

Amended: September 2019

# Constitution

Cornerstone  
Baptist Church



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**Cornerstone Baptist Church** Simply Adhering to  
God's Word for Evangelism, Edification, and Living.

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## **PREAMBLE**

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We, being born-again and Bible-believing Baptists, in the interest of growth in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ through worship and work; and that we might fulfill our responsibilities to propagate the Word of God both at home and abroad; and to contend earnestly for the faith; and that “all things might be done decently and in order”, do institute the following statement of our faith and principles for our government.

## **ARTICLE I Name and Objective**

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### **SECTION A Name**

This congregation of believers shall be known as the “Cornerstone Baptist Church” of Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

### **SECTION B Objective**

The objective of this church shall be to minister the Gospel of Jesus Christ for all purposes required in or consistent with Scripture, including, but not limited to the purpose of:

1. Evangelizing the unsaved through worship and evangelical services, training and educational ministries;
2. Strengthening and building up Christians in the most holy faith through worship, training, teaching, and education of the saints;
3. Actively engaging in the enterprise of missions both at home and abroad with prayers and financial support;
4. Educating our members and their children in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture, both in Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education.

The establishing of the Cornerstone Baptist Church is to promote a sound, evangelical testimony, and true-to-the-Bible witness for the glory of Christ.

## **ARTICLE II Doctrinal Statement**

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### **SECTION A Concerning the Scriptures**

1. We believe that the Bible, sixty-six books in the Old and New Testaments, is without error in its original writing; its author was God, using Spirit-guided men, being thereby verbally and plenary inspired; it is the sole authority for faith and practice. 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 (Proverbs 30:5-6; John 17:17; Revelation 22:18,19; 11 Peter 1:19-21; II Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Corinthians 2:10-13; Matthew 5:17,18; Mark 12:26,36; Luke 24:27,44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16).
2. We believe that a correct interpretation of Scripture is to recognize the dispensational framework of Scripture. A dispensational understanding recognizes that God's revelation has been progressive (Hebrews 1:1,2), that God has dealt with mankind differently but in accord with His progressive

revelation (Exodus 6:3) and that man's responsibilities have varied with each new revelation given (Hebrews 7:12). We believe that according to the "eternal purpose" of God (Ephesians 3:11) salvation in all dispensations has been and 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 (I Corinthians 9:17; Colossians 1:25; Ephesians 3:2, Ephesians 3:9; 1 Timothy 1:4; Hebrews 11).

## **SECTION B** Concerning the Godhead

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, Infinite, eternal, self-existing, unchangeable, and perfect. He is a personal Being, the creator and upholder of the universe; in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in essence and in every divine perfection, but having distinct work (Deuteronomy 6:4,5; Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 28:19; John 10:30, 14:7-12; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

## **SECTION C** Concerning Creation

We believe in the Genesis account of Creation and that it is to be accepted literally and not figuratively; that the six days of creation in Genesis chapter one were solar, that is twenty-four hour days, that all animal and vegetable life was made directly and God's established law is that they bring forth only "after their kind", that man was created directly In God's own image and after His own likeness and did not evolve from any lower form of life and that the moment the earth was created it was mature and full-grown not through natural processes but by the Instantaneous and supernatural act of God. We disavow as unscriptural any form of atheistic or theistic evolution, and the gap theory (Genesis 1:1, 2:3; Exodus 20:11, 31:7; Job 38:3,4; Psalms 8:3, 33:6-9; Proverbs 3:19; Isaiah 40:18-26; Romans 1:20; Hebrews 11:3; John 1:1-3,10).

## **SECTION D** Concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ

1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man (Matthew 1:18-20; John 1:1,2,14,18; Luke 1:35).
2. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who receive Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood (Romans 3:24-26, 4:25; I Corinthians 15:3,4; 11 Corinthians 5:21).
3. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ and that our redemption and salvation is guaranteed to us by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead; in His bodily ascension into heaven; and in His present life there for us as High priest and Intercessor (Matthew 28:5,6; 1 Corinthians 15:12-19; Acts 1:9; Hebrews 4:14-16, Hebrews 7:23-25, 9:24; 1 John 2:1,2).

