

# **Constitution**

## **of Open Door Baptist Church of Columbia, MO**

### **PREAMBLE**

We, the members of Open Door Baptist Church of Columbia, MO, do hereby declare and establish this Constitution and Bylaws to preserve and secure the principles of our Christian faith, and to govern the Church in an orderly manner. Further, the Constitution and Bylaws maintain the autonomy of this Church in freedom of action in relation to other churches and organizations, and maintain the liberties of each individual Church member.

### **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this organization, as incorporated under the laws of Missouri, shall be Open Door Baptist Church of Columbia, MO (hereinafter, "Open Door Baptist Church" or "Church"). The Church was organized and constituted in 1991.

### **ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

We exist for the Gospel and the glory of God. We advance the Kingdom of Christ and His Gospel by following the teachings and practices of the Holy Bible in worship, the proclamation of the Gospel, Christian education and training, benevolent work, missionary labor, and ministry. The Church is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, and religious purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code.

### **ARTICLE III - DECLARATION OF FAITH**

#### **Section 1 - The Holy Bible and The Baptist Faith and Message 2000**

The Church recognizes the Holy Bible as its supreme authority in matters of faith, practice, and worship. The Church affirms as our doctrinal statement The Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000 (Appendix 1).

#### **Section 2 - Human Sexuality and Gender**

The Church affirms God's original design to create two distinct and complementary sexes, male and female, to glorify Him (Gen. 1:27; Isa. 43:7; Matt. 19:4-6; Mk. 10:6). The assignment of biological sex at birth is a gift of God and part of God's glory in creation. The fall of mankind into sin and God's subsequent curse have introduced brokenness and futility into God's good creation (Gen. 3:1-24; Rom. 8:20). We extend love and compassion to those whose experience of this brokenness includes a conflict between their biological sex and their perceived gender identity (Rom. 8:22-23). We affirm God's good design that gender identity should be determined by biological sex and not by one's self-perception—a perception which is often influenced by fallen human nature in ways contrary to God's design (Eph. 4:17-18). We affirm distinctions in masculine and feminine roles as ordained by God as part of the created order (Gen. 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor. 11:7-9; Eph. 5:22-33; 1 Tim. 2:12-14). We believe that efforts to live contrary to birth sex, whether by behavior, attire, cosmetics, or even medical or surgical therapy, are resisting or rebelling against the gift of God and a central dimension of His will for that person, and therefore such behavior is sinful. We condemn efforts to alter one's bodily identity (e.g., cross-sex hormone therapy, gender reassignment surgery) to bring it into line with one's perceived gender identity. We love our transgender neighbors, seek their good always, welcome them into our congregation as they repent and believe in Christ, and spur them on to love and good deeds in the name of Christ (2 Cor. 5:18-20; Gal. 5:14; Heb. 10:24). We steadfastly oppose all efforts by any court, legislature, or policymaker to validate transgender identity as morally good, right, or praiseworthy (Isa. 5:20). We commit ourselves to make decisions about Church membership, personnel, and other Church matters based on this biblical perspective of human sexuality.

#### **Section 3 - Marriage and Civil Unions**

We affirm the biblical truths that marriage is the first divine institution, essentially rooted in the created order, uniting one man and one woman in an exclusive covenant commitment for their joint lifetime, for their good, and for the welfare of any children who may be conceived and born into this union. Marriage is based on the truths that men and women are complementary, that biological reproduction depends on a man and a woman, and the experience that children need both a mother and a father. Re-defining marriage to fit popular norms rejects these truths.

By encouraging the norms of true marriage—man-woman monogamy, sexual exclusivity, and permanence—the Church strengthens civil society and promotes human flourishing, including the well-being of children. Christian marriage is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church, as illustrated by the wedding of a Christian man and woman into this covenant relationship. As such, we believe that Christian wedding ceremonies on our property are spiritual observances of worship of God who created this divine institution. As worship services, weddings on our property shall be officiated by one or more ordained ministers of the Gospel approved by the Pastoral Team. We may decline to make our facilities or ministers available for any wedding if it is determined that one or both of the parties are not biblically qualified to marry.

Such determinations shall be made by the Pastoral Team. We may decline to participate in or recognize in any manner any marriage, civil union, commitment ceremony, or other activity which may, directly or indirectly affirm, approve or communicate behavior or beliefs which are contrary to our beliefs about biblical morality and marriage. Such actions would violate our religious conscience. We must obey God, who is the Lord of our conscience.

No pastor, minister, or deacon of the Church shall officiate at any marriage or similar ceremony unless such event or ceremony is consistent with our Constitution.

## **ARTICLE IV - GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH**

### **Section 1**

The Church is governed by the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of the body, the church, as He shall reveal His leadership to us through the Word of God and the Spirit of God. The Church is an autonomous body, not subject to the direction or control of any other ecclesiastical body; therefore, the government of the Church is vested in the members who compose it.

### **Section 2**

The Church shall function with a Christ-ruled, Pastor-led, Deacon-served, and Membership-affirmed form of government. While we affirm the priesthood of the believer, meaning that the believer is in no need of a mediator aside from the mediation that the Godhead provides through Christ and the Holy Spirit, we recognize through Scripture that the temporal, spiritual oversight of a congregation rests with its appointed pastors (elders/overseers/shepherds). The offices of Pastor and Deacon are the only two offices cited in scripture, and as such are the means in which God has organized His church to operate in leading and ministering to the congregation. The deacons serve alongside and at the assistance of the pastors in facilitating the necessary ministry and functions of the Church.

