missionary Union, Baptist Brotherhood, and the congregation at large. (Note: The pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member on the search committee when seeking a staff minister or Children's Ministry Center director.) Such committee shall bring to the consideration of the Church only one candidate at a time, and their recommendation shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose; at least one week's public notice shall be given before voting. Election shall be by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present and voting is necessary to elect. The minister thus elected shall, if he accepts the call, serve at the will of the Church, and/or until the relationship is terminated by mutual consent, both the minister and the Church seeking at all times to follow the will of God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit in reference thereto.

#### **B. Resignation and Dismissal**

A minister may relinquish his office by giving at least two weeks' notice to the church at the time of resignation. The Church may declare the office of pastor to be vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given. The meeting may be called at the recommendation of a majority of the personnel committee and the deacons or by written petition signed by not less than one fourth of the resident church members. The moderator for this meeting shall be designated by the members present by majority vote, and he shall be someone other than the pastor. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot; and affirmative vote of two thirds of the members present is necessary to declare the office vacant. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor so excluded from office, the church will compensate the pastor with no less than one twelfth of his total annual compensation. The termination shall be immediate, and the compensation shall be rendered in no more than thirty days.

#### **(2) Principle Functions**

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament Church. The pastor shall lead and encourage the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to perform

their tasks.

The pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in the church. As such he works with the deacons and church staff to (1) lead the church in the achievement of its mission; (2) lead the church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry, and application; (3) proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers; and (4) care for the church's members and other persons in the community.

### **(3) Duties**

The Pastors Duties Shall Be To

- (1) Lead in entreaties, prayers, petitions and thanksgiving on behalf of all men, women and children.
- (2) Minister unto the Church at all regular and appointed times of worship and service, and to the individual members whenever possible.
- (3) Serve as Chairman of the Church Council and as ex-officio member of all standing committees.
- (4) Administer the church ordinances. (Matt. 29:15 - 20)
- (5) Point out false doctrines, deceit, hypocrisy, lies of demons and men. (I Tim. 4:1,6)
- (6) Preach or nourish the flock on the Words of the faith and with sound doctrine. (Acts 20:28, I Peter 5:2, I Tim. 4:6)
- (7) Devote himself to prayer and ministry of the Word. (I Tim. 2:1, Acts 6:4)
- (8) Discipline himself; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, gentleness and humility. (I Tim. 6:11-12)
- (9) Shepherd the flock of God, exercising oversight, not for sordid gain, but with eagerness prove to be an example to the flock. (I Tim. 3:2-3)
- (10) Care for the church's members and other persons in the community.
- (11) Have full supervision of the ministerial staff and all hired employees of the church. The pastor may delegate day-to-day supervision of hired employees to other staff as approved by the personnel committee.

### **(4) Pastoral Privileges**

- (1) He is allowed two weeks off each year for rest and vacation with full pay. During his fourth year of service and

thereafter, he is allowed three weeks vacation with full pay; and during his seventh year of service and thereafter, he is allowed four weeks vacation with full pay. The Church may approve a different schedule upon recommendation from the Personnel Committee.

- (2) He shall not be absent from his pulpit more than six Sundays in any one year, and not more than two Sundays in succession at any one time, except as otherwise authorized by the Deacons.
- (3) The pulpit supply shall be paid by the Church when the Pastor is absent. When extra speakers are invited into the Church, the Stewardship Committee is to determine the amount of compensation unless otherwise budgeted.

**(5) Privileges and Duties of Called Staff Ministers**

The privileges and duties of called staff ministers will be outlined in a job description provided by the Search Committee and the Personnel Committee to the Church for approval.

## **SECTION 3 Deacons**

### **I General**

There shall be an active Committee of Deacons consisting of seven (7) deacons for the first 300 resident church members; and two (2) deacons will be added for each additional 100 resident church members up to 500; then two (2) deacons will be added for each 200 resident church members. Deacons will be added by twos in order that the number may remain odd for voting purposes. Each deacon shall be an active member of this church and able to participate in the affairs of the church. Additional deacons may be elected at the will of the church as the need arises. Deacons shall elect the following officers in the first month of the church year: chairman, vice-chairman, secretary as well as a Church Relations Committee, and additional committees as they deem necessary.