## **SECTION E** Concerning the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, equal with the Father and the Son and of the same substance and nature; that He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; bears witness to the truth; is the agent of the new birth; and that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies, and helps the believer; that He indwells them permanently, seals them unto the day of redemption, bestows spiritual gifts, and fills for service those yielded

to Him. We believe that certain of the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as apostleship, prophecy, tongues, healing, and revelation were temporary and are not to be expected today. We believe that the Holy Spirit testifies concerning Jesus Christ and never leads any person, at any time, contrary to the teaching of the Bible (John 3:8,14:16,15:26-27, John 16:7-15; Acts 5:1-4; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; 13:8-11; Ephesians 4:4, 5:18).

## **SECTION F** Concerning the Sinful Nature of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God; and that all mankind is born with a sinful nature, became willful sinners with the first expression of personal choice, is totally unable to regain its former position, and is therefore, under just condemnation to eternal ruin, in a literal hell without defense or excuse before God (Genesis 1:26, 3:1-24; Ecclesiastes 7:20; John 3:18,19; Romans 1:20, 3:9-23, 5:12; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:1-6,12).

## **SECTION G** Concerning Salvation

1. We believe that - God has provided a way -of salvation (John 14:6) from the consequences of sin (Romans 6:23) through Christ's shed blood on the cross (I Peter 1:18-19). This salvation was given because of the love of God (John 3:16) and is available to all mankind with no limitations whatsoever (I John 2:2). The sinner can believe this provision of salvation only after the hearing of the Gospel (Romans 1:17; Matthew 28:19) and the convicting work of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8).
2. We believe that the obtaining of salvation is in part dependent upon God. God the Father before the foundation of the world designed a plan to make a repentant sinner (1) holy before Him, (2) children of Him, and therefore, (3) accepted by Him (Ephesians 1:4-6). Those who are saved are sometimes called the elect or chosen (I Peter 1:2) but we do not believe in an election which appropriates salvation (Romans 10:9,10) and therefore we reject the doctrinal deviation commonly referred to as Calvinism. God the Son provided the way of salvation by securing for a repentant sinner (1) the payment for sin (2) release from sin, and (3) the assurance of salvation (Ephesians 1:7-12). God the Holy Spirit secures a repentant sinner's salvation by first convicting the sinner with the truth of God's Word (John 16:1-13) and then, by Himself being the down payment of salvation within each believer until his entrance into heaven (Ephesians 1:13-14).
3. We believe that the obtaining of salvation is impossible apart from a personal voluntary choice of the sinner (John 3:16) based upon a complete reliance upon God's way of salvation (Ephesians 2:8,9). At the moment a sinner repents from sin and trusts Christ as his Savior, the sinner is united to Christ (II Corinthians 5:17) by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). This turning from sin (Psalms 51:3,4) to Christ - as Savior and Lord (Romans 10:9,10) is called conversion. At conversion God declares the sinner righteous (justified) because of the merit of Christ, which merit removes the eternal penalty of sin (Romans 8:1). Consequently, the sinner is made alive spiritually (John 3:36) and is reconciled to God's favor (Romans 5:1,2,10) thereby becoming holy, a saint.
4. We believe that the Scriptures teach that regeneration, or the new birth, is that change in the soul by the Holy Spirit by which a new nature and spiritual life, not before possessed, are imparted, and the person becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus and without it salvation is impossible (John 3:3-6; 11 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Peter 1:23; Titus 3:5).
5. We believe that the salvation of every believer is secure for all eternity from the moment of regeneration and therefore, we reject the doctrinal deviation commonly referred to as Arminianism. This security is guaranteed to each believer by the fact that the life received is

eternal life, by the keeping power of God, by the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit, and by the interceding ministry of Christ (John 5:24,10:27-30; Romans 8:1.29,30,38,39; Ephesians 1:13,14, 4:30; Hebrews 7:25).

6. We believe that justification is the judicial act of God whereby He declares us to be righteous through faith in Christ Jesus; that justification includes the pardon of sin and the imputation of God's righteousness; that it is bestowed; not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood (Isaiah 53:11; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1-9, 8:1; II Corinthians 5:18-21).

## **SECTION H** Concerning Sanctification

1. We believe that immediate, positional sanctification is that act of God whereby believers are at the time of regeneration, eternally set apart as belonging to Him by redemption, thereby being placed in the family of God as children, joint heirs with Jesus Christ (I John 3:1; Romans 8:14,17; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Hebrews 10:10-14).
2. We believe that progressive sanctification is the process by which, according to God's will, we are made partakers of His holiness that it is progressive; that it is begun in regeneration; that it progresses if the believer is yielded to the Holy Spirit's control; that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, self-examination, watchfulness and prayer; and that there is no complete eradication of the old nature in progressive sanctification (I Thessalonians 4:3, 5:23; Proverbs 4:18; 1 John 2:29; Philippians 2:12-13; Ephesians 4:22-24, 6:18; John 17:17).
3. We believe that ultimate sanctification will be the portion of every believer when finally in the presence of the Lord, complete and entire, with soul and spirit united in the resurrection body free from every trace or effect of sin and rebellion (I John 3:2; 1 Corinthians 15:52-54; Ephesians 4:30, 5:27; Philippians 4:20-21).

