

CONSTITUTION

CHRIST CHAPEL BIBLE CHURCH



CHRIST CHAPEL
BIBLE CHURCH

Preamble

We, the members of Christ Chapel Bible Church, do adopt and establish the following articles to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I – Purpose

The purpose of this body of believers is to glorify God:

1. in developing a family of believers which is first and foremost coming to know, enjoy and love God through the Lord Jesus Christ;
2. in laboring and striving according to His power to present every believer complete in Christ;
3. in regularly meeting together for the worship of God and for the equipping of the believers for the work of service to the building up of Christ through the faithful teaching of the Scriptures, through prayer, through the singing of praises to God and through fellowship;
4. in committing to work together and to be accountable to one another to permit God to develop the spiritual gifts of this body of believers for serving one another and others as God leads both financially and otherwise;
5. in evangelizing through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, locally and worldwide;
6. in supporting and working with other Christian ministries in harmony with God's Word; and
7. in the ordination of qualified men to the ministry, until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE II – Doctrine

SECTION 1 – The Scriptures

We believe that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” by which we understand the whole Bible is inspired in the sense that holy men of God “were moved by the Holy Spirit” to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings—historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic—as appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe that the whole Bible in the originals is therefore without error. We believe that all the Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming, and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read, or

understood, until it leads to Him. We also believe that all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction (Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2–3; 18:28; 26:22–23; 28:23; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 2:13; 10:11; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21).

SECTION 2 – The Godhead

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—and that these three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence, and obedience (Matt. 28:18–19; Mark 12:29; John 1:14; Acts 5:3–4; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 1:1–3; Rev. 1:4–6).

SECTION 3 – Angels, Fallen and Unfallen

We believe that God created an innumerable company of sinless, spiritual beings, known as angels; that one, “Lucifer, son of the morning”—the highest in rank—sinned through pride, thereby becoming Satan; that a great company of the angels followed him in his moral fall, some of whom became demons and are active as his agents and associates in the prosecution of his unholy purposes, while others who fell are “reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day” (Isa. 14:12–17; Ezek. 28:11–19; 1 Tim. 3:6; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).

We believe that Satan is the originator of sin, and that, under the permission of God, he, through subtlety, led our first parents into transgression, thereby accomplishing their moral fall and subjecting them and their posterity to his own power; that he is the enemy of God and the people of God, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped; and that he who in the beginning said, “I will be like the most High,” in his warfare appears as an angel of light, even counterfeiting the works of God by fostering religious movements and systems of doctrine, which systems in every case are characterized by a denial of the efficacy of the blood of Christ and of salvation by grace alone (Gen. 3:1–19; Rom. 5:12–14; 2 Cor. 4:3–4; 11:13–15; Eph. 6:10–12; 2 Thess. 2:4; 1 Tim. 4:1–3). We believe that Satan was judged at the Cross, though not then executed, and that he, a usurper, now rules as the “god of this world”; that, at the second coming of Christ, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years, and after the thousand years he will be loosed for a little season and then “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone,” where he “shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever” (Col. 2:15; Rev. 20:1–3, 10). We believe that a great company of angels kept their holy estate and are before the throne of God, from whence they are sent forth as ministering spirits to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation (Luke 15:10; Eph. 1:21; Heb. 1:14; Rev. 7:12). We believe that man was made lower than the angels; and that, in His incarnation, Christ

took for a little time this lower place that He might lift the believer to His own sphere above the angels (Heb. 2:6–10).

SECTION 4 – Man, Created and Fallen

We believe that man was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, and that he fell through sin, and, as a consequence of his sin, lost his spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and that he became subject to the power of the devil. We also believe that this spiritual death, or total depravity of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad apart from divine grace (Gen. 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Pss. 14:1–3; 51:5; Jer. 17:9; John 3:6; 5:40; 6:35; Rom. 3:10–19; 8:6–7; Eph. 2:1–3; 1 Tim. 5:6; 1 John 3:8).