### **Section 3**

The Church shall have an annual member meeting as required by Missouri Revised Statutes Title XXIII, Chapter 355 and regular member meetings (Bylaws Article IV, Section 2). The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Church in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution and Bylaws.

### **Section 4**

The corporate officers and board of directors (Bylaws, Article III, Sections 2 & 3) will handle all legal matters relating to the Church.

## **ARTICLE V - LEADERSHIP**

The Church confesses the Lord Jesus Christ as its head, both as to the body corporate, and as to individual Church members. In relation to His sovereignty, and to ensure the integrity and purity of this family, the Church leadership shall consist of a Pastoral Team, a Deacon Team, and Ministry Team Leaders who are all directly responsible to the Church membership. Qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of the leadership are described in Article II of the Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of the Church shall consist of such persons who placed their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, who follow His example in Believer's Baptism by immersion, and who satisfy the requirements for membership as described in the Bylaws (Article I, Sections 1 & 2).

## **ARTICLE VII - CHURCH COVENANT**

Having received Christ as Lord and Savior and having subsequently been baptized by immersion, and being in agreement with the Church's Declaration of Faith and mission, we join together by the Holy Spirit to commit ourselves to God and to one another to do the following:

We will seek unity through prayer and by walking in brotherly love. We will love one another by being kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving as Christ has forgiven us. We will speak the truth in love. We will bear the burdens of others and seek to restore those who are struggling in sin. (1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:32; Gal. 6:1-2; 1 Pet. 4:8)

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor will we neglect to pray for ourselves and others. We will strive to disciple each other and those under our care in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (Heb. 10:24-25; Phil. 4:6; Eph. 6:4; Matt. 28:20)

We will make disciples by sharing the gospel of Jesus with others. We will pray for and support the mission of the Church. We will serve the Church body with the gifts and strengths we have received from the Lord. (Matt. 28:18-19; Rom. 1:16; 1 Pet. 4:10-11)

We will contribute cheerfully and sacrificially to support the ministries and expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through national and international missions. (2 Cor. 9:6-7; Lk 21:1-4; Phil. 4:18-19)

We will grow in our love for Jesus by spending time with the Lord in the Scriptures and in prayer. Having submitted ourselves to the Scriptures as the final authority on all matters in life, we will submit also to the leaders that God has given to serve the Church. (1 Tim. 4:7-8; 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 13:17)

We will live as representatives of Christ in the way that we speak and act in the world. We will flee sin and pursue godliness, not being controlled by any substance or sinful behavior, but being controlled by the Spirit as we glorify Christ in word and deed. (2 Cor. 5:20, 6:3; Eph. 5:18; 1 Tim. 6:11)

If we move from this place, we will unite with another like-minded church, as soon as possible, where we can continue to carry out the principles of God's Word. May the Lord Jesus be glorified in our Church now and forever, and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen. (Acts 18:27-28; Rom. 16:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:58; Col. 3:23; Heb. 10:24-25; 2 Cor. 13:14)

## **ARTICLE VIII - CHURCH PROPERTY**

The Church's Facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of Church members. All real property facilities of the Church (collectively, the "Church Facilities"), including without limitation its sanctuary, auditorium, fellowship hall, gymnasium, educational facilities, conference rooms, and other meeting rooms or facilities, and its land and any improvements thereon, used for the mission of the Church, wherever located, when used by the Church, its pastors, deacons, officers, staff, Church membership, or congregation, and if used by other persons or groups with the permission of the Pastoral Team of the Church, shall be used solely for purposes consistent or compatible with the Declaration of Faith and mission of the Church, as defined in its Articles of Incorporation, and Constitution and Bylaws adopted by the Church.

It is acknowledged and understood that the Church Facilities are intended not to be facilities of "public accommodation" as defined by law, but are facilities owned by the Church, a Missouri non-profit corporation, dedicated solely for such permitted uses.

Church Facilities use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs, or advancing, advocating, or engaging in practices that conflict with the Church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in the Constitution and Bylaws adopted by the Church, nor may Church Facilities be used for activities that express viewpoints that contradict, or are deemed by the Pastoral Team to be inconsistent or incompatible with the Church's faith or moral teachings. The Church designates the Pastoral Team as its final decision-maker on whether a person or group is allowed to use Church Facilities for particular activities.

This restricted Church Facilities use policy is necessary because the Church may not in good conscience materially cooperate or participate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing the Church Facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the Church's beliefs would be viewed by some as material cooperation with that activity and complicity in that viewpoint and would be a grave violation of the faith and religious practice of the Church and its individual members. It is also important to the Church that it presents a consistent message to the community, which the Church leadership and members conscientiously maintain as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Thess. 5:22)

Therefore, in no event shall persons or groups who hold, advance, or advocate beliefs; or advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict the Church's faith, use any Church Facilities nor may Church Facilities be used in any way that contradicts the Church's faith. (Col. 3:17)

### **ARTICLE IX - COOPERATION**

The Church recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Southern Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, the Church shall voluntarily cooperate with and support the Heart of Missouri Baptist Association, Missouri Baptist Convention, and Southern Baptist Convention. This cooperation does not grant to any of the aforementioned entities any authority over the Church, nor in any way alter or lessen the autonomy and independence of the Church.

### **ARTICLE X - ADOPTION**

#### **Section 1**

This Constitution shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect upon a three-fourths vote of the Church membership present at any regular ministry meeting or at a special called ministry meeting called for the purpose of adopting this Constitution and at which a quorum (Bylaws, Article III, Section 6) is present. This vote shall be taken not less than 30 days after formal presentation of the Constitution to the Church.