## **SECTION I** Concerning the Existence of Satan

We believe that Satan was originally created a holy and perfect being, but through pride and wicked ambition rebelled against God, thus becoming utterly depraved in character, the great adversary of God and His people, leader of all other evil angels, the deceiver and god of this present world; that his powers are vast, but strictly limited by the permissive will of God who overrules all his wicked devices for good; that he was defeated and judged at the cross, and therefore, his final doom is certain; that we are able to resist and overcome him only in the armor of God, by the blood of the Lamb, and through the power of the Holy Spirit (Genesis 3:1-7; II Corinthians 4:3-4, 11:3; Ephesians 2:1-4, 6:11,12; Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Revelation 20:1-10).

## **SECTION J** Concerning Future Events

We believe the Scriptures teach that at death the spirit and soul of the believer pass instantly into the presence of Christ and remain in conscious joy until the resurrection of the body when Christ comes for his own; the blessed hope of the believer is the imminent, personal, pretribulational, premillennial appearance of Christ to rapture the church, His bride; His righteous judgments will then be poured out on an unbelieving world during the Tribulation (the seventieth week of Daniel), the last half of which is the Great Tribulation, the climax of his fearful era will be the physical return of Jesus Christ to the earth in great glory to introduce the Davidic kingdom; Israel will be saved and restored as a nation; Satan will be bound and the curse will be lifted from the physical creation; following the Millennium, the Great



White Throne judgment will occur, at which time the bodies and souls of the wicked shall be re-united and cast into the Lake of Fire (II Corinthians 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:51-57; Titus 2:13; I Thessalonians 1:10, 4:14-17, 5:9; Matthew 24:21; Revelation 19:11-16; Romans 11:26,27; Revelation 20:2,3, 20:11-15).

### **SECTION K** Concerning the Eternal State

We believe that the souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation do at death immediately pass into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming when soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory; but, that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery in Hell 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 from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. (Luke 16:19-26, Luke 23:43; 11 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 11 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 20:11-15, 14:9-14; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

### **SECTION L** Concerning the Local Church

1. We believe that a New Testament church is a voluntary and independent autonomous group of baptized believers who are a body with Christ as its head, joining together for worship, service, fellowship, discipline, prayer, teaching, testimony, the observance of the ordinances, and the spread of the Gospel into all the world; that it is a pure democracy, which organically can join nothing, and that it has the power and right within itself to confess its own faith in accordance with the New Testament; that each congregation recognizes its own democratic self-containing government as its highest authority for carrying out the will of the Lord Jesus Christ. We disavow any teaching on a "universal church." (I Timothy 3:15; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Revelation 2,3; Colossians 1:18,24, 3:15,16; Acts 20:17; 1 Timothy 3:1-15; Titus 1:5-11; I Corinthians 3:10-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 11:2).
2. We believe that the local church is God's only program for this dispensation, and that every Christian is bound by Scripture to give his unhindered cooperation to the program of His local church; that it is the responsibility of all believers to remember the work of the local church and its extension ministries in prayer, to support it with their tithes and offerings as the Lord prospers them, to participate in all the regular services of the church as the Lord enables, and to voluntarily submit to the watchcare and discipline of the local church (I Corinthians 16:2; Hebrews 10:19-25,13:17; 1 Timothy 3:15).
3. We believe that the Bible teaches that the following offices of the church should be held by men only: Pastor, Assistant Pastor, Deacons, and Moderator (I Timothy 2:12, 3:2,12; Acts 15).

### **SECTION M** Concerning the Ordinances

1. We believe that baptism is the immersion in water one time backwards of a believer in Christ, into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to show forth by solemn and beautiful symbolism, the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection, and that it is a Scriptural prerequisite to church membership (Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:36; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Peter 3:21; Acts 2:38-41).