SECTION 5 – The Dispensations

We believe that the dispensations are stewardships by which God administers His purpose on the earth through man under varying responsibilities. We believe that the changes in the dispensational dealings of God with man depend on changed conditions or situations in which man is successively found with relation to God, and that these changes are the result of the failures of man and the judgments of God. We believe that different administrative responsibilities of this character are manifest in the biblical record, that they span the entire history of mankind, and that each ends in the failure of man under the respective test and in an ensuing judgment from God. We believe that three of these dispensations or rules of life are the subject of extended revelation in the Scriptures, viz., the dispensation of the Mosaic Law, the present dispensation of grace, and the future dispensation of the millennial kingdom. We believe that these are distinct and are not to be intermingled or confused, as they are chronologically successive.

We believe that the dispensations are not ways of salvation nor different methods of administering the so-called Covenant of Grace. They are not in themselves dependent on covenant relationships but are ways of life and responsibility to God which test the submission of man to His revealed will during a particular time. We believe that if man does trust in his own efforts to gain the favor of God or salvation under any dispensational test, because of inherent sin his failure to satisfy fully the just requirements of God is inevitable and his condemnation sure.

We believe that according to the “eternal purpose” of God (Eph. 3:11) salvation in the divine reckoning is always “by grace through faith,” and rests upon the basis of the shed blood of Christ. We believe that God has always been gracious, regardless of the ruling dispensation, but that man has not at

all times been under an administration or stewardship of grace as is true in the present dispensation (1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 3:2; 3:9, asv; Col. 1:25; 1 Tim. 1:4, asv).

We believe that it has always been true that “without faith it is impossible to please” God (Heb. 11:6), and that the principle of faith was prevalent in the lives of all the Old Testament saints. However, we believe that it was historically impossible that they should have had as the conscious object of their faith the incarnate, crucified Son, the Lamb of God (John 1:29), and that it is evident that they did not comprehend as we do that the sacrifices depicted the person and work of Christ. We believe also that they did not understand the redemptive significance of the prophecies or types concerning the sufferings of Christ (1 Pet. 1:10–12); therefore, we believe that their faith toward God was manifested in other ways as is shown by the long record in Hebrews 11:1–40. We believe further that their faith thus manifested was counted unto them for righteousness (cf. Rom. 4:3 with Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:5–8; Heb. 11:7).

SECTION 6 – The First Advent

We believe that, as provided and purposed by God and as preannounced in the prophecies of the Scriptures, the eternal Son of God came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end He was born of the virgin, and received a human body and a sinless human nature (Luke 1:30–35; John 1:18; 3:16; Heb. 4:15).

We believe that, on the human side, He became and remained a perfect man, but sinless throughout His life; yet He retained His absolute deity, being at the same time very God and very man, and that His earth-life sometimes functioned within the sphere of that which was human and sometimes within the sphere of that which was divine (Luke 2:40; John 1:1–2; Phil. 2:5–8).

We believe that in fulfillment of prophecy He came first to Israel as her Messiah-King, and that, being rejected of that nation, He, according to the eternal counsels of God, gave His life as a ransom for all (John 1:11; Acts 2:22–24; 1 Tim. 2:6).

We believe that, in infinite love for the lost, He voluntarily accepted His Father’s will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb and took away the sin of the world, bearing the holy judgments against sin which the righteousness of God must impose. His death was therefore substitutionary in the most absolute sense—the just for the unjust—and by His death He became the Savior of the lost (John 1:29; Rom. 3:25–26; 2 Cor. 5:14; Heb. 10:5–14; 1 Pet. 3:18).

We believe that, according to the Scriptures, He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He had lived and died, and that His resurrection body is the pattern of that body which ultimately will be given to all believers (John 20:20; Phil. 3:20–21).

We believe that, on departing from the earth, He was accepted of His Father and that His acceptance is a final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished (Heb. 1:3).

We believe that He became Head over all things to the church which is His body, and in this ministry He ceases not to intercede and advocate for the saved (Eph. 1:22–23; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1).

SECTION 7 – Salvation Only Through Christ

We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again; and that no degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven; but a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation, and only those thus saved are sons of God. We believe, also, that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying in our room and stead; and that no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, nor all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles can add in the very least degree to the value of the blood, or to the merit of the finished work wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper deity with perfect and sinless humanity (Lev. 17:11; Isa. 64:6; Matt. 26:28; John 3:7–18; Rom. 5:6–9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; 6:15; Eph. 1:7; Phil. 3:4–9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:18–19, 23).

