

Constitution and By-Laws of Faith Baptist Church
Cheboygan, MI 49721

Updated August 1, 2022

PREAMBLE

Believing the local church to be an institution established by the Lord Jesus Christ, and believing it is His will that “all things be done decently and in order,” we the members of Faith Baptist Church of Cheboygan, Michigan adopt solemnly and sincerely on this date the Constitution and by-laws by which we willingly and cheerfully agree to be governed by.

ARTICLE 1 – NAME

This Church shall be known as Faith Baptist Church of Cheboygan, Michigan 49721

ARTICLE 2 – PURPOSE

1. For spiritual worship and fellowship.
2. To teach and preach the Bible.
3. To win the lost to faith in Christ.
4. To build up believers to maturity in Christ.
5. To administer the ordinances of the New Testament, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.
6. To extend the ministry of our faith through gifts, prayer, individuals, churches, and organizations throughout the whole world.
7. To glorify God, including that of teaching our children to know and love God through Christian Education.

ARTICLE 3 – CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, on the public confession of faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I do now, in the presence of God and this Christian Family, solemnly and joyfully enter into a covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

I purpose, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge and holiness; to attend its services regularly; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to give faithfully of time and talent in its activities; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God leads, to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel.

I also purpose to train my children¹ according to the Word of God; to seek the salvation of family members and acquaintances; to walk carefully in the world; to be just in my dealings, faithful in engagements, and exemplary in conduct; to be zealous in my efforts to advance the cause of Christ, our Savior; and to give Him preeminence in all things.

I further purpose to watch over one another in familial love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling, speech, and action; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation.

I moreover purpose that if I remove myself from this Church that I will initiate an exit interview with the Pastor or a Deacon in love and respect for the betterment of Christ's Church. I also purpose to unite myself with another Bible believing Church as soon as possible.

Being in agreement with the Confession of Faith and By-Laws I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Faith Baptist Church Family. In doing so, I commit to God and to the other members my obedience and love. (Adopted: July 2019)

ARTICLE 4 – GOVERNMENT

This church is an independent, fundamental Baptist Church, organized January 13, 1969. All departments shall be subordinate to the congregation.

In accordance with the Scriptures this church shall be governed by its membership. The Scriptures shall be the final authority governing the Constitution, practice and policy of this Church.

ARTICLE 5 – STATEMENT OF FAITH

The statement of Faith has for ease of use and reference has been moved to the end of this document.

ARTICLE 6 – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Qualifications of Members

- A. Personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. Evidence of regeneration in their lives.
- C. Personal assurance of their salvation
- D. Baptism by immersion after conversion.
- E. Acceptance of the doctrine and practices of the church.
- F. The desires to live a consistent Christian life before God and others.
- G. They shall not be members of any organization which demands pre-eminence or allegiance equal to or above God.

Section 2 – Reception of Members

- A. They must be examined by the pastor and two or more deacons.
- B. They must be recommended by the pastor and two or more deacons to the church.
- C. They must give testimony of their faith in Jesus Christ in a service of the church. (At the discretion of the pastor and two or more deacons, the testimony may be presented in writing. The candidate must stand while it is being read.)
- D. Candidate must be received by majority vote of a quorum of the membership present.
- E. When the candidate has met the requirements for membership and has been voted upon by the congregation, they will be given the right hand of fellowship.

Section 3 – Ways of Membership

- A. Baptism by immersion following conversion.
- B. By letter of recommendation or transfer from another church of like precious faith (as defined in our doctrinal statement article 5.)
- C. By Christian experience, provided candidate has met all the qualifications (Article 6 Section 1)
- D. By restoration, being recommended by the pastor and deacons and voted on by the church.

Section 4 – Termination of Membership

- A. Death – name removed at the time of death.
- B. By letter. Letters of transfer will be given to another church of like precious faith (as defined in our doctrinal statement article 5) when requested, after being approved by majority vote of a quorum of the membership present.
- C. By Request
- D. By Discipline – (as defined in this article, section 5)
 - 1. All matters of discipline shall be at the discretion of the pastor and two or more deacons, and the subject of any disciplinary action shall have the right of appeal to the church.
 - 2. If the disciplinary action is recommended to the church by the pastor and deacons, the church shall have the responsibility to approve the recommendation or to hear the case for itself.
 - 3. If disciplinary action is taken, the member shall be excluded from membership and be restored by the procedure outlined in section 3 of this article.