2. We believe that the Lord's Supper is partaking of bread and the fruit of the vine, as symbols of Christ's body and blood, and is a local church ordinance only, commemorating His suffering and death for us and our continual benefit therefrom; that participation should consist of those who have united to the local church by baptism and testimony, or to those who are baptized members of churches of like faith and practice, and that participation should be preceded by careful self-examination (I Corinthians 11:23-32, 5:1-5; Matthew 18:15-17).

It shall be the responsibility of the one directing the service to explain its full significance and purpose as well as the rights and privileges of the ones who participate. The church will not be the final judge in this matter; it is for the individual to decide on participation. This is termed "Close Communion."

## SECTION N Concerning Biblical Separation

We believe that all the saved are called into a life of separation (II Corinthians 6:14-7:1). This separation is in, at least, three areas: moral, personal, and ecclesiastical.

1. **Moral.** The Biblical commandments are God's perfect standard for a perfect man. We are commanded to perfect holiness in the fear of God (II Corinthians 7:1). The believer is to never suffer as an evil doer (I Peter 4:14), but is commanded to be clean in body and mind (II Corinthians 10:5).
2. **Personal.** Romans 14 explains that there are going to be areas where the believers are going to disagree in matters which they call sin. The weaker will do things that the stronger will not. In matters of eating, holy days, etc., every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind (Romans 14:5; 1 Corinthians 8:9,10:23,31).
3. **Ecclesiastical.** It is evident that unbelief and error in many organized fellowships has developed to the point where recognized and indisputable apostasy exists. We, therefore, disavow the position of the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches, the National Association of Evangelicals, and any other association or fellowship that would be in sympathy with them. We stand in opposition to the Charismatic Movement, Ecumenical Movement, Neo-Orthodoxy, New Evangelicalism, New Fundamentalism, Interdenominationalism, and Cooperative Evangelistic Programs between people and churches not of like precious faith (II Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:11,12; Luke 12:51).

As a result of the above clause this church shall not join in with or sponsor:

- a. Any churches, missions or other organizations which support, join in with or are affiliated with the NCC or the WCC.
- b. Any religious or cults denying any of our doctrines as listed in this doctrinal statement.
- c. Any churches, missions or other organizations which support, join in with or are affiliated with the neo-evangelical movement.
- d. Any churches, missions, or other organizations which are part of the ecumenical movement, which seeks to join the liberal Protestant denominations with the Roman Catholic Church and other false churches and religions.
- e. Youth groups and organizations employing worldly and unscriptural methods, or which join with churches or groups in the NCC or WCC, to evangelize young people.

## SECTION O Concerning the Charismatic Movement

- A. We believe that the healing and tongues movement of today is unscriptural and contrary to sound doctrine and those who believe and practice these are in error (I Corinthians 14:33,40, 12:8-11).

B. 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; Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 13:8).

## **SECTION P** Concerning Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; that rulers are to be prayed and conscientiously honored and obeyed, including the bearing of arms for the defense of the country, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience and the coming Prince of the Kings of the earth (Exodus 18:21-22; 11 Samuel 23:3; Psalms 72:11; Daniel 3:17-18; Matthew 10:28, 22:21, 23:10; Acts 4:19-20, 5:29, 23:5; Romans 13:1; Philippians 2:10-11; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13).

## **ARTICLE III** Membership

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### **SECTION A**

Any one desiring to unite with this Church must appear before the Membership Committee of the Deacons. Candidates must be examined and must meet with the unanimous approval of those present of this committee and be recommended to the Church. All candidates must appear before the Church and give public testimony except those candidates who are unable to so appear because of physical handicap. No candidate can become a member who is a member of any secret society, such as Communism, Masonry, etc., (John 10:20) or who is a member of any group that teaches or practices civil disobedience (Romans 13). No candidate can become a member if there are five dissenting votes. Those that object must appear before the Pastor and Deacons and the candidate to give just reason. If reasons are not justifiable, the Deacons can recommend the candidate to the Church for membership and the Church can over rule the five or more objectors.

### **SECTION B**

The membership of this Church shall be constituted of persons, who having professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, give evidence of regeneration and of conduct worthy of their profession, whose convictions are in harmony with the faith and practice of this Church as set forth in the Doctrinal Statement, and who have, after baptism by immersion, been elected into membership of the church. No member shall be eligible to vote until he or she attains 18 years of age. Any member under the age of 18, upon reaching the age of 18 must reconfirm their agreement to the church constitution or have the opportunity to withdrawal their membership.

### **SECTION C**

All candidates shall be received on profession of faith. No member shall be received on the basis of a letter or transfer of membership from another Church.