We believe that the new birth of the believer comes only through faith in Christ and that repentance is a vital part of believing, and is in no way, in itself, a separate and independent condition of salvation; nor are any other acts, such as confession, baptism, prayer, or faithful service, to be added to believing as a condition of salvation (John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Rom. 1:16–17; 3:22, 26; 4:5; 10:4; Gal. 3:22).

SECTION 8 – The Extent of Salvation

We believe that when an unregenerate person exercises that faith in Christ which is illustrated and described as such in the New Testament, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life, and from the old creation into the new; being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according as Christ His Son is accepted, loved as Christ is loved,

having his place and portion as linked to Him and one with Him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ, and is therefore in no way required by God to seek a so-called “second blessing,” or a “second work of grace” (John 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:1; 1 Cor. 3:21–23; Eph. 1:3; Col. 2:10; 1 John 4:17; 5:11–12).

SECTION 9 – Sanctification

We believe that sanctification, which is a setting-apart unto God, is threefold: It is already complete for every saved person because his position toward God is the same as Christ’s position. Since the believer is in Christ, he is set apart unto God in the measure in which Christ is set apart unto God. We believe, however, that he retains his sin nature, which cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing of the Christian in Christ is perfect, his present state is no more perfect than his experience in daily life. There is, therefore, a progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is to “grow in grace,” and to “be changed” by the unhindered power of the Spirit. We believe also that the child of God will yet be fully sanctified in his state as he is now sanctified in his standing in Christ when he shall see his Lord and shall be “like Him” (John 17:17; 2 Cor. 3:18; 7:1; Eph. 4:24; 5:25–27; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 10:10, 14; 12:10).

SECTION 10 – Eternal Security

We believe that, because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love, because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless on the ground of the propitiatory blood of Christ, because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of God, because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, we and all true believers everywhere, once saved shall be kept saved forever. We believe, however, that God is a holy and righteous Father and that, since He cannot overlook the sin of His children, He will, when they persistently sin, chasten them and correct them in infinite love; but having undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He, who cannot fail, will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son (John 5:24; 10:28; 13:1; 14:16–17; 17:11; Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 6:19; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1–2; 5:13; Jude 24).

SECTION 11 – Assurance

We believe it is the privilege, not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to

be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children filial love, gratitude, and obedience (Luke 10:20; 22:32; 2 Cor. 5:1, 6–8; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 10:22; 1 John 5:13).

SECTION 12 – The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the blessed Trinity, though omnipresent from all eternity, took up His abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost according to the divine promise, dwells in every believer, and by His baptism unites all to Christ in one body, and that He, as the Indwelling One, is the source of all power and all acceptable worship and service. We believe that He never takes His departure from the church, nor from the feeblest of the saints, but is ever present to testify of Christ; seeking to occupy believers with Him and not with themselves nor with their experiences. We believe that His abode in the world in this special sense will cease when Christ comes to receive His own at the completion of the church (John 14:16–17; 16:7–15; 1 Cor. 6:19; Eph. 2:22; 2 Thess. 2:7).

We believe that, in this age, certain well-defined ministries are committed to the Holy Spirit, and that it is the duty of every Christian to understand them and to be adjusted to them in his own life and experience. These ministries are the restraining of evil in the world to the measure of the divine will; the convicting of the world respecting sin, righteousness, and judgment; the regenerating of all believers; the indwelling and anointing of all who are saved, thereby sealing them unto the day of redemption; the baptizing into the one body of Christ of all who are saved; and the continued filling for power, teaching, and service of those among the saved who are yielded to Him and who are subject to His will (John 3:6; 16:7–11; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:30; 5:18; 2 Thess. 2:7; 1 John 2:20–27).

We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healings were temporary. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism nor of the filling of the Spirit, and that the deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection (Acts 4:8, 31; Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 13:8).

SECTION 13 – The Church, A Unity of Believers

We believe that all who are united to the risen and ascended Son of God are members of the church which is the body and bride of Christ, which began at Pentecost and is completely distinct from Israel. Its members are constituted as such regardless of membership or nonmembership in the organized

churches of earth. We believe that by the same Spirit all believers in this age are baptized into, and thus become, one body that is Christ's, whether Jews or Gentiles, and having become members one of another, are under solemn duty to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian differences, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently (Matt. 16:16–18; Acts 2:42–47; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12–27; Eph. 1:20–23; 4:3–10; Col. 3:14–15).