#### **Section 2**

This Constitution shall be and is, hereby established as the sole Constitution for the Church. This Constitution abolishes, supersedes, and takes the place of any constitution, rules, bylaws, and amendments that preceded it. No rules, regulations, bylaws, or policies may be established which conflict with this Constitution. There shall be no worship, education, service by Church members, or fellowship conducted which is in conflict with this Constitution. The Church shall not conduct any business transaction contrary to the Constitution.

#### **Section 3**

A copy of this Constitution and Bylaws shall at all times be kept by the board of directors and another copy shall be kept in the Church office. All amendments and revisions shall, after passage by the vote of the Church membership, be prepared by the Church clerk and incorporated in the Constitution and Bylaws and made available to Church members on request.

### **ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution can be amended by a three-fourths vote of the Church membership present at any regular ministry meeting or at a special called ministry meeting called for the purpose of amending this Constitution and at which a quorum is present, provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the members of the Church and announced from the pulpit two weeks prior to the ministry meeting at which the amendment is to be considered.

# Bylaws of Open Door Baptist Church of Columbia, MO

## ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

### **Section 1 - Qualifications for Membership**

A prospective member of the Church shall consist of such persons (a) sixteen (16) years of age or older, (b) who placed their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, (c) followed His example in Believer's Baptism by immersion, (d) whose character, conduct, and reputation is in accord with their confession, (e) have applied to become a member of the Church, (f) affirmed the Constitution and Bylaws of the Church, and (g) signed the Membership Covenant (Constitution, Article VII).

### **Section 2 - Membership Application Process**

- A. The prospective member shall (a) attend a prospective membership class, (b) fill out a membership application form, (c) affirm agreement with the Membership Covenant, and (d) affirm agreement with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Church.
- B. A member of the Pastoral Team (Article II, Section 1, A.a.) will schedule a meeting with the prospective member to review the membership application and ensure all qualifications are met. If it is determined that qualifications are not met, the person will be removed from prospective member status and steps will be developed and presented to them to meet the qualifications in Section 1.
- C. The Pastoral Team will present the prospective member for a vote (Article III, Section 4) of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting.

### **Section 3 - Church Member Voting Responsibilities**

Church members are eligible to vote on all motions, recommendations, resolutions, and other matters that come before the Church in regular and special ministry meetings.

### **Section 4 - Church Discipline**

Church discipline is a biblical process that is to be followed by the Church when a member is found to be consistently in violation of clear biblical truth. The purpose of church discipline is not to punish a member; its goal is the repentance and restoration of the erring member to a spiritually healthy condition and full participating membership in the Church. In progressing through the stages of church discipline, ample time for repentance should be allowed at each step.

- A. The steps of church discipline shall be according to Matthew 18:15-17 as follows:
  - a. Private Confrontation - The erring member should be directly approached in private by a concerned and informed fellow member and confronted with their sin. If repentance does not follow, the church discipline process proceeds to the next step.
  - b. Private Conference - The erring member will be confronted about their sin by two or three believers, including at least one member of the Pastoral Team. If repentance does not follow, the erring member is to be removed from active membership and listed as a suspended member under discipline. The church discipline process proceeds to the next step.
  - c. Public Meeting - After the second step, the Pastoral Team will determine whether or not the biblical ideals of discipline, love, and concern have been appropriately communicated to the erring member. If the Pastoral Team does not see clear repentance, the member will be publicly confronted by the members of the Church at a ministry meeting.
  - d. Public Exclusion - When the Pastoral Team and the Church membership have made consistent efforts to bring the erring member to repentance without results, the erring member shall be dismissed from membership by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting and asked to refrain from participating in any and all Church activities.
- B. At any point of the discipline process, if the allegations are found to be false, the case shall be dismissed and the Pastoral Team shall clear the name of the accused member in a manner appropriate to the situation.
- C. The erring member will be removed from any role of leadership or any other role of service in the Church until the disciplinary issue is resolved according to the above steps.
- D. The erring member under discipline shall be denied a request to terminate membership in the Church or transfer

membership to another church.

- E. The erring member under discipline may be restored to active membership if the Pastoral Team determines that they have repented of the offense(s) for which discipline was exercised.
- F. Should there be a conflict within the Church that involves issues between the Pastoral Team, staff, deacons, and the Church membership that could destroy or hinder the work of the Church, the Church will call for an outside mediator to work with the parties involved to make every reasonable attempt to resolve the conflict.
  - a. The Church should request a mediator before the problem escalates to the point it causes a break in the unity, harmony, and fellowship of the congregation.
  - b. Before the mediation process begins, the participating parties will approve of the mediator and any and all of their functions, terms, or limitations.

### **Section 5 - Termination of Church Membership**

Membership can be terminated by the member's choice, by church discipline (Section 4), or by non-involvement with the Church.

- A. A member who wishes to terminate their membership shall inform the Pastoral Team in writing. Unless the member is under church discipline, he (she) will be removed from the membership roll. Any living member whose membership has been terminated for any reason will receive a letter from the Church stating the date and reason for termination.
- B. A member who wishes to transfer their membership to another church should inform the Pastoral Team in writing. Unless the member is under church discipline, he (she) will be notified in writing and removed from the membership roll.
- C. Membership may be terminated by action of the Church for reasons of church discipline, in obedience to the principles of 1 Corinthians 5, Matthew 18:15-17, and Galatians 6:1.
- D. Members who qualify for termination of membership are:
  - a. members that have been received as members of another church and the Pastoral Team is able to confirm the same;
  - b. members that pass away and/or;
  - c. members that fail to attend or support the Church for more than a year (except in extenuating circumstances such as health issues, college, military service, etc.).