### **SECTION D**

All candidates shall receive, read, and agree with the Constitution of the Church before applying for membership.

## SECTION E

Letters of dismissal may be granted by the Church upon request of the Deacons when such request is made by a member in good standing on the roll of this Church. This letter of dismissal is not a valid transfer of membership.

## SECTION F Definition of Membership

1. **Active Member.** One who attends regularly the meetings held in this Church, and who contributes and participates in the work of this Church according to New Testament teachings (I Corinthians 16:2).
2. **Inactive Member.** When members, without just cause or reason satisfactory to the Deacons, shall fail to attend or manifest any interest in the church for a period of three months, they shall be placed on the inactive list and lose their right to speak or vote at any meeting of the Church whatsoever, provided formal notice of this action has been tendered to the member. The Deacons shall make every effort to re-establish the member's fellowship with the Church and may restore an inactive member to active membership whenever such person shall indicate a desire to be reinstated by his regular attendance at Church for three full months. Names remaining on the "inactive list" for more than three months shall be removed from the list and dropped from the Church roll; he or she shall be officially notified.
3. **Permanent Inactive Member.** Those who are permanently ill, retired, or moved to a community where no Church of like precious faith exists, and who faithfully support the Church with their tithes or those who through no circumstances of their own cannot faithfully attend the house of God. Each case shall be separately judged by the Deacons, and approved by them.

## SECTION G Discipline

Corrective discipline has for its aim the glory of God, the welfare and purity of the Church, and the spiritual growth of the offender. The discipline of the Church shall be formative and corrective. Offenders shall be brought before the Pastor and Deacons for a recommendation to the Church according to the following principles.

1. **Formative Discipline.** The sanctifying influence of formative discipline as taught in I Corinthians 12:12-27 shall be well understood. Every member will then be satisfied with his place and we shall grow in grace and in knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:21,22; Ephesians 4:12,13; 11 Peter 1:5-8). By such observance the Church can build up its members and use the talent of both young and old. All who have been redeemed should live for Him and the Church and not for themselves.
2. **Corrective Discipline.** Corrective discipline implies imperfection and a tendency to sin and to cause offense. The censure, in the Judgment of the Church, may be erasure from the roll. Every effort shall first be made to clear up difficulties and to remove offenses before Church action is taken. No offense should be brought before the Church until the instructions of Christ have first been followed (Matthew 5:23,24; Matthew 18:15-17).
3. Any person dismissed who gives satisfactory evidence of being penitent, shall be restored as of Article III, Section A.

## SECTION H

The Pastor or Assistant Pastor of the Church and his wife shall be considered members of the Church. Their children shall be voted into membership according to the Constitution under Article III, Section A.

## ARTICLE IV Officers

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The initial ministering servants of this Church shall consist of the scriptural offices of Pastor and/or Pastors and Deacons, afterwards any other officers deemed necessary by the Church to implement its stated purpose. Also, following the initial election of officers, with the exception of Pastor, one must be a member of this church for a period of at least six months before being placed in nomination for any office. Any exception to this rule will be by a majority vote of the Church membership. Their terms of office shall begin at the first of the month following the annual meeting.

Retiring officers shall hold office until the terms of the newly elected officers begin. No member on the “inactive” list is eligible to hold a Church office. In the event of a vacancy in any office other than that of Pastor, the Pastor and Deacons shall have the authority to appoint a replacement to fulfill these duties until the time of the next regular Church business meeting.

### SECTION A Office of the Pastor

The Pastor shall be a properly ordained Baptist minister or one desirous of such ordination. He shall be elected at a special meeting of the Church called for that purpose. Balloting shall be written, and the votes of three-fourth (3/4) of those present shall be necessary for his election to this office. Before his name is presented to the Church for consideration, the Deacons shall have thoroughly investigated the history of the candidate relative to his schooling, business affairs, evidence of the Lord’s blessing in previous Pastorates or positions of Christian experience. They shall have, prior to this, determined his doctrinal, spiritual, emotional, and moral stability before placing his name before the Church. The candidate shall have affirmed in writing and also orally in the presence of the Deacons, his belief and acceptance of the articles of faith and Church constitution. Only one Pastoral candidate shall be considered at a time. The Pastor shall continue in office until he resigns or his resignation is requested by a three-fourth (3/4) vote of the voting members present at either a regular or a specially called business meeting of the Church. In the dissolution of Pastor and Church relationship, a sixty (60) day period of time shall be given by the party initiating the move. In cases of doctrinal or moral digression from the standards of this Church, the Pastor shall not be permitted to exercise any further duties although the proposed period of dissolution referred to above shall be exercised.