SECTION 14 – The Sacrament or Ordinances

We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only sacraments and ordinances of the church and that they are a scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age (Matt. 28:19; Luke 22:19–20; Acts 10:47–48; 16:32–33; 18:7–8; 1 Cor. 11:26).

SECTION 15 – The Christian Walk

We believe that we are called with a holy calling, to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. But the flesh with its fallen, Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, being with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord (Rom. 6:11–13; 8:2, 4, 12–13; Gal. 5:16–23; Eph. 4:22–24; Col. 2:1–10; 1 Pet. 1:14–16; 1 John 1:4–7; 3:5–9).

SECTION 16 – The Christian's Service

We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit, and each is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit may will. In the apostolic church there were certain gifted men—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers—who were appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints unto their work of the ministry. We believe also that today some men are especially called of God to be evangelists, pastors and teachers, and that it is to the fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory that these shall be sustained and encouraged in their service for God (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4–11; Eph. 4:11).

We believe that, wholly apart from salvation benefits which are bestowed equally upon all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his service for his Lord, and that these rewards will be bestowed at the judgment seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself (1 Cor. 3:9–15; 9:18–27; 2 Cor. 5:10).

SECTION 17 – The Great Commission

We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those

whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth of His Father into the world. We believe that, after they are saved, they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses, and that their primary purpose in life should be to make Christ known to the whole world (Matt. 28:18–19; Mark 16:15; John 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:18–20; 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:11).

SECTION 18 – The Blessed Hope

We believe that, according to the Word of God, the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive to Himself into heaven both His own who are alive and remain unto His coming, and also all who have fallen asleep in Jesus, and that this event is the blessed hope set before us in the Scripture, and for this we should be constantly looking (John 14:1–3; 1 Cor. 15:51–52; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 4:13–18; Titus 2:11–14).

SECTION 19 – The Tribulation

We believe that the translation of the church will be followed by the fulfillment of Israel's seventieth week (Dan. 9:27; Rev. 6:1–19:21) during which the church, the body of Christ, will be in heaven. The whole period of Israel's seventieth week will be a time of judgment on the whole earth, at the end of which the times of the Gentiles will be brought to a close. The latter half of this period will be the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30:7), which our Lord called the great tribulation (Matt. 24:15–21). We believe that universal righteousness will not be realized previous to the second coming of Christ, but that the world is day by day ripening for judgment and that the age will end with a fearful apostasy.

SECTION 20 – The Second Coming of Christ

We believe that the period of great tribulation in the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went, in person on the clouds of heaven, and with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age, to bind Satan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, to restore Israel to her own land and to give her the realization of God's covenant promises, and to bring the whole world to the knowledge of God (Deut. 30:1–10; Isa. 11:9; Ezek. 37:21–28; Matt. 24:15–25:46; Acts 15:16–17; Rom. 8:19–23; 11:25–27; 1 Tim. 4:1–3; 2 Tim. 3:1–5; Rev. 20:1–3).

SECTION 21 – The Eternal State

We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own, whereupon soul and body reunited

shall be associated with Him forever in glory; but the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power (Luke 16:19–26; 23:42; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 2 Thess. 1:7–9; Jude 6–7; Rev. 20:11–15).

This doctrinal statement is the complete and unaltered doctrinal statement of Dallas Theological Seminary.

SECTION 22 – Marriage

We believe the testimony of the God-breathed Holy Scriptures is that the marriage covenant shall be reserved for only one God-made man with one God-made woman. We believe it was our Creator the Lord God Who decided the man should not be alone, Who specifically fashioned the woman as the suitable helper for the man, Who literally made the woman from a part of the man and in the woman made the man complete, Who designed sexual union to be with a husband cleaving to his wife as one flesh, Who bestowed His divine blessing upon the unity of a God-made man and a God-made woman, Who gave the man and the woman the ability to fulfill His charge to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and Who ordained the pattern for human existence that a God-made man and a God-made woman would pair up and cleave to each other in one flesh. We believe that God values man and woman as equals in His Kingdom, yet in the holy unity of marriage, the husband and the wife each have distinct, God-ordained roles and responsibilities. We believe no other relationship can ever be the holy unity between one God-made man and one God-made woman established by our Creator, which the Apostle Paul frequently compared to the holy unity of Christ and the church, and man has no authority to alter the divine order of the unity between one God-made man and one God-made woman (Gen. 2:18-24; 1:27, 28; Matt. 19:4-6; Eph. 5:31, Eph. 5:22-25, 32).