## **ARTICLE II - CHURCH LEADERSHIP**

The Church recognizes that the Bible gives clear instruction about the identity and responsibilities of the leaders of God's church (Acts 20:17-35; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Heb. 13:17). The Bible also gives us some freedom in how to implement these Biblical principles.

### **Section 1 - Pastors and Pastoral Team**

#### **A. Qualifications**

- a. The terms "pastor/shepherd," "elder," and "overseer/bishop" all refer to one and the same office (Titus 1:5, 7; Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Pet. 5:1). All pastors (vocational and volunteer) occupy the same office, share equal authority, and act as a body (Acts 13:1-3; 15:22-23). The body of pastors within the Church will be referred to as the Pastoral Team. The Pastoral Team must consist of at least two pastors. In the event of only one pastor see Section 1, H.
- b. The Pastoral Team should be composed of spiritually mature men that are fully committed to Christ and His church as evidenced by their faithful service and financial support as members of this church. Most importantly, these men consistently demonstrate the Christ-like character and conduct required of a pastor in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4.
- c. If a pastor departs theologically from the doctrinal positions articulated in the church's statement of faith he shall inform the Pastoral Team.

#### **B. Duties**

- a. Pastors, as under-shepherds of Christ (1 Pet. 5:1-4), must serve as examples, teach sound doctrine, guard against false doctrine, care for the spiritual well-being of the Church, govern the affairs of the Church, equip the Church for ministry, and raise up future leadership.
- b. The Pastoral Team is responsible to examine and instruct prospective members; examine and recommend all prospective candidates for the offices of Pastor or Deacon; oversee the work of the deacons, teams, and employees of the Church; plan the corporate worship gatherings of the Church; administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper; equip the saints for the work of the ministry; and oversee the process of church discipline. The

Pastoral Team is also responsible to ensure that all who minister the Word of God to the congregation (whether in classes, studies, or from the pulpit), including outside speakers, are in earnest agreement with the Church's statement of faith (Appendix 1).

- c. The Lead Pastor (see job description in Policy Manual) shall be responsible for overseeing the Pastoral Team by calling the meetings, setting the agendas, and communicating with team members.
- d. The Pastoral Team shall meet, at minimum, each month. In addition, special meetings of the Pastoral Team may be convened at the discretion of any Pastoral Team member, subject to the adequate notice of such meeting to all Pastoral Team members. No meeting of the Pastoral Team shall be convened without the awareness of the whole Pastoral Team. In lieu of a special called meeting, any matter requiring action and the consent of the Pastoral Team may be permitted if all Pastoral Team members consent in writing to the action, including electronic means.
- e. The Pastoral Team shall have the primary responsibility for establishing ministry positions and proposing the employment of individuals, whether from among the Church membership or those outside the Church, to assist them in fulfilling their duties.
- f. Every member of the Pastoral Team will receive a job description based upon available hours to serve and compensation by the Church. Specific policies related to compensation and time-off shall be located in the personnel section of the Policy Manual.

### **C. Calling and Appointment of the Lead Pastor**

- a. The Lead Pastor will be employed by the church thereby enabling him to give himself more freely to the work at hand.
- b. In the absence of the Lead Pastor, the Pastoral Team will assemble a Search Team to identify a candidate who is qualified to serve as the Lead Pastor. If no Pastoral Team exists, the Deacon Team will assemble the Search Team.
  - i. When called upon, the Search Team will consist of up to seven members from the Church membership, not to include spouses or relatives.
  - ii. The Search Team members will be presented to the congregation and affirmed by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting.
  - iii. The Search Team will be led by a member of the Pastoral Team. If there is no available Pastoral Team member to lead, the Deacon Team Leader will lead the Search Team.
  - iv. If there is an internal candidate, that candidate is restricted from assembling and serving in any capacity regarding the Search Team.
- c. The Search Team shall present the candidate before the Church membership for their consideration providing sufficient notice and opportunity for the Church members to meet, hear from, and interact with the candidate before a vote. Upon approval by a three-fourths vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting, the candidate will be installed as a pastor by the laying on of hands by the membership.

### **D. Calling and Appointment of Additional Pastor(s)**

- a. The Pastoral Team and the Church shall decide if the need for an additional pastor(s) exists.
- b. When a need is identified, the Pastoral Team shall notify the congregation of the need and request them to recommend to the Pastoral Team those men whom they believe meet the qualifications.
- c. The Pastoral Team will review the names submitted, along with any additional names of men they believe to be qualified. In some cases candidates from outside the Church may need to be considered.
- d. Each name submitted will be carefully and prayerfully considered and reviewed according to the need and his qualifications, gifts, and willingness to serve.
- e. Upon the recommendation of the Pastoral Team, men who are not pastors who appear to demonstrate the character and possess the desire to serve in the office of pastor may engage in an intensive period of discipleship training and assessment outlined in the Policy Manual. At the completion of this period and upon mutual agreement that it would benefit the Church for this man to become a pastor, the aforementioned man will be presented to the Church membership for their consideration on whether or not to ordain him. Any Church member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for the office should express such concern to the Pastoral Team as far in advance as possible. Upon approval by a three-fourths vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting, the candidate will be ordained as a pastor with the laying on of hands by the congregation.
- f. Upon the recommendation of the Pastoral Team, men having previously been ordained by the Church or another like-minded church, will be presented to the Church membership for their consideration on whether or not to install him as a pastor of the Church. Any Church member with reason to believe that a candidate is not suited for service should express such concern to the Pastoral Team as far in advance as possible. Upon approval by a

three-fourths vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting, the candidate will be installed as a pastor by the laying on of hands by the congregation. These pastors may be compensated by the Church for their work as approved in the annual budget.