4. Restoration should always be the end result desired.

Section 5 – Discipline

A. Procedure of Discipline

1. Self-Discipline

“A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of among you are weak and sick and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.” I Corinthians 11:28-32

2. One to One

“...if your brother sins, rebuke him and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in a day and seven times comes back to you and says, ‘I repent,’ forgive him.” Luke 17:3,4

“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.” Matthew 18:15

3. Two Or More To One

“But if he will not listen, take one or two others along so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’” Matthew 18:16

4. To The Church

“If he refused to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.” Matthew 18:17

5. The Church

- a. Pastor consult with member.
- b. If no repentance, pastor and a deacon(s) consult with the member.
- c. If no change, pastor or deacon(s) shall bring a recommendation to the church for action.
- d. A meeting for discipline shall be announced one week in advance and the person’s name shall NOT be announced in advance of the meeting.
- e. Restoration should be the end result desired James 5:19, 20

B. Responsibility For Discipline

1. All members bear the responsibility for discipline (as defined in article 6, section 5, a, 1-4)
2. It is the responsibility of the Pastor and Deacons, (as defined in article 6, section 5, 1, 5) with consideration given to Galatians 6:1 “Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently, but watch yourself, or you may be tempted.”

(as defined in article 6, section 5, a,5)

C. Reason for Discipline

1. Deliberate refusal to submit to the church covenant.
2. Unrepentant public scandal, open sin, obstinate doctrinal deviation, contention, a lifestyle which is inconsistent with the scriptures.
3. Lack of church attendance – after 12 months, a letter of inactivity. – after 18 months, a letter of removal (after exhausting other means of contact with said person.)

ARTICLE 7 – POLICY

Section 1 – Financial

- A. This church shall be financed by tithes and free-will offerings.
- B. No unscriptural methods are to be employed to raise money by this church or any of its organizations.
- C. All fund raising projects shall be approved by the Pastor and Deacons.

Section 2 – Missions

A. Purposes of Missions

1. To glorify God
2. To see the salvation of the lost.
3. Discipleship in the Scriptures through the teaching and training of believers.
4. The planting of churches both at home and abroad.
5. The edification and encouragement of believers.

B. Who We Support

1. This church shall associate itself with individuals, churches, and organizations which are true to our doctrinal statement of faith and purposes (of Missions A, above) in all parts of the world.

2. This church shall encourage the regular support of individuals and agencies that are recognized by Regular Baptists.

C. Procedure For Missions

1. Choosing a Missionary

- a. Recommended by Pastor and Deacons
- b. Approved by congregational vote.

2. Missionary Update

- a. It is requested that the missionary send the church a report of activities at least quarterly.
- b. When furloughed, it is requested that the missionary visit the church; and that the home missionary visit at intervals agreeable to both the missionary and the church.

3. Church Evaluation of Missionary

- a. Done by the pastor and deacons, at least every four years.
- b. Upon evaluation, recommendations are to be brought to the church for approval.

4. Continuance/Termination of Support – It is by congregational vote of the church upon recommendation of the pastor and deacons.

Section 3 – Separation

We believe in obedience to the Biblical commands to separate ourselves unto God from worldliness and ecclesiastical apostasy (Churches which depart(ed) from the Faith). 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:11; 1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Romans 16:17; 2 John 9-11

Questionable situations and organizations should be brought to the pastor and deacons for review and recommendation.

Section 4 – Association

- A. As a sovereign New Testament body of believers this church cannot join anything outside of itself, but by majority vote of its members, may declare itself in fellowship or association with sister churches on a local, state, or national level. It also, therefore, may withdraw from such fellowships or associations for any reason without endangering its property rights.
- B. At present time this church and its pastor are in fellowship with the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches.

ARTICLE 8 – Meetings¹

- A. The church shall meet regularly each Lord's Day. Meetings may be rescheduled for special services as determined by the pastor and deacons. (Adopted: July 31, 2022)
- B. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly at designated times, as decided by pastor and deacons.
- C. Special services include Missionary and Bible Conferences, Vacation Bible School, Evangelistic services, fellowships, etc.

Section 2 – Business Meetings

- A. Annual business meetings shall be held in January and quarterly business meetings shall be held in April, July, and October. The budget shall run from January 1 to December 31.
- B. The Pastor shall moderate all meetings, except in the case of his absence, or in matters concerning the pastor, or a vacated pulpit, in which case the deacon chairman shall moderate.
- C. Special meetings may be called by:
 - 1. The pastor
 - 2. A majority of the deacons
 - 3. 40% of voting membership in writing.
- D. Notice of a special meeting and the purpose are to be announced at two regular services of the church, one of which shall be the preceding Sunday. Only business specified for the special meeting is to be discussed.

Section 3 – Congregational Order

Agendas for all Family Business meetings will be determined by the Senior Pastor and the Deacons (Leadership) and will be made available to the membership at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting. Any member may make suggestions to the Leadership for topics to be added to the Agenda before the Agenda is made available. At the meeting each item on the agenda will be explained, discussed, and questions answered and then there will be a vote if the by-laws call for it or at the discretion of the Leadership. (Updated December 2019)

Section 4 – Voting

- A. A quorum shall consist of 25% of the voting resident membership in good standing except for calling or dismissing of a pastor, see Article 9, section 1B.