SECTION 23 – Sexuality

We believe sexuality and the divinely prescribed boundaries for the expression thereof is covered clearly in the Holy Scriptures, which limit sexual expression to the marital relationship of one God-made man with one God-made woman. We believe homosexual acts, adultery, bestiality, and all forms of fornication are categorically condemned in the Holy Scriptures (1 Cor. 6:18; 1 Thess. 4:3; Rom. 1:26-27; Prov. 5:3-5, 8-13; Prov. 7:21-27; Gal. 5:19; Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18; Matt. 5:27; Matt. 19:18; Luke 18:20; Rom. 13:9; James 2:11; Lev. 20:10; Lev. 20:13; Lev. 20:15; Lev. 20:10-21; 1 Cor. 10:8; 1 Cor. 6:18; Jude 7).

ARTICLE III – The Membership

SECTION 1 – Definition

For purposes of church government, the membership shall consist of all the members of Christ Chapel Bible Church.

SECTION 2 – Qualification for Membership

Any person desiring to unite with this local church shall be examined by the Board of Elders at a regularly convened meeting and shall satisfy such body of his personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior by affirmation of such faith, and shall agree that Jesus is God; that He was virgin born; that He died as a voluntary substitute for sinful man; that He was bodily raised from the dead; that God imputes righteousness to the believer upon acceptance by faith of His Son as Savior and gives the believer eternal life; that Jesus will bodily return to the earth and that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God.

SECTION 3 – Receiving into Membership

Upon the Elders being satisfied of the applicant's qualifications he shall be received into membership of the church and presented to the membership at an appropriate service thereafter.

SECTION 4 – Termination of Membership

If a member engages in conduct which, in the opinion of the Elder Board, is detrimental to the ministry, unity, peace or purity of the church and such member remains unrepentant, then the Board, by unanimous vote, may declare such member's membership terminated, remove the member's name from the roll and announce such removal from the pulpit of the church on the first Sunday following removal.

At death, the name of a member shall be removed from the roll.

Upon a member joining another church, membership shall be terminated.

SECTION 5 – Membership Meetings

A membership meeting may be called at any time by the Elders, by the giving of notice of the time, place, and purpose at all worship services on the Sunday at least one week previous to the day of the meeting. In case of an emergency, the membership will be notified by mail provided that such notice is placed in the mail not less than five days before the meeting. The Elders shall always call a membership meeting when requested in writing to do so by ten percent of the members of the church, except as provided for in Article V, Section 2(4)(c). No business shall be transacted in such meeting except that stated in the call. The Elders shall call a membership meeting at least once a year to report on the goals for the ensuing Church Year and to hear the recommendations of the membership.

SECTION 6 – Quorum

A quorum for the transaction of business in all membership meetings shall consist of twenty-five (25) percent of the members of this church who are eligible to vote. Only members in good standing and who have attained to the age of eighteen (18) years and upward shall be eligible to vote at any business meeting.

SECTION 7 – Minutes

Minutes of all membership meetings shall be taken by the secretary of the Board of Elders or by a substitute appointed by the Elders and shall be kept in a well-bound book.

SECTION 8 – Order

In the transaction of business in all membership meetings, Robert's Rules of Order shall be used in all cases not covered by this constitution.

ARTICLE IV – Government

The government of this church, under the leadership of Jesus Christ, is vested in the Boards of Elders and Deacons duly elected by the membership.

ARTICLE V – Officers, Pastors, Non-Pastoral Staff and Teachers

SECTION 1 – The Officers

The officers of the church shall consist of a Board of Elders, a Board of Deacons, and a Church Treasurer. Each officer shall be installed in an appropriate ordination service prescribed by the Elders.

SECTION 2 – Pastors

1. Qualifications.

For a man to be considered for Pastor, he shall show evidence of having successfully completed college and seminary training, or shall offer an educational equivalent judged satisfactory by the Elders. Also, every Pastor must meet the requirements of I Timothy 3:-1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 and subscribe to the Doctrinal Statement of the Constitution of the church.