#### **E. Tenure and Status**

- a. The men composing the Pastoral Team are each expected to keep their charge and serve indefinitely unless otherwise disqualified or unable to fulfill the duties corresponding to their calling.
- b. Any volunteer pastor may request to take a respite from his role as a pastor. The respite must be approved by the Pastoral Team. The respite shall be for a fixed time which is agreed upon by the Pastoral Team and it shall be announced at a ministry meeting of the Church.

#### **F. Sabbatical**

- a. In respect of the well-being of a pastor, either a pastor or Church members may recommend, request, and/or submit a sabbatical proposal to the Church membership for their approval.
- b. Following an approval of a sabbatical proposal, a sabbatical covenant will be made.

#### **G. Removal**

- a. Any charge against a pastor due to moral impropriety or theological error shall be reported to the Pastoral Team and Deacon Team by no less than two people in accordance with 1 Timothy 5:19-21. If the Pastoral Team and Deacon Team believes the charges are of a credible nature, they will proceed to investigate them in preparation for further action.
- b. If the charges are substantiated, the Pastoral Team and Deacon Team shall determine the consequences and the appropriate communication to the Church membership (1 Timothy 5:20).
- c. If the charges are not substantiated, the Pastoral Team and Deacon Team will determine what communication, if any, needs to be made to the Church membership as well as, pastorally, what action should be taken with those who brought forth the accusations.
- d. If it is decided after a formal evaluation process that either a pastor is 1) no longer functioning effectively or fruitfully in his role, or 2) is found to no longer qualify for his position because of personal or moral failure, he may be removed from the office of pastor. This change must be recommended by at least a majority of the Pastoral Team and Deacon Team and affirmed by a three-fourths vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting.
- e. A pastor who has been removed from office by disciplinary action may, depending on the circumstances and only after evidencing the fruit of repentance over time, be considered by the Pastoral Team, Deacon Team, and the Church membership for a return to service in the office of pastor, following the selection and affirmation procedures outlined in the Bylaws.

#### **H. Without a Pastoral Team**

- a. In the case where the Church only has one pastor, thus not able to constitute or operate as a Pastoral Team, the remaining pastor will work closely with the Deacon Team as his advisory board in the continuing operation of the Church.
- b. In the case where the Church is without a Pastoral Team, the Deacon Team shall assume the responsibility of interviewing candidates for the position of Interim Pastor and present one candidate for a vote of approval by the Church membership present at a ministry meeting.
  - i. Until an Interim Pastor is hired, the Deacon Team will arrange pulpit supply.

### **Section 2 - Deacons**

#### **A. Qualifications**

- a. Deacons of the Church shall be men who love God and the local church body, are called to be servants, who meet all the qualifications of the Bible set forth in Acts 6:1-4 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13, who are conscientiously and wholeheartedly in agreement with the Constitution of this Church, and have been a member of the Church in good standing for a minimum of 6 (six) months.

#### **B. Duties**

- a. In Acts 6:1-4, certain men were appointed to minister to the physical needs of the flock, to relieve the Apostles of certain duties so they would have more time to concentrate on prayer and the Word. These men were forerunners of what we understand to be deacons and functioned as helpers to the leaders of the Jerusalem church, who were forerunners of the pastors in the New Testament church.
- b. Deacons shall assist the Pastoral Team in ministering to the needs of the congregation by providing logistical and material support, though they may serve in other capacities as their gifts and training allow.



- c. The Pastoral Team, according to the need of the Church and a deacon's particular gifts, capacities, and talents will designate their specific duties. See the Policy Manual for a deacon job description.

### **C. Calling and Appointment**

- a. The congregation and Pastoral Team should be on the alert to those men who demonstrate the qualifications of a deacon.
- b. The following outlines the procedure the Church will follow in selecting deacons:
  - i. The Pastoral Team and the Deacon Team shall decide if the need for a deacon exists.
  - ii. When a need is identified, the Pastoral Team shall notify the congregation of the need and request them to recommend to the Pastoral Team those men whom they believe meet the qualifications.
  - iii. The Pastoral Team will review the names submitted, along with any additional names of men they believe to be qualified.
  - iv. Each name submitted will be carefully and prayerfully considered and reviewed according to the need and his qualifications, gifts, and willingness to serve.
  - v. The Pastoral Team will then appoint that man, or men, whom they believe to be qualified to serve, to enter into a year-long residency where they will be trained alongside the existing Deacon Team and further examined by the Pastoral Team, Deacon Team, and congregation.
    - 1. If the Pastoral Team, Deacon Team, congregation, or candidate determines that they are not fit for the office of Deacon, they can discontinue their residency. To be put back into the residency at a later date, they will need to be re-nominated by the Church membership, Deacon Team, or Pastoral Team, to then restart a year-long residency.
  - vi. After completion of the individual's year-long residency, he shall be affirmed by a three-fourths vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting, and then fully implemented as a deacon of the Church.