The Deacons shall meet at least once each month and at such other times upon call of the Pastor or the Chairman for consideration of special matters.

### **II Election and Term**

Deacons shall be elected by the church in the following manner:

- (1) The Pastor and serving Deacons will vet and nominate candidates to the church for election to the Deacon Body.
- (2) At least one name for each vacating slot will be submitted to the Church for election. A majority of those voting must be received to serve.

In the event the required slots are not filled; the Deacon body may elect to serve the year with those slots open. The Nominating Committee may assist the Deacons in facilitating this process as requested.

In electing deacons, the church shall elect men who are honorable, who are true servants of God and who conform to the meaning of the word and practice of the New Testament as reflected by the principles set forth in I Timothy 3:8-13. They shall be the servants of the church and zealous to guard the unity of the Spirit within the church in the bonds of peace.

Deacons shall be elected for three (3) year terms so that the



terms of approximately one-third of them shall expire each year at the end of the church year. Having served one term shall disqualify a deacon for re-election for one year, after which time he shall be eligible for re-election to the active deaconship if nominated.

In the event of the breach of covenant vows or gross misconduct or in case of acts involving moral turpitude or unchristian conduct on the part of any deacon during his term of office, he may, upon written and signed complaints made to the Church, be removed from office by a vote of the Church at any regular business meeting. The Church may then proceed to elect another deacon to fill such vacancy.

When it becomes necessary to fill an unexpired term, the Church shall proceed to elect another deacon to fill such vacancy.

### **III Function**

In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the Church. They are to serve in such duties as to free the Pastor for prayer and ministry of the Word (Acts 6:1-7). They are to serve at all times as a council of advice in conference with the Pastor on all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the church and its members. With the Pastor, they shall consider and formulate plans for the constant effort and progress of the church in all things pertaining to the saving of souls, the development of Christians, and the extension and growth of the Kingdom of God.

They shall seek to know the moral, physical, and spiritual needs and burdens of the members of the Church and shall serve the whole church in relieving, encouraging and developing all who are in such need.

### **IV Duties**

- (1) Deacons are to lead the Church in its ministry tasks of proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers; caring for church members and other persons in the community; and engaging in fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry, and application.
- (2) They are to maintain a ministry plan to facilitate their duties.
- (3) They are to serve the Church as deemed necessary to

administer the operations of the church facilities (such as preparing facilities for various activities).

- (4) They are to assist the Pastor in serving the Lord's Supper.
- (5) The Deacons shall serve as a General Pulpit Committee and in case of the absence or inability of the Pastor, subject to advice from and conference with him, they shall provide for pulpit supplies. In any period when the Church is without a Pastor, unless the Church otherwise provides, the Deacons shall arrange for temporary ministry and take counsel with reference to securing a pastor; however, it is especially provided that the matter of selecting a pastor shall rest with the Church and not with the deacons.
- (6) Duties of the Deacon Committees are listed in Attachment III.

## **SECTION 4 Trustees**

### **I Election**

The trustees shall be composed of three men who are loyal, active men in all affairs of the church. They shall be elected for six year terms with bi-annual replacement. The Deacon body in conjunction with the Pastor shall submit a name to the nominating committee to be presented to the Church for election as trustee. A trustee may serve two consecutive terms if reelected. Consecutive term of service shall be limited to twelve years; however, a trustee may be reelected after rotating off for six years. On the occasion that one moves from this community and his services at the church are hindered, there will be an election to replace him whether he changes membership or not.

### **II Function**

They shall hold in trust the property of the church in accordance with the articles of Incorporation of this church, and shall have charge and supervision of all church property.

### **III Duties**

- (1) They will act as legal representatives as directed by the church and affix signatures to all legal documents involving church property and any other legal agreements.