2. Selection.

Any Pastor of the church shall be chosen by the members for an indefinite period (unless otherwise specified in the call), by secret ballot, upon the recommendation of the Elders after prayerful investigation and examination. Only such men shall be recommended for the pastorate who conscientiously subscribe without mental reservation to the

Doctrinal Statement and Constitution of this church, and who are or will become independent of any denomination. The selection of a Pastor shall be voted on at a regularly called meeting of the members. Each Pastor shall be recommended to the church by the Elders and shall be elected by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the qualified members present at a meeting duly called and constituted for the express purpose of considering such recommendation. After his election, the Pastor-elect shall be installed at an appropriate service prescribed by the Elders. Each Pastor's salary shall be set by the joint action of the Elders and Deacons.

3. *Duties.*

It shall be the duty of each Pastor to perform the duties given to him by the Elders. Each Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees without vote. Each Pastor shall spiritually encourage the Elders and Deacons and share with them the shepherding responsibilities for the church.

4. *Termination.*

Termination of a Pastor relationship can be effected in any of the following manners:

- a. If at any time a Pastor shall tender his resignation to the Elders, such resignation may be accepted by the Elders upon any terms specified by the Elders.
- b. The termination of the pastoral relationship can be accomplished by a unanimous vote of all of the Elders at a special or regularly called meeting, provided that written notice of such proposed termination has been mailed to the Pastor and Elders at least one week prior to such meeting. Any Elder who cannot attend the meeting shall express his vote on termination in writing. If so terminated, the Pastor shall receive a minimum of one month's salary after the time of termination.
- c. The termination of the pastoral relationship can be instituted by the members in the following manner. If a petition signed by twenty percent of the members, requesting such termination, shall be presented to the Elders, they shall cause to be called a membership meeting for consideration of the question. The moderator of this meeting shall be the chairman of the Board of Elders or any member of the Board of Elders so designated by the Elders. Upon reading of the petition to the members and discussion thereon, a vote by secret written ballot shall be taken. A simple majority vote of all those present shall be sufficient to cause termination. The pastor shall be entitled to a minimum of one month's salary after such termination.

SECTION 3 – Non-Pastoral Staff

Any staff member shall be chosen by the Elders. Any staff member may be terminated by a vote of the Elders present at a special or regularly called meeting. The salary of staff members shall be set by the joint action of the Elders and Deacons.

SECTION 4 – Teachers

All teachers will be approved by the Elders before teaching in the church. Any teacher may be terminated at any time when, in the opinion of the Elders, the teacher's conduct is detrimental to the ministry, unity, peace or purity of the church. All teachers shall agree to the Doctrinal Statement of the church and shall not teach anything contrary to the Doctrinal Statement.

SECTION 5 – The Elders

1. *Qualifications.*

The qualifications are specifically set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Additionally, each man nominated for Elder must subscribe to the Doctrinal Statement of the church.

2. *Selection.*

The Board of Elders shall be composed of not more than the maximum number of members as determined by the Board of Elders. The positions of such Board of Elders shall be numbered consecutively, beginning with Number 1, and each Elder shall hold the office of Elder designated by that numbered place.

In addition, each Elder shall be assigned to a class in such a manner that there shall be three classes at all times, each with the same number of members insofar as is possible.

Elders shall be elected for a term of three years and to a numbered place and class so that at the end of the Church Year the terms of all the members of one class shall expire.

a. *Nomination.*

At least four weeks before the last Sunday of the Church Year every year and for four consecutive Sundays it shall be announced from the pulpit and published in the church bulletin the names of all of the Elders who are members of the class whose terms expire that year. Such announcement shall also contain nominations by the Board of Elders for the office of Elder for each of the members of the class whose terms are expiring, and nominations for the office of Elder for any vacancies existing on such Board of Elders. Incumbent members of the Board of Elders shall be eligible for nomination and election for no more than two successive terms of office.