### **D. Tenure and Status**

- a. Deacons shall be appointed to serve as long as they are a member of the Church in good standing, qualified and called, willing to serve, and as long as a need for their ministry exists.
- b. In the event that a deacon desires a voluntary and temporary removal, he will be placed on a list of "Inactive" deacons. Those whose status is "Inactive" are not part of the Deacon Team until such time as they are placed back into "Active" status.
- c. Those on the list of "Inactive" Deacons will be consulted each year to discuss whether or not they desire to move to "Active" Deacon for at least one year. If a deacon wishes to move from "Inactive" status to "Active" status, they must discuss with the Pastoral Team, as well as the Deacon Team. They will then need a vote of approval by three-fourths of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting. Upon a successful vote of approval, that deacon will be moved from an "Inactive" status to "Active" status, which places them back onto the functioning Deacon Team.

### **E. Dismissal of Deacons**

- a. Voluntary - A deacon may voluntarily step down from his position at any time he chooses. This decision could be on a temporary or permanent basis. The deacon should prayerfully reflect on his decision and seek counsel from the Pastoral Team before making a final decision.
- b. Involuntary - Termination of a deacon shall follow the procedures for church discipline (Article 1, Section 4). If the situation is such that it necessitates dismissal from office, the Pastoral Team may suggest voluntary resignation by the person involved. If he refuses, the Pastoral Team may present their case before the church membership at a special-called ministry meeting wherein the Church membership will vote on whether or not to remove him from office, but only after the principles for church discipline have been prayerfully considered and followed (Matt. 18:15-18).

### **Section 3 - Ministry Team Leaders**

- A. A ministry may emerge within the Church without the need for a pastor or vocational staff leader. A volunteer-led ministry team is not only allowed, but encouraged.
- B. Volunteer leaders of such ministry teams are provided shepherding oversight by the Pastoral Team.
- C. A Ministry Team Leader shall be an active member of the Church for a minimum of one (1) year, appointed by the Pastoral Team, and agree to serve for a term of one year.

## ARTICLE III - ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES

### **Section 1 - Non-Pastoral Staff**

“Non-Pastoral Staff” shall refer to persons employed by the Church to assist the pastoral staff in Church operations. Non-Pastoral Staff may be full- or part-time positions, or may be temporary, residency or internship positions. Specific policies related to compensation and time off shall be located in the personnel section of the Policy Manual.

#### **A. Qualifications**

- a. Be a Christian and a model servant.
- b. They must be in earnest agreement with the Church’s statement of faith.

#### **B. Duties**

- a. Support the ministry of the Pastoral Team and the Church.
- b. Attend to tangible needs, organize and mobilize acts of service, preserve the unity of the flock, carry out administrative tasks.

#### **C. Employment**

- a. Candidates will be identified and proposed to the Church by the Pastoral Team.
- b. All staff must be affirmed by a three-fourths vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting.

#### **D. Tenure and Status**

- a. Non-Pastoral Staff shall be called and dismissed by the Pastoral Team, though the Church must approve the budget requirement.
- b. The Pastoral Team shall provide each Non-Pastoral Staff member with a detailed job description outlining all duties and responsibilities, and oversee their diligence.

#### **E. Removal**

- a. Non-Pastoral Staff may be removed from their position by the Pastoral Team or by a three-fourths vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting.

### **Section 2 - Corporate Officers**

As required by the Missouri Revised Statutes Title XXIII, Chapter 355, the corporate officers of the Church shall be the President and Secretary. None of these corporate officers shall have any duties or rights not delegated to them by the membership of the Church or these Bylaws.

#### **A. President**

- a. The Lead Pastor shall serve as the President. In the event the Church is without a Lead Pastor, a member of the Pastoral Team will be elected by the Church to fill this role. If the Church is without a Pastoral Team, the Deacon Team Leader will assume this role.
- b. The President shall be authorized to sign and file the annual reports necessary to maintain the corporation as a legal entity and be authorized to sign legal documents on behalf of the Church, so long as the action has been approved by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting.

#### **B. Secretary**

- a. The Secretary shall be the same person elected to serve as the Church clerk;
- b. keep accurate records of actions taken at all ministry meetings of the Corporation and shall submit such records for approval at the next ministry meeting;
- c. assist in preserving, in a safe place, all records of the Corporation, including Church membership rolls;
- d. be authorized to sign and file the annual reports necessary to maintain the corporation as a legal entity; and
- e. be authorized to sign legal documents on behalf of the Church, so long as the action has been approved by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting.

#### **C. Duties**

- a. Officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these Bylaws and the laws of the State of Missouri governing non-profit corporations.

#### **D. Tenure and Status**

- a. Each officer shall hold their office until their successor has been duly elected and qualified, until their death, or until they resign or have been removed in the manner provided by these Bylaws.

#### **E. Removal**

- a. Any corporate officer may be removed by the Pastoral Team or by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting if the best interests of the Corporation will be served through removal.

### **Section 3 - Board of Directors**

As required by the Missouri Revised Statutes Title XXIII, Chapter 355, the board of directors will be at least three (3) in number and be authorized to act on behalf of the Corporation on legal matters. None of these board of directors shall have any duties or rights not delegated to them by the Pastoral Team, the Church membership, or these Bylaws.

- A.** The President, Secretary, Treasurer shall serve as the three (3) required board members.
- B.** When the signatures of the board of directors are required, they shall sign legal documents so long as the action has been approved by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting.