Trustees shall act only as directed by the church in regular business session. Trustees shall never act independently of a church's actions. If a trustee acts without the authority of the church, he is personally responsible for the actions.

- (2) They will maintain an up-to-date inventory of all church property, property deeds, mortgage or other type of loans, and insurance on church property. All such information shall be kept in a safe-deposit box with copies filed in the church office.
- (3) They will counsel with church officers, committees, and organizations concerning legal matters.
- (4) They will act as legal representatives of the Church in the event suit is brought for or against the Church.
- (5) The Trustees will review the insurance needs of the church annually and maintain proper coverage.

## **SECTION 5 Treasurer**

### **I. Election**

The Church Treasurer shall be elected annually when the nominating committee presents the nominee for election by the church.

### **II. Principle Function**

It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month. The treasurer shall be bonded, the church paying for the bond.

All money received for regular offerings, special offerings, or designated offerings shall be accounted for and preserved in the regular checking and savings accounts in the name of the church.

Funds from one account may not be transferred to another account without authorization by the Stewardship Committee.

### **III. Duties**

It shall be the duty of the treasurer to

- (1) Work with the Stewardship Committee to develop and

- recommend to the church adequate policies and procedures relating to receiving, accounting, disbursing, and reporting church monies.
- (2) Preserve all church income and liquid assets in checking accounts or savings accounts or other church approved safe places.
  - (3) Maintain members' records of contribution and provide quarterly and annual reports.
  - (4) Maintain adequate records of all church funds received and disbursed as well as obligations of the church.
  - (5) Provide a monthly written financial report showing itemized expenses and receipts and bank balances to the stewardship committee, officers, directors, committee chairs and deacons.
  - (6) Examine supporting data for all check requests and issue checks for cosignatory(s).

Many of the above duties may be assigned to a Financial Secretary with the Treasurer overseeing those functions assigned to the Secretary.

#### **IV Financial Secretary**

The financial secretary shall be a paid staff member or a position elected annually upon recommendation of the nominating committee.

The duties will be in accordance with the job description approved by the Treasurer and the Personnel Committee.

### **SECTION 6 Church Clerk**

#### **I Election**

The Church Clerk will be elected annually when the nominating committee presents the nominees for election by the Church.

#### **II Principle Function**

The Church Clerk is responsible for the accurate recording and processing of all business transactions approved in the Church business meetings. The Clerk will be responsible for all official church communications. Part of the Church Clerk's duties may be assigned to a staff secretary under the oversight of the elected Clerk.

### **III Duties**

The Clerk's specific duties are as follows:

- (1) To keep accurate minutes of transactions of the Church at its business meetings. To record the action of the Church on dismissal of members, giving the name of the person whose letter is granted. Likewise, he shall record the names of any deceased during the past month, the membership figures at the beginning of the month along with the total additions and the decreases in the membership for the month.
- (2) To keep two registers of the membership for the church, one in chronological order and the other in alphabetical order.
- (3) To keep a record of the names of all members baptized with date baptized.
- (4) To keep a record of the admission, dismissal, or death of members showing dates of the events, and note the same briefly on the register.
- (5) To issue letters of dismissal and recommendation pursuant to rules.
- (6) To present at the Annual Meeting a statistical report of the church membership.
- (7) To present a written copy of the minutes each quarter to the Pastor for the church file.
- (8) To keep documents of the church, except such papers as belong to the Trustees, subject to its demand and inspection.
- (9) To notify committees, messengers, etc., of their election or appointment.
- (10) To prepare the annual letter for the association. The Clerk may assign the responsibility for gathering and compiling information for the annual letter to a staff member. S/He will need input from staff and organizational leaders. After the final compilation, the clerk will present the letter to the church for approval and forward three copies to the associational office.
- (11) To work with the pastor in preparation of agendas for church business meetings. Copies of the suggested agenda should be forwarded to all those who may be asked to be a part of the meeting. The agenda will also serve as a guide to help in preparing or securing materials and reports for the business meeting.