Additional candidates for the office of Elder can be nominated by any voting member of the church until the close of the morning service two weeks before the election by presenting the nomination in writing to a member of the Board of Elders and all such nominations shall be to a particular and designated numbered place on the Board of Elders. All persons so nominated from the membership shall be subject to being certified by the Board of Elders as meeting constitutional and scriptural requirements of the office to which they are nominated, and such certification shall be a prerequisite to such nomination, and the refusal of the Board of Elders to certify a nominee shall prevent his being voted upon by the membership. It shall not be necessary for there to be a nomination or candidate for every vacancy on the Board of Elders.

b. *Election.*

The election shall be at a duly constituted membership meeting presided over by the chairman of the Board of Elders or by any member of the Board of Elders so designated by the Elders. The election shall be by secret ballot. The ballots shall be designed so that all nominations for each place on the Board of Elders shall be voted upon separately.

To be elected, an Elder must receive at least a three-fourths majority of the votes of the qualified members present and voting, and the failure to so receive a three-fourths majority shall result in an unfulfilled vacancy on such Board of Elders.

In the event there is more than one nominee for a particular place and the election shall result in no three-fourths majority by any of such nominees, the name of the nominee receiving the highest number of votes on the first ballot shall again be submitted to the membership by secret ballot. This second ballot shall be taken at the same meeting if practicable, but if not practicable, at a meeting held not less than two weeks later for which notice of one week has been given by announcement from the pulpit during the regular service and a notice included in the church bulletin. Said nominee receiving the highest number of votes on the first ballot must receive at least three-fourths majority of the votes of the qualified members present and voting on such second ballot and the failure to so receive a three-fourths majority shall result in an unfulfilled place on such Board of Elders.

c. *Special Election.*

Upon the death, the resignation, or the removal from office of a

member of the Board of Elders, provided that there shall remain more than one year in the unexpired term of such Elder, the Board of Elders may at its discretion call a Special Election for a replacement for such Elder to serve the balance of the unexpired term. Such election shall be conducted as soon as practicable and with all notices and requirements as stipulated for regular elections. If no replacement is elected at such Special Election, such vacancy shall continue until the next regular election.

3. *Duties.*

It shall be the duty of the Elders to care for the church and its spiritual condition, to guard the purity of doctrine and life of the church, and to discipline the church in accordance with the Word of God. The Elders shall assist the Pastors in the administration of the Lord's Supper, act for the church in the reception and dismissal of members, and examine all seeking membership in the church. It shall be the duty of the Elders to assist the pastors in counseling the needy, comforting the afflicted, visiting the sick, and supplying the pulpit of the church when necessary. It shall be the duty of the Elders to supervise the operation of the church with its various organizations. The Elders shall supervise the Church School, the missionary work of the church, the distribution of benevolent funds, the young people's work, and any other organization or activity of the church. The Elders and the Deacons shall jointly approve the church budget to be prepared by the Church Treasurer.

4. *Officers and Committees.*

The Elders shall annually elect a chairman, a secretary, and committee chairmen as are necessary for the functions of its aims as a Board and shall appoint from its members committees for the effectual oversight of the spiritual welfare of the church.

5. *Termination.*

Termination of an Elder to serve on the Board of Elders can be effected in any one of the following manners:

- a. If at any time an Elder shall tender his resignation to the Board of Elders, it shall be accepted.
- b. The termination of an Elder can be accomplished by a unanimous vote of the Elders if an Elder shows himself by person or attitude to be disturbing the purity, peace, or unity of the church; who has changed his views regarding the Doctrinal Statement and Constitution; or whose life and activities are consistently unbecoming an officer in a Christian Church. Such vote on divestiture shall occur at a special or regularly called meeting,

provided that written notice of such proposed termination has been mailed to the Elders at least one week prior to such meeting. The Elder named in the motion for divestiture shall not be permitted to vote. Any Elder who cannot attend the meeting shall express his vote on termination in writing.

- c. The office of Elder shall also be terminated by expiration of term or death.

6. *Quorum.*

A quorum for the transaction of business in all Elders meetings shall consist of a majority of the total number of Elders. All actions taken by the Board of Elders shall require a unanimous vote of the Elders present at a duly constituted meeting of the Elders.

7. *Communication.*

Minutes of all Elders meetings shall be available upon request by any member of the church at any reasonable time and place.

SECTION 6 – The Deacons

1. *Qualifications.*

The qualifications for the Deacons are specifically set forth in I Tim. 3:8-13. Additionally, each man nominated for Deacon must subscribe to the Doctrinal Statement of the church.