### **Section 4 - Administrators**

#### **A. Treasurer**

- a.** The Treasurer shall be an active member of the church for a minimum of one (1) year, not be a member of the pastoral team; recommended by the Pastoral Team, and approved by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting for a term of two years;
- b.** lead the Finance Team;
- c.** be a signer on the all church financial accounts;
- d.** pay and/or oversee the timely payment of all bills and invoices;
- e.** assist in preparing regular and annual reports and present them to the Church for approval;
- f.** assist in entering transactions into the accounting software, and ensure all accounts are up-to-date and properly balanced;
- g.** actively monitor all accounts, including investment accounts, and make recommended actions when appropriate; and
- h.** ensure that all funds and securities of the Church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, and depositories as appropriate.

#### **B. Finance Secretary**

- a.** The Finance Secretary shall be an active member of the Church for a minimum of one (1) year, recommended by the Pastoral Team, and approved by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting for a term of two (2) years;
- b.** not be a member of the pastoral staff;
- c.** be a member of the Finance Team;
- d.** be a signer on the all church financial accounts;
- e.** reconcile monthly bank statements and record all contributions to the Church in a confidential record. They shall also provide an annual report to each individual giver in January, covering the individual's contributions to the Church in the preceding calendar year
- f.** be a de-facto member of the counting team; and
- g.** provide information in general on the number of givers to the Church. However, they are not allowed to discuss specific information concerning individual giving with anyone outside of the Finance Team.

#### **C. Clerk**

- a.** The Church clerk shall be an active member of the Church for a minimum of one (1) year, recommended by the Pastoral Team, and approved by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting for a term of two (2) years;
- b.** not be a member of the pastoral staff;
- c.** be responsible for recording the minutes at all regularly scheduled or special business meetings, including all key reports presented;
- d.** be responsible for counting votes, along with another designated individual, in the case of a ballot vote;
- e.** also serve as the legal Secretary of the non-profit corporation; and
- f.** If deemed necessary, additional duties may be assigned to the Church clerk by the Church.

#### **D. Moderator**

- a.** The Moderator shall be an active member of the Church for a minimum of one (1) year, recommended by the Pastoral Team, and approved by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting for a term of two (2) years; and
- b.** preside over all Church business meetings, except when the matter before the Church relates directly to the Moderator.

## ARTICLE IV - MINISTRY MEETINGS

### **Section 1 - Purpose**

Ministry meetings are an opportunity **(a)** for the Pastoral Team to communicate with the membership of the Church, **(b)** for Church members to vote on matters requiring Church membership approval, **(c)** for Church members to bring forward matters or motions, **(d)** to report and discuss matters of ministry, **(e)** to report and discuss any business as it relates to the Corporation, and **(f)** to fulfill the Church's obligations to Missouri Revised Statutes Title XXIII, Chapter 355.

### **Section 2 - Ministry Meetings**

- A. The Church shall hold quarterly ministry meetings in the month following the close of the previous fiscal quarter.
- B. The October quarterly ministry meeting will be considered the annual member meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to approve the following year's annual budget, celebrate the past year, cast vision for the future, and communicate ministry highlights, and financial details.

### **Section 3 - Special Ministry Meetings**

Special ministry meetings, to consider matters of a special nature and significance, may be called by the Pastoral Team, Deacon Team, or at the written request of ten (10) active members of the Church delivered to the Clerk. Notice of special ministry meetings must be published and announced at least one week before the meeting is to take place. The notice shall include the agenda, date, time, and place; and it must be given in a way that all Church members have the opportunity to be made aware of the meeting.

### **Section 4 - Voting**

- A. All matters shall be determined by a simple majority vote of the Church membership present, except when otherwise specified in the Constitution or Bylaws.
- B. Votes shall be taken verbally, by a show of hands, or by written ballot. Ballot votes shall be tallied by the Church clerk and one other designated individual selected by the Moderator.
- C. Absentee votes or voting by proxy is not permitted.

### **Section 6 - Quorum**

The presence of twenty percent (20%) of all voting Church members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

### **Section 7 - Parliamentary Rules**

*Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all ministry meetings of the Church.

### **Section 8 - Conduct**

All Church meetings should be marked by genuine love, grace, honor, humility, and mutual submission, which is fitting and required of those who are members of Christ's church.

## ARTICLE V - FINANCE

### **Section 1 - Finance Team**

- A. The Finance Team shall be composed of the Treasurer, Finance Secretary, and Church members as needed who are recommended by the Pastoral Team and approved by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting. Team members must be active, supporting members of the Church for a minimum of one (1) year and have shown support of the Church and all its ministries through regular giving.
- B. The Finance Team shall be led by the Treasurer.
- C. The Finance Team shall:
  - a. recommend the annual budget for the coming fiscal year;
  - b. execute established financial policies and procedures, ensuring that fiscal accountability is maintained and that all financial matters are above reproach;
  - c. coordinate independent audits as deemed necessary by the Pastoral Team;
  - d. review staff compensation and benefit review;
  - e. review purchase, disposition, and financing of real and personal property in excess of \$100,000; and
  - f. coordinate capital fund-raising campaigns.

- D. Finance Team members can serve as additional signers on church financial accounts when approved by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting.
- E. Pastoral Team members will be ex officio members of the Finance Team, and cannot serve as signers on financial accounts.

## **Section 2 - Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year shall match the calendar year.

## **Section 3 - Annual Budget**

- A. By October 1st each year, the Finance Team will present the Pastoral Team with the proposed annual budget for the next fiscal year. The Pastoral Team will make any needed adjustments and approve the proposed annual budget.
- B. At least two weeks prior to the annual ministry meeting, the Finance Team will send a copy of the proposed annual budget for the next fiscal year to each Church member, allowing concerns to be voiced and questions to be answered. The Pastoral Team will evaluate questions and concerns, make any necessary changes, and will present the final approved annual budget at the annual ministry meeting.
- C. Approval of the annual budget shall constitute authority for the expenditure of funds in the amounts and for the purposes stated in the annual budget.