### **SECTION 7 Moderator**

The moderator shall be elected annually. In the absence of the moderator, the Chairman of Deacons shall preside, or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator shall be elected. The moderator shall preside over the business meetings of the Church.

### **I. Election and Term**

The moderator will be nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the church. In electing a moderator, the Committee shall seek out a person who is capable of leading the church in seeking out God's Will for the church in a spirit of openness and cooperation and understanding these rules of decorum. The moderator shall serve for (1) one year which is a church year or any part thereof.

### **II. Function**

The moderator shall be the presiding officer over all business meetings. He shall strive to maintain the fellowship and bring different views, ideas and beliefs together in unity.

### **III. Duties**

- (1) The Moderator will inform the church of regular and special called conferences.
- (2) S/He will provide the proposals and items of business to the church before the conference.
- (3) S/He provide an agenda for meetings and follow it closely so as to expedite business.
- (4) S/He Clarify matters voted for later action.

## **ARTICLE IV MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 1 General**

The purpose of the institutional church is to serve the Church (Body of Christ) as the Body of Christ serves Christ. The Church places its highest priority upon the Great Commandment to love as found in Matthew 22:37-39, and upon the Great Commission to serve as found in Matthew 28:18-20.

The church buildings are for the purpose of reaching lost

people, teaching the Good News of salvation in Christ, winning the lost to Christ, developing the members of the Church (Body of Christ) spiritually, and ministering to the needs of the people.

## **SECTION 2 Organizational Meetings**

For worship, work and administration of the ordinances, the church shall maintain and foster meetings and organizations as follows:

- (1) For public worship, preaching, instruction, and evangelism, regular meetings for the entire membership and for all people shall be held each Lord's Day Morning and Evening and each Wednesday Evening. Each of these meetings is to be held under the direction of the Pastor. The cancellation of one or more of the services must be approved by the Church at least one service in advance except in times of inclement weather when the Pastor (or Deacons in the Pastor's absence) may make this determination.
- (2) For study and instruction in God's Word, there shall be a Sunday School, divided into departments and classes, patterned after denominational standards. It shall be conducted under the direction of a Sunday School Director in harmony with the overall educational direction provided by the Minister responsible for Education, and subject to the approval of the Church.
- (3) The church shall have a Church Training Program patterned after denominational suggestions and standards for New Member Training, Leadership Training and Member Training. It shall be conducted under the direction of a Church Training Director in harmony with the overall educational direction provided by the Minister responsible for Education and subject to the approval of the Church.
- (4) For the women of the church, there shall be Women's Missionary Union with such officers and such forms of organization and service including the standard auxiliaries, as their wisdom may direct under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and the teachings of the New Testament, subject to the approval of the Church.
- (5) For the men, there shall be a Baptist Brotherhood with such officers and such forms of organization and service, including the standard auxiliaries for boys, as their wisdom may direct under the leadership of the Holy Spirit

and the teachings of the New Testament, subject to the approval of the Church.

- (6)
  - a. The ordinance commemorating the Lord's Supper shall be observed by the church at least once every quarter (three months). All members of the church may participate therein, as well as the members of other churches of like faith and order who may be present at such service.
  - b. The ordinance of baptism may be administered at any worship service for the benefit of all persons who have been accepted by the church upon public profession of faith and acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
- (7) Whenever feasible the church shall conduct one or more evangelistic meetings each year. The pastor, with consultation from the Deacons and the Church, is responsible for arranging these meetings with final approval being given by the Church. Occasional religious meetings of the church and its auxiliaries may be appointed by the Pastor at his direction or by vote of the church.
- (8) No organization shall meet during the worship services on Sunday or during the Wednesday prayer meeting time without Church approval.
- (9) Whenever possible, the Church shall conduct or join with other Churches, each year, one or more training schools for the training and development of the leaders and members of the various organizations, inviting, when possible, such denominational and other state and church workers to assist in the leadership and instruction. Whenever possible the cost of outside leadership should be anticipated and placed within the church budget.