1. The Pastor shall be the moderator of all business meetings of the Church and a member ex officio of all such boards and committees of the Church and its auxiliaries. In the absence of a Pastor, a temporary chairman shall be chosen by the Church from among the Deacons to serve as moderator until such time as the Church calls a new Pastor.
2. Although the Pastor’s services shall be considered on the basis of an indefinite call as to length of time, the Pastor’s salary shall be reviewed annually by the Deacons prior to the annual meeting. As far as possible, this salary shall be kept at least in line with the current cost of living. Therefore, recommendations to implement this should be made to the Church by the Deacons at the annual meeting. The Pastor shall be entitled to an annual vacation with pay, not to exceed one month.
3. It is expected that the Pastor will have the qualifications laid down in the following scriptures: I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4. Otherwise, the Church should not call him. Assuming this to be true, the Pastor’s duties are:
  - a. To be the spiritual shepherd of the flock, the local Church.
  - b. To be the preacher and the teacher of the Word of God.

He shall be expected to implement these responsibilities by fulfilling the duties commonly expected of a Pastor in the exercise of office.

## **SECTION B** The Deaconate

1. The Church shall elect by ballot, or voice vote, from its membership during the annual business meeting men to serve as Deacons. Their term shall be three years and arranged to end alternately. A simple majority of the ballots, or voice votes, cast is necessary for each election. His office shall be reviewed/renewed every three years and continued by church vote. The qualifications for Deacons shall be those set forth in the New Testament (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-13). Their duties shall be those expected of those elected to this office in the Church, namely:
  - a. To assist the Pastor in serving the Lord's Supper and administering the ordinance of baptism.
  - b. To serve with the Pastor in meeting the spiritual needs of the Church by participating in the examination of candidates for Church membership.
  - c. To assist in initiating matters of discipline according to Matthew 18:15-17.
  - d. To serve as a pulpit committee for the Church and be responsible for the entertaining of Pastoral supplies in the absence of a Pastor.
  - e. To serve as trustees. The care of Church property and arranging for its care and preservation becomes their duty. They shall exercise only those rights given to them by the Church in respect to receiving and disposing of property and receiving and disposing of funds. The deacon board may transact business not in excess of \$500.00 without Church authorization.
  - f. To oversee and distribute the Hospitality Fund, when collected.
2. The Deacons shall choose a chairman from their number at their first meeting after the annual meeting. One of the Deacons shall serve as Financial Secretary. This is in keeping with the true meaning of the word "deacon", a ministering servant of the Church. His duties will consist of the following:
  - a. Receive all Church bills, or direct the elected Church bookkeeper to do so.
  - b. Responsible to make out voucher for all bills and salaries, or direct the elected Church bookkeeper to do so.
  - c. No bills are to be paid by the Church Treasurer without a voucher from the Financial Secretary or Church bookkeeper.
  - d. A duplicate set of books shall be kept by the Financial Secretary.
  - e. Keep all bills, or direct Church bookkeeper to do so. Church Treasurer keeps no bills.
  - f. Be responsible that Church books balance with Church Treasurer's book every month.
  - g. All general bills will be issued vouchers automatically by the Financial Secretary, or Church bookkeeper, such as gas, oil, salaries, etc.
  - h. To keep Board well informed on how the budget is being met and spent.
3. The Deacons' wives may assist in the preparation of the elements for the Lord's table, also assist in baptismal services, visit the sick, be proficient in dealing with women and girls who respond to the invitation given in the Church services, calling in the homes of people, particularly where women and girls are to be dealt with (I Timothy 3:11).

## **SECTION C Church Treasurer**

1. The Treasurer shall be elected annually by the members of the Church. The Treasurer shall receive and take charge of all monies and disburse the same in accordance with orders of the Church or of its Deacons. The Treasurer shall keep a full and faithful account of all monies received and paid out specifying the purposes for which they are received and expended, and shall make a report to the Church annually and to the Deacons as often as required to do so.

The Church Budget shall be a unified budget. It shall be a single General Fund budget. It shall not consist of several budgets: general, missionary, etc. Each organization may have its own treasurer to keep the records, but all monies shall be kept by the Church Treasurer and all bills will be paid by him. The Church only shall have a financial secretary. No member or organization of the Church has a right to make a bill for the Church without permission of the Deacons. Before each annual business meeting each organization shall present a suggested budget to the Deacons. They shall present the whole budget to the Church. To exceed their budget each organization must have approval of the Church. All collections other than those specifically taken for social events must be kept by the Church Treasurer.