## **Section 4 - Accounting Procedures**

- A. While we believe that the Church should operate by faith, we also believe that everything must be done decently and in order so as to provide things honestly before all men.
- B. All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the Finance Team and be properly recorded.
- C. A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the Finance Team.
- D. Anyone making an authorized expenditure should submit a purchase requisition to the Finance Team explaining the purchase and its purpose.
- E. The Finance Team must be notified prior to an expenditure exceeding \$1,000.
- F. Expenditures exceeding \$2,000 not originally included within the annual budget must be approved by a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting.
- G. The Finance Team shall provide an accurate accounting at the end of each year to those individuals who have contributed during the year.

## **Section 5 - Restricted Funds**

- A. Donor restricted funds may be received by the Church as long as the funds are for ministries that are in accordance with the stated goals and purposes of the Church, pending the approval of the membership of the Church, and in accordance with the Policy Manual.
- B. All accepted monies contributed to the Church ministries and restricted by the donor for their dispersal shall be dispersed according to the donor's desires as quickly as possible subject to current tax laws.

## **ARTICLE VI - MINISTRIES**

The Pastoral Team shall have the liberty to implement or discontinue any ministry or activity in keeping with the Church's mission and vision, subject to Church membership approval of budget requirements.

## **ARTICLE VII - MINISTRY TEAMS**

- A. The Church shall have ministry teams to assist the Pastoral Team with carrying out the mission and the vision of the Church.
- B. Each ministry team will have a team leader, and can annually request a line item in the annual budget for ministry expenses.
- C. Ministry teams will be evaluated annually by the Pastoral Team. The results of the evaluation shall be shared with the respective team leader.
- D. Pastoral Team members will be ex officio members of all ministry teams.

### **ARTICLE VIII - MESSENGERS**

- A. Messengers shall be Church members elected by the Church membership as needed to represent it at local, associational, regional, state, national, or worldwide meetings in which the Church chooses to participate. The number of messengers will be determined by the respective organizations and communicated to the Church.
- B. The Lead Pastor shall serve as a messenger to all such meetings he is able to attend.
- C. The Church membership shall annually elect representatives to the Heart of Missouri Baptist Association Executive Board who will also be messengers at the Heart of Missouri Baptist Association Executive annual meeting.

### **ARTICLE IX - POLICY MANUAL**

- A. The Pastoral Team shall develop and keep updated a Policy Manual. The Policy Manual should include Church policies, procedures, staff, personnel, building usage, property and organizational charts indicating lines of responsibility to be used in the administration of the Church. The Policy Manual shall be made available for use by any member of the Church. Any Church member may recommend changes to the Policy Manual. The Pastoral Team shall review the Policy Manual annually, and shall recommend changes for the Church to consider at a ministry meeting for that purpose.
- B. Addition, revision, or deletion of Church policies requires a vote of the Church membership present at a ministry meeting.
- C. The policies in the Policy Manual shall be consistent with the Bible, Constitution, and Bylaws.

### **ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS**

These Bylaws can be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Church membership present at any regular ministry meeting or at a special ministry meeting called for the purpose of considering an amendment to the Bylaws, provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the Pastoral Team and announced to the Church membership from the pulpit two weeks prior to the ministry meeting at which the amendment is to be considered. Amendments can be proposed by any member, in good standing, of the Church.

# Appendix 1

## The 2000 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.

Ex. 24:4; Deut. 4:1-2; 17:19; Josh. 8:34; Ps. 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isa. 34:16; 40:8; Jer. 15:16; 36:1-32; Matt. 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Rom. 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 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.

Gen. 1:1; 2:7; Ex. 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Lev. 22:2; Deut. 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chron. 29:10; Ps. 19:1-3; Isa. 43:3,15; 64:8; Jer. 10:10; 17:13; Matt. 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; Rom. 8:14-15; 1 Cor. 8:6; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 4:6; Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; Heb. 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.

Gen. 18:1ff.; Ps. 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isa. 7:14; Isa. 53:1-12; Matt. 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; Rom. 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; 8:9; Gal. 4:4-5; Eph. 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thes. 4:14-18; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Heb. 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; Rev. 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.

Gen. 1:2; Jud. 14:6; Job 26:13; Ps. 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isa. 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matt. 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; Rom. 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Cor. 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thes. 5:19; 1 Tim. 3:16;4:1; 2 Tim. 1:14; 3:16; Heb. 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Rev. 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.

Gen. 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Ps. 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isa. 6:5; Jer. 17:5; Matt. 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Rom. 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Cor. 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Eph. 2:1-22; Col. 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.

Gen. 3:15; Ex. 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matt. 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; Rom. 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 Cor. 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Cor. 5:17-20; Gal. 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Phi. 2:12-13; Col. 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thes. 5:23-24; 2 Tim. 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Heb. 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; Rev. 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.

Gen. 12:1-3; Ex. 19:5-8; 1 Sam. 8:4-7,19-22; Isa. 5:1-7; Jer. 31:31ff.; Matt. 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; Rom. 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Cor. 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Eph. 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Col. 1:12-14; 2 Thes. 2:13-14; 2 Tim. 1:12; 2:10,19; Heb. 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; 1 Corinthians 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.