### **SECTION 3 Business Meetings**

For the transaction of business of the church, the following is provided:

1. At any regular meeting for worship, the Church may, without special notice, act upon the reception of members, and upon the appointment of messengers to councils and conventions.
2. The Church shall have **at least one scheduled business meeting per Church year,** as scheduled below for the transaction of any and all business, except for the call of



a Pastor or call of a ministerial staff member. In lieu of special meetings, the regular business meeting night can be postponed by agreement of the Church at least one worship service prior to the meeting being postponed.

A. An annual business meeting of the Church shall be held in the last **quarter** of the Church Fiscal Year. At this meeting annual reports shall be presented by standing committees which shall be adopted and filed. The nominating committee and the stewardship committee shall present nominations and the proposed Church budget for the new year to be voted on by the Church body.

3. The Moderator, or in his absence, the Chairman of Deacons or Pastor, may call from the pulpit special business meetings, the particular object of the meetings being very clearly stated in the call. Likewise, it shall be the duty of the Moderator, or in his absence, the Chairman of Deacons or Pastor, to call a special business meeting from the pulpit when requested to do so by the deacons, trustees, or chairperson of any standing committee. Notice of such meetings shall be given at least one worship service prior to the time of such meeting.
4. Special meetings of the Church may be called by the recording clerk upon written request on 10% of the resident adult members (18 years of age and older) specifying the object thereof, notice of which shall be read at all regular services two weeks prior to the day fixed for the called meeting.
5. A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall be not less than five percent (5%) of the resident membership of the church, except for the call of a pastor and/or ministerial staff, which shall be no less than twenty percent (20%) of the resident church membership.
6. A majority vote of those present and voting shall determine any matter voted upon except that, in the case of a call of a Pastor or a ministerial staff, a three-fourths affirmative majority shall determine, being subject to the provision of sub-section five (5) above with reference to presence of a quorum.

7. The moderator shall preside at all business meetings of the Church, and upon his absence, the chairman of the deacons shall preside. In case neither of the two can act, then the Church shall select a temporary moderator to preside at such meeting.
8. In the absence of the recording clerk at any business meeting of the Church, the moderator shall appoint a temporary clerk to record the action of the Church.
9. All members shall be prayerfully concerned about the business of the Church and shall endeavor to be present at all business meetings. If unable to be present, all members shall lovingly abide by and cooperate with the plans of the majority present on all matters decided upon.
10. In all questions of procedure at any business meeting, the Church shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order. The Church shall place a copy of this book in the library for the use of the public (church).
11. All of the church business is to take place inside the church building or at a location approved in advance by the Church in a formal business meeting.

#### **SECTION 4 Use of Facilities**

Any group outside the standard organized groups of the Church must have approval of the Church, time permitting, to hold meetings in any of the Church facilities; otherwise, the Pastor and at least two trustees, one being the chairman, must approve.

Any group or individual wishing to use part or all of the church facilities must make a request in writing in a method approved by the church and agree to abide by any rules established by the church. The request and approval must be kept and available for review by the Church.

### **ARTICLE V ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORS**

#### **I. General**

The church will have ministry organizations patterned after the denomination unless otherwise approved by the church. The

organizations and their functions are as follows:

A. Sunday School

The purpose of the Baptist Sunday School is to form small Bible study groups where instruction, ministry and evangelism are the focus.

B. Discipleship Training or Small Groups

The purpose of Discipleship Training is to provide specific in depth Bible study and instruction for the purpose of advanced Christian maturity for effective service.

C. Youth Ministry

The purpose of the Youth Ministry is to provide specific Bible study and instruction geared to youth. It will also provide opportunity for fellowship and recreation activities to encourage youth participation in all activities.

D. Women's Missionary Union

The purpose of the Women's Missionary Union is to provide a women's organization for the instruction and implementation of mission activities in the community and world.

E. Men's Ministry

The purpose of the Men's Ministry is to provide a Men's organization for the instruction and implementation of mission activities in the community/world and facilitate fellowship.