¹ Article 8.D was deleted. This subsection designated a particular translation of Scripture for use in the church.

B. A voting member must have reached his or her eighteenth birthday and be in good and regular standing (endeavoring to fulfill the covenant.)

C. Absentee Balloting – (See Section 5, C, 5).

Section 5 – Election Process

A. The pastor and deacons will make up the nominating committee.

B. The nominating procedure

1. Names may be submitted to the nominating committee for consideration of office in writing.
2. The nominating committee shall review the membership list, recommending those qualified.
3. Nominees must be notified.
4. After selecting names (two when possible) then a written slate is submitted to the congregation.

C. Election of Officers

1. To be held at the fourth quarterly business meeting.
2. The nominating committee shall submit in writing by October 1 the nominees and the proposed annual budget to the congregation.
3. Newly elected officers shall serve in training capacity until January 1.
4. The October business meeting shall be held within the first ten days of the month.
5. If absence is unavoidable, absentee ballots will be furnished upon request by members for all elections of deacons, and specifically announced business. The request must be made to the church clerk by the Sunday prior to the business meetings, and the sealed ballot in the clerk's hand prior to the vote.
6. Pastor is an ex-officio member of each committee.
7. There will be no nominations from the floor at the time of the election.
8. All officers are elected by a majority quorum.

ARTICLE 9 - PASTOR

Section 1 – Qualifications

His Qualifications are set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9

Section 2 – Responsibilities

- A. Preach the Word Acts 20:20
- B. Keep watch over the flock of God Acts 20:28
- C. Warn and protect the flock of God Acts 20, 29, 31
- D. Prepare the people of God for service Ephesians 4:12, 13
- E. To Evangelize 2 Timothy 4:2-5
- F. Feed the flock of God 1 Peter 5:2
- G. To take the oversight of the flock of God 1 Peter 5:2
- H. To serve the flock of God 1 Peter 5:2
- I. To be an example to the flock of God 1 Peter 5:3
- J. He must uphold the constitution, by-laws, and covenant of the church.
- K. He shall give a written report of his pastoral duties and the church's program at the annual meeting.
- L. He shall moderate all meetings, except as in Article 8, Section 2B.

Section 3 – Calling

- A. Call to the Ministry

The candidate:

1. He will be screened by the pulpit committee. Candidates may be recommended to the pulpit committee.
 2. He will be recommended to the church by the pulpit committee.
 3. The pulpit committee will do as much as possible to acquaint the members with the candidate.
 4. He must believe in the church's doctrinal statement without reservation
 5. He must uphold the constitution, covenant, and by-laws.
- B. A 75% majority vote is necessary, and a quorum is 50% of the voting members in good standing.
 - C. The Pastor's duties consist of the Biblical obligations of the office, and

1. shall give a written report of his pastoral duties and the church's program at the annual meeting.
2. he moderates all meetings, except as in Article 8, section 2B.

Section 4 – Privileges

- A. The pastor may have one free day per week excluding Sunday.
- B. An annual vacation and amount to be agreed upon by the deacons and pastor.
- C. Camp, church trips, and conferences agreed upon between the deacons and pastor are not to be counted as vacation.
- D. The church shall endeavor to pay for his expenses and his wife's to those trips and conferences which have been agreed upon by the deacons and pastor, then voted upon by the church.

Section 5 – Salary

Salary increase shall be considered at least once a year.

Section 6 – Dismissal

- A. A special meeting may be called by the deacons with two weeks notice, for the purpose of voting to dismiss the pastor.
- B. 50% of the membership form a quorum, with a 75% of a majority vote needed to dismiss the pastor.

Section 7 – Resignation

- A. A letter is sent to the deacons.
- B. A public announcement will be made prior to his leaving.
- C. Termination will occur within 30 days or agreed upon by mutual consent.
- D. Vacation time coming and pay should be considered by mutual consent at termination.

Section 8 – The Church Pastorless

The church shall consider and vote upon one candidate before another is considered.

ARTICLE 10 – Deacons

Acts 6 Establishes the office of deacon for the purpose of assisting the Pastor in the spiritual and physical needs of the church.

Section 1 – Their Election and Term of Office

- A. The deacons are chosen by “the whole multitude,” (Acts 6:5), that is the congregation, and appointed “over this business,” (Acts 6:3), in order that the spiritual ministry of the church, “prayer”, and the ministry of the “Word” (Acts 6:4) may be kept preeminent.
- B. At the implementation of this constitution and by-laws deacons shall be elected for a three (3) year term, for a two (2) year term and for a one (1) year term. Thereafter, deacons will be elected for three year terms.
- C. Vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term by appointment of the deacons and pastor and approved by the membership at the next quarterly business meeting or at a special business meeting called for that purpose.