2. The Church Treasurer is not authorized to write any checks without a voucher from the Financial Secretary, or Church bookkeeper.

## **SECTION D The Clerk**

The Clerk shall be chosen from, among the membership at the annual meeting by a vote of the Church. The Clerk shall keep a fair and complete record of the proceedings covered in each business meeting, prepare any papers authorized by the Church, and to turn over books, records, and Church property to a successor.

## **SECTION E The Sunday School Superintendent**

At each annual meeting the Church shall approve from Its membership a Sunday School Superintendent previously selected by the Pastor. He must be a male member of the Church. It shall be his duty to direct and superintend the Sunday School. His term of office shall be one year. He is directly responsible to the Pastor.

## **SECTION F The Sunday School Teachers**

All teachers of the Sunday School and substitutes shall be appointed from the membership by the Pastor for an indefinite period.

## **SECTION G**

Regulations and Qualifications for the Church officers of Sunday School Superintendent, teachers and youth leaders:

1. They should be a godly example of demonstrating Biblical discernment with regards to separation from the world and worldly pleasures (I John 2:15-17; James 4:4; Titus 2:11-15).
2. They must be free from membership in oath bound (except military service), religious or social, secret organizations or other entangling alliances with unbelievers (II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Ephesians 5:11).
3. They must be living a life beyond reproach and free from carnal indulgences, such as the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage, tobacco in all its forms, and narcotic drugs for other than

prescribed medicinal purposes; all of which are harmful, a stumbling block and out of harmony with a dedicated life as set forth in the Word of God (Galatians 5:16-25- Romans 12:1,2; 8:12,13; 14:21; Colossians 3:1-10; I Peter 1:14-16; 1 Corinthians 3:16,17).

## **ARTICLE V Missions**

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### **SECTION A**

It shall be the policy of the church to proclaim the Gospel and to support only missions engaged in evangelization and in establishing New Testament Baptist Churches. They shall be in hearty agreement with our confession of faith, both in doctrine and in practice (Acts 1:18; Matthew 28:19-20).

### **SECTION B**

No missionary or mission board that is a member of any of the organizations listed in Article II, Section N, point 3 in this doctrinal statement shall be supported by this Church.

### **SECTION C**

Any mission or missionary to receive support shall be approved by this Church.

## **ARTICLE VI Meetings**

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### **SECTION A**

The church shall meet every Lord's Day, morning and evening, for public worship, at least once a week for prayer, and at such times for religious purposes as the pastor and the board of deacons recommend.

### **SECTION B**

The Sunday School shall meet every Sunday for the study of the Bible and shall be under the supervision of the Pastor with the assistance of the Sunday School Superintendent. (See Article IV, Section E).

### **SECTION C**

The annual business meeting of the church shall be held on any day between June 1 and June 30 each year. At that time the following shall give a written report of their activities of the previous year: Pastor, Board of Deacons, Treasurer, Bible School Superintendent, Young Peoples' Organizations, and all other Church Organizations.

### **SECTION D Special Business Meetings**

Special meetings may be called by the Pastor, Deacons, or by a written request to the Church clerk of not less than ten adult unrelated members in good standing. Notice shall be posted two



(2) weeks before any special business meeting is held. Each item of business to be acted upon at a special business meeting shall be announced from the pulpit whenever possible. At a regular service of the church new members may be brought into membership. No other business can be transacted unless a two week notice has been given for a special business meeting.

## **SECTION E**

The fiscal year shall begin July 1 and end on the following June 30.

## **SECTION F**

No modern translation of the Bible shall be used in this Church or any organization for preaching or teaching. The only translation to be used shall be the King James Version.

## **SECTION G**

No non-member can serve in any capacity in this church.

# **ARTICLE VII Ordinances**

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## **SECTION A**

1. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed by the Church upon the first Wednesday evening of every month after the regular service, at which time an offering for the Hospitality fund of the Church may be received, if decided by Deacons and Pastoral staff.
2. The Pastor may schedule the Lord's Supper in addition to the above for special services (i.e., Christmas, Easter, etc.).

## **SECTION B**

The ordinance of baptism shall be administered upon request, according to the doctrinal statement.