Directors shall use denominational guidelines in structuring the organizations and executing their duties.

**II. Election**

1. The Organizational Directors will be nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the church. The Directors will serve a one (1) year term or any part thereof, which is a church year.

2. Other necessary officers shall be nominated and elected as indicated above or by any other means directed by the church at any regular or special business meeting.
3. No organization, organized class or group of individuals under the protection of this church shall either institute or form any organization upon any plan or ideal contrary to these Rules of Decorum or the approved denominational standard for like organizations unless expressly authorized to do so by the vote of the church.

### **III. Duties**

The Organizational Directors will plan and lead in the areas of their responsibilities. They are to coordinate their organization activities with those of the overall church program through Church Council membership.

### **IV. Responsibilities**

- a. Directors will submit budget requests for the Organization and work within the church-approved budget and financial policies.
- b. They will plan for and provide training required for Organizational workers.
- c. They will oversee their organization's activities.
- d. They will provide a quarterly calendar of scheduled events coordinated with the Church Council.

## **ARTICLE VI COMMITTEES, TEAMS AND COORDINATORS**

### **SECTION 1 General**

Being a congregational oriented Church, Committees, Teams and Coordinators are used as an efficient, effective and wise method of performing tasks. The purpose of the committees, teams and coordinators is twofold: to conduct the work and function of the church in an efficient manner, and to facilitate the involvement of the people.

Committees and Coordinators are tasked with administrating the functional aspects of the organization. There are two types of committees, standing and temporary. Standing committees are manned every year to perform ongoing tasks. The Church Standing Committees will be the Personnel, Stewardship, Nominating,

Building and Grounds, Transportation, Children's Ministry Center and the Cemetery. Temporary committees are established and elected to perform a specific task and are disbanded when that task is complete. Teams are tasked with the organizational scheduling and functional aspects of the various ministries\organizations.

## **SECTION 2 Election and Term**

Committees, Teams and Coordinators will be nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Church. Committees, Teams and Coordinators will serve for one year or terms as determined by the Church, which is a Church year. Temporary committees will serve for the duration of their task or purpose unless the Church states otherwise in establishing the Temporary committee. Committee Chairpersons will be nominated by the nominating committee and approved by the church. Team leaders will be selected by the team members.

## **SECTION 3 Function**

Committees, Teams and Coordinators will set goals, plans, and schedules relating to their areas of responsibility and perform and lead tasks to achieve those goals. Committees, Teams and Coordinators have the responsibility and authority to carry out their tasks as directed by the existing policies, procedures and guidelines previously approved by the Church.

## **SECTION 4 Duties**

Specific duties of the Committees, Teams and Coordinators are found in Attachment III. When a new standing Committee, Team, Coordinator or other church position is instituted Attachment III should be revised to provide the make-up, duties and responsibilities of the new position.

The duties of a Temporary Committee will be established in writing and approved by the Church at the time of the committee is created.

# **ARTICLE VII FINANCIAL POLICIES**

## **SECTION 1 General**

We believe ourselves to be stewards of God's provision for us. Membership in this church involves the financial obligation to support the Church and its causes with regular proportionate gifts. Each member shall be encouraged in scriptural giving. Plans shall be made during the year for enlisting all members in the financial support of the church. Each new member shall be approached immediately upon uniting with the church and encouraged together with other members in a loving manner to support the church financial program. Continual effort in the enlistment of new members in a financial program shall be carried on under the direction of the pastor. (I Cor. 16:2, Malachi 3:8-11)

## **SECTION 2 Special Offerings**

Special offerings may be sought by the Church or by any of its organizations only after approval in accordance with the Financial Policies and Procedures Manual approved by the Church and included as an attachment. This shall not preclude individuals or groups from making special offerings to established funds as the Spirit of God may lead them. Love Offerings may be collected at the discretion of the Pastor or Deacons, in his absence, for visiting ministers.