2. *Selection.*

The Board of Deacons shall be composed of not more than the maximum number of members as determined by the Board of Elders. The nomination and election of Deacons shall be the same as for Elders except for term of office and classes. The term of office for a Deacon shall be two years. No man shall be elected for more than two successive terms.

3. *Duties.*

The Board of Deacons shall operate under the general supervision of the Board of Elders. The Deacons shall be responsible for the properties of the church and the maintenance of them in proper repair. They shall be responsible for such temporal duties as ushering at church services, the collection of offerings, and the provision of every material thing for proper worship.

4. *Officers and Committees.*

The Deacons shall annually elect a chairman, a secretary and committee chairmen as are necessary for their functioning as a Board and shall

appoint from its members committees for the accomplishment of its various duties.

5. Termination.

Termination of a Deacon to serve on the Board of Deacons can be effected in any one of the following manners:

- a. If at any time a Deacon shall tender his resignation to the Board of Deacons, it shall be accepted.
- b. The Termination of a Deacon can be accomplished by a unanimous vote of the Elders if a Deacon shows himself by person or attitude to be disturbing the purity, peace, or unity of the church; who has changed his views regarding the Doctrinal Statement and Constitution; or whose life and activities are consistently unbecoming an officer in a Christian Church. Such recommendations of divestiture shall occur at a special or regularly called meeting, provided that written notice of such proposed termination has been mailed to the Deacon and the Elders at least one week prior to such meeting. Any Elder who cannot attend shall express his vote on termination in writing.
- c. The office of Deacon shall also be terminated by expiration of term or death.

6. Quorum.

A quorum for the transaction of business in all Deacon meetings shall consist of a majority of the total number of Deacons. All actions taken by the Board of Deacons shall require a unanimous vote of the Deacons present at a duly constituted meeting of the Deacons.

7. Communication.

Minutes of all Deacons meetings shall be available upon request of any church member at any reasonable time and place.

SECTION 7 – Treasurers

1. A church treasurer shall be elected by a majority of the Board of Deacons at its last regular meeting before the end of the church year, such treasurer to serve for the next church year. His signature shall be sufficient for checks drawn on the account of the church and he shall be responsible for keeping all books pertaining to the church's financial affairs except those specifically made the responsibility of other treasurers. He shall be responsible for preparing the church budget.
2. Assistant treasurer or treasurers for special funds may be elected by the Board of Deacons as is expedient for the affairs of the church.

3. Treasurers of the Church School or of various classes or bodies within the church shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Deacons whether they be appointed or elected.
4. Any treasurer of the church, as set out in paragraphs 1-3, shall make available for audit his books at any time upon request of the board of Deacons or the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE VI – Church Year

For the purpose of determining terms of office for all church officers, the church year shall begin on the first day of September and shall end on the last day of August of the following year.

ARTICLE VII – Amendments

This Constitution may be amended at a duly announced meeting of the membership providing the proposed amendment has been conspicuously posted in written form, or a letter sent to members, and announced from the pulpit, for a period of two consecutive Sundays preceding said meeting; and provided further, that any such proposed amendment shall receive an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the qualified members present at a duly constituted meeting of the membership.

ARTICLE VIII – Ordinances

SECTION 1 – Baptism

Baptism is one of the two ordinances instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ. If a member of the church has not been baptized, the Elders shall recommend that such member be baptized as an act of obedience and testimony. The mode of baptism being only a testimony to a spiritual reality, shall be by sprinkling or immersion at the candidate's option.

SECTION 2 – The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper shall be administered as frequently as the Elders shall order during the church year.

ARTICLE IX – Ordination

The church shall have the authority to ordain qualified men to the gospel ministry. Such men shall be ordained and given a commission to preach and administer the ordinances by an ordination council composed of the Pastors and the Board of Elders. The ordaining council shall thoroughly

examine all applicants for ordination as to their call to the Christian ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation, character, doctrinal belief, and demonstrated efficiency in Christian service.

ARTICLE X – Dedication of Children

It shall be the policy of the church to have children dedicated to the Lord in a brief ceremony where the parents are committed to rear the children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and request the dedication ceremony.

ARTICLE XI – Fiscal Policy

The church shall not acquire property or services unless they are paid for in full when acquired or upon receipt of the bill for same. No officer or Pastor of the church is authorized to incur on behalf of the church a debt or execute evidence of debt requiring the payment of interest.



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