# **ARTICLE VIII Licensing and Ordination**

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## **SECTION A Licensing**

Since it is our hope that Spirit-filled men will be called out from among us to proclaim the Gospel of the grace of God, such men may be given a commission to preach and to administer the ordinances. A license may be issued by a three-fourth (3/4) vote of the active members present and voting, provided the Pastor and the Deacons are unanimous in their conviction that the candidates have the scriptural qualifications, suitable gifts, necessary training and have had the blessing of God upon their public ministry.

## **SECTION B Ordination**

When the church decides that one of its candidates possesses the scriptural qualifications for ordination, the Church shall call a council of ministers and brethren to examine the

qualifications of the candidate and to recommend him to the Church. After due consideration of the council's recommendation, the Church shall decide upon ordination of the candidate by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the active members present and voting.

### **SECTION C Women Candidates**

We believe that the Scriptures teach that women should not be ordained to the ministry, therefore the Church shall not sponsor such applications (I Timothy 2:12).

## **ARTICLE IX Order Of Meetings**

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In conducting of business, the vote shall be determined by a majority of those present and voting. Except Article IV, Section A-3; Article VIII, Section B; Article XII, Sections A and B.

## **ARTICLE X Finances And Committees**

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### **SECTION A**

The fiscal year shall begin July 1 and end on the following June 30.

### **SECTION B**

No money shall be raised by the Church or an assisting department through unscriptural means for pecuniary gain such as suppers, chances, raffles, or the sale of merchandise. The Church shall be maintained through the "tithes and offerings" of the Lord's people.

### **SECTION C**

The Treasurer's books will be audited annually.

### **SECTION D**

The Church building and its facilities shall be used primarily for its own services and shall be available for other use only to active members of the Church or for use by other Churches, Christian organizations or individuals in total agreement with our Church. Permitted use shall be for spiritual purposes only and upon approval of the Deacons of our Church.

### **SECTION E**

The Sunday school shall be the Church studying the Bible. It shall be under the supervision and control of the Church at all times.

### **SECTION F**

Other departments of religious training, teaching and exercises may be established by the Church at its discretion. Therefore, it is clearly understood that none shall be started without the consent of the membership. These departments shall be subject to the policies of the Church, and the department head must always be one of the active members of the Church. The minutes and records of any and all departments of the Church shall be available to the Church

body at any time, and an annual report must be read and approved at each annual business meeting of the Church. Failure to provide such reports and records and failure to receive Church approval shall be considered sufficient reason for automatic termination of the work as a Church department and the conclusion of its services.

## **SECTION G**

All temporary committees appointed by the Church shall be expected to report at the next annual business meeting following their appointment. All permanent committees shall be expected to make an annual report at the annual business meeting of the Church.

## **ARTICLE XI Affiliated Organizations**

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This Church reserves the right to affiliate with any other Christian organization which holds to our doctrinal statement and practices. In no wise shall we become a permanent member of any organization and we shall always reserve the right to withdraw our affiliations.

## **ARTICLE XII Amendments**

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### **SECTION A**

This constitution may be altered or amended at any regular or called meeting of the church by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the active members present and voting, providing the notice of such alterations or amendments is presented to the Church in written form at least one month before action is taken.

### **SECTION B**

The following articles can be changed only by one hundred (100) percent of those voting in a special or regular called business meeting.

- ARTICLE II      Doctrinal Statement
- ARTICLE III     Membership
- ARTICLE IV     Section A-3. Qualifications of the Pastor
- ARTICLE V      Section B - Support of a Missionary

## **ARTICLE XIII Quorum**

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A quorum for all regular and special meetings of this Church consists of one-fourth (1/4) of the active membership. Any active member who is away at school, work, full-time Christian service, military service, or who is permanently confined because of illness, or any member below voting age, shall not be counted in the total membership to constitute a quorum.

## **ARTICLE XIV** Human Sexuality

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We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgender, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery, hormone therapy, or cross-gender appearance. (Genesis 2:24; 19:5, 13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thessalonians. 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4). We believe that the only scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman.

## **ARTICLE XV** Dissolution

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In the event of dissolution of this corporation, all of its tangible assets and holding shall be distributed to such other existing non-profit religious corporations as would be in agreement with the letter and spirit of this constitution. All decisions in this event would be made by the majority vote of the remaining members of this Church.

No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any person or persons from the assets, holding or other transactions in which this corporation may become involved.

## **ARTICLE XVI** Previous Documents

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All by-laws, rules, resolutions, or regulations heretofore adopted or in force in this Church are hereby repealed.