## **SECTION 3 Denominational Contributions**

It shall be the policy of this Church to contribute as much of its gross receipts as possible for missions and denominational causes according to the budget adopted each year.

## **SECTION 4 Budget**

The Church will operate on a budget adopted each year. Expenditures not in the approved budget must be approved by the Church prior to financing that expenditure. Expenditures which exceed the approved budget line item amount by \$100 or 10% (whichever is greater) must be approved by the Church prior to financing that expenditure. (In an emergency situation, a ministerial staff member or Church officer (limited to Treasurer, Chairman of Deacons or a Trustee) may authorize the expenditure but must present the situation to the Stewardship Committee as soon as possible). The Church Budget will include

all projected costs for general operation of the Church, its committees, and missions as authorized by the Church body. Further detail may be found in the attached Financial Policies and Procedures Manual.

(I Cor.4:2, Luke 12:48)

#### **SECTION 5 Cemetery Fund**

A perpetual care fund will be maintained for the upkeep of the Cemetery property. The appropriate amount of fund will be maintained for this effort.

#### **SECTION 6 Audits**

There will be a periodic audit of the financial records of the Church. The type and level of audit will be determined by the Stewardship Committee and Trustees of the Church. A summary report of any audits will be shared with the church at its next business meeting after the audit is accepted by the Treasurer.

### **ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS**

#### **SECTION 1 Revision Authority**

The adoption of this Constitution and By-laws (known as revision 3) shall supersede all previously adopted rules in conflict with this document.

#### **SECTION 2 Maintenance**

Copies of this Constitution and By-Laws shall be kept by the clerk in the church office and in the church library. The interpretation of the By-Laws will be the responsibility of the Deacon Body.

#### **SECTION 3 Revision and Amendments**

These rules of decorum may be amended as follows:

##### **A. Approval Level I**

Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws and Articles of Faith require a three-fourths vote of the quorum present and voting at any annual meeting of the church, or at any

meeting especially called for that purpose. The proposed amendment shall be inserted in the call, which is to be in writing and placed before the church at a regularly scheduled meeting at least one month prior to the church conference for action.

B. Approval Level II

Amendments to all other portions of this document require a majority vote of a quorum present at any regular business meeting of the church or a meeting especially called for that purpose.



**Baptist Faith and Message (2000)**

## **Report of the Baptist Faith and Message Study Committee to the Southern Baptist Convention**

Adopted, June 14th, 2000

The 1999 session of the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, adopted the following motion addressed to the President of the Convention:

"I move that in your capacity as Southern Baptist Convention chairman, you appoint a blue ribbon committee to review the Baptist Faith and Message statement with the responsibility to report and bring any recommendations to this meeting next June in Orlando."

President Paige Patterson appointed the committee as follows: Max Barnett (OK), Steve Gaines (AL), Susie Hawkins (TX), Rudy A. Hernandez (TX), Charles S. Kelley, Jr. (LA), Heather King (IN), Richard D. Land (TN), Fred Luter (LA), R. Albert Mohler, Jr. (KY), T. C. Pinckney (VA), Nelson Price (GA), Adrian Rogers (TN), Roger Spradlin (CA), Simon Tsoi (AZ), Jerry Vines (FL). Adrian Rogers (TN) was appointed chairman.

Your committee thus constituted begs leave to present its report as follows:

Baptists are a people of deep beliefs and cherished doctrines. Throughout our history we have been a confessional people, adopting statements of faith as a witness to our beliefs and a pledge of our faithfulness to the doctrines revealed in Holy Scripture.

Our confessions of faith are rooted in historical precedent, as the church in every age has been called upon to define and defend its beliefs. Each generation of Christians bears the responsibility of guarding the treasury of truth that has been entrusted to us [2 Timothy 1:14]. Facing a new century, Southern Baptists must meet the demands and duties of the present hour.

New challenges to faith appear in every age. A pervasive anti-supernaturalism in the culture was answered by Southern Baptists in 1925, when the Baptist Faith and Message was first adopted by this Convention. In 1963, Southern Baptists responded to assaults upon the authority and truthfulness of the Bible by adopting revisions to the Baptist Faith and Message. The Convention added an article on "The Family" in 1998, thus answering cultural confusion with the clear teachings of Scripture. Now, faced with a culture hostile to the very notion of truth, this generation of Baptists must claim anew the eternal truths of the Christian faith.

Your committee respects and celebrates the heritage of the Baptist Faith and Message, and affirms the decision of the Convention in 1925 to adopt the New Hampshire Confession of Faith, "revised at certain points and with some additional articles growing out of certain needs . . . ." We also respect the important contributions of the 1925 and 1963 editions of the Baptist Faith and Message.

With the 1963 committee, we have been guided in our work by the 1925 "statement of the historic Baptist conception of the nature and function of confessions of faith in our religious and denominational life . . . ." It is, therefore, quoted in full as a part of this report to the Convention:

(1) That they constitute a consensus of opinion of some Baptist body, large or small, for the general instruction and guidance of our own people and others concerning those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us. They are not intended to add anything to the simple conditions of salvation revealed in the New Testament, viz., repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

(2) That we do not regard them as complete statements of our faith, having any quality of finality or infallibility. As in the past so in the future, Baptists should hold themselves free to revise their statements of faith as may seem to them wise and expedient at any time.

(3) That any group of Baptists, large or small, have the inherent right to draw up for themselves and publish to the world a confession of their faith whenever they may think it advisable to do so.

(4) That the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over the conscience.

(5) That they are statements of religious convictions, drawn from the Scriptures, and are not to be used to hamper freedom of thought or investigation in other realms of life.

Baptists cherish and defend religious liberty, and deny the right of any secular or religious authority to impose a confession of faith upon a church or body of churches. We honor the principles of soul competency and the priesthood of believers, affirming together both our liberty in Christ and our accountability to each other under the Word of God.

Baptist churches, associations, and general bodies have adopted confessions of faith as a witness to the world, and as instruments of doctrinal accountability. We are not embarrassed to state before the world that these are doctrines we hold precious and as essential to the Baptist tradition of faith and practice.

As a committee, we have been charged to address the "certain needs" of our own generation. In an age increasingly hostile to Christian truth, our challenge is to express the truth as revealed in Scripture, and to bear witness to Jesus Christ, who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

The 1963 committee rightly sought to identify and affirm "certain definite doctrines that Baptists believe, cherish, and with which they have been and are now closely identified." Our living faith is established upon eternal truths. "Thus this generation of Southern

Baptists is in historic succession of intent and purpose as it endeavors to state for its time and theological climate those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us."

It is the purpose of this statement of faith and message to set forth certain teachings which we believe.

Respectfully Submitted,

**The Baptist Faith and Message Study Committee**  
**Adrian Rogers, Chairman**

**Committee Members**

Adrian Rogers, Chairman

Max Barnett	Steve Gaines
Susie Hawkins	Rudy A. Hernandez
Charles S. Kelley, Jr.	Heather King
Richard D. Land	Fred Luter
R. Albert Mohler, Jr.	T. C. Pinckney
Nelson Price	Roger Spradlin
Simon Tsoi	Jerry Vines

**THE BAPTIST FAITH & MESSAGE**

**I. The Scriptures**

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

## **II. God**

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

### **A. God the Father**

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

### **B. God the Son**

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-

15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

### **C. God the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

### **III. Man**

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

## **IV. Salvation**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

## **V. God's Purpose of Grace**

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

## **VI. The Church**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

## **VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.



The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

### **VIII. The Lord's Day**

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

### **IX. The Kingdom**

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

### **X. Last Things**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11;

17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

## **XI. Evangelism and Missions**

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

## **XII. Education**

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

### **XIII. Stewardship**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

### **XIV. Cooperation**

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

### **XV. The Christian and the Social Order**

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the

unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

## **XVI. Peace and War**

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

## **XVII. Religious Liberty**

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

## **XVIII. The Family**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.