Section 2 – Their Qualifications

A deacon must believe in personal separation and shall meet the New Testament standards as given in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3.

Section 3 – Their Organization

- A. Soon after the annual business meeting the deacons shall elect one of their number to be vice-moderator of the church. He shall be moderator of the deacons and of the church business meeting in the absence of the pastor or at those times when the business pertains to the pastoral office.
- B. They shall annually elect one of their members to be secretary. He shall keep minutes of the meetings.
- C. Minutes of the meetings are of confidential nature and will not be made public.

Section 4 – Their Duties

- A. They shall actively engage in the spiritual advancements of the church.
- B. They shall uphold the pastor in prayer.
- C. They shall visit the sick and be an example to others in fulfilling the office of spiritual leadership.
- D. They shall assist the pastor in administering the ordinances of the church, the Lord’s Supper and Baptism.
- E. They shall be legal trustees of the church and shall sign for and on behalf of the church in the purchase or sale of property.
- F. They shall have charge of maintenance of building and oversight of janitorial services.
- G. They shall appoint personnel as needed by the church.

- H. They shall have full supervision of the financial responsibilities of the church according to its desires.
- I. The deacons shall be the pulpit committee.
- J. They shall meet monthly.

Section 5 – Discipline of Deacons

Any deacon whose conduct is such that it might bring reproach upon the church or who fails to administer his office in a reasonable manner, (1 Timothy 3:1-13, and Titus 1:7-9) shall be removed from office by the recommendation of the deacons and pastor, then a majority vote of the church, a quorum is necessary.

Section 6 – Their Wives

- A. They are to meet the spiritual qualifications as found in 1 Timothy 3:11, and Titus 2:5 and assist in the spiritual ministry of their husbands.
- B. They are, upon the request of pastor and deacons, to prepare the Lord's Supper and to see that the communion service is cleaned and cared for after each service.
- C. They are, upon request, to assist the ladies at the baptismal service.

ARTICLE 11 – TREASURER

Section 1 – Term of Office

The Church Treasurer shall be elected annually

Section 2 – Duties of the Church Treasurer

- A. Perform duties common to his office.
- B. All monies paid out are to be done by check, except for petty cash.
- C. A checking account is to be kept by a reputable bank.
- D. Pay all bills as prescribed by the church budget or upon approval of pastor and deacons.
- E. If he cannot perform his duties, the deacon chairman is to assume the responsibilities.
- F. All records belong to the church and are to be kept for the church.
- G. Supervises any savings or bond programs.
- H. Makes out quarterly and annual reports.
- I. When the office terminates, records will be turned over to the successor.

Section 3 – Yearly Audit

An audit shall be conducted each year by a qualified person approved by Pastor and Deacons.

Section 4 – Financial Secretary

A. Term of office shall be for one year appointed annually by the pastor and deacons.

B. Duties

1. Counts the monies with the help of at least one other person selected by the deacons, at the close of each service. Both persons count all monies and a signed (put initials in ink) report of each offering will be given to the pastor and filed for record keeping purposes.
2. Makes out deposit slips and deposits monies in the bank and gives a copy of the deposit slip to the treasurer weekly.
3. Makes an annual report on individual giving of church members.

ARTICLE 12 – CHURCH CLERK

Section 1 – Term of Office

The church clerk shall be elected annually.

Section 2 – Duties

- A. Records minutes of all business meetings.
- B. Is the custodian of all church records.
- C. Maintains a current list of members.
- D. Submits a report for the quarterly and annual meeting.
- E. Requests letters of transfer for those applying for membership from their former church.
- F. Send letters of transfer to requesting churches of former members.
- G. Places the original documents of vital records in a safe deposit box at a local bank.
- H. The records belong to the church and when possible should be kept at the church.

ARTICLE 13 – SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

Section 1 – Term of Office

The Sunday School Superintendent shall be appointed annually by the pastor with the approval of the deacons.

Section 2 – Duties

- A. Administer the affairs of the Sunday School.
- B. Holds quarterly teachers meetings.
- C. Assigns teachers and purchases the materials with the approval of the pastor and deacons.
- D. Appoints Sunday School secretary to work with him. (Keeps the Sunday School attendance records.)
- E. Responsible for any contests, projects, awards, etc.

Section 3 – Assistant Sunday School Superintendent

- A. The assistant superintendent is to assist the superintendent in carrying out the program of the Sunday School.
- B. Appointed by the superintendent with approval of pastor and deacons.

ARTICLE 14 – COMMITTEES

Committees are appointed as soon as possible for the year starting in January, by the pastor and deacons.

- A. Pastor is an ex-officio member of all committees.
- B. The purpose of committees is to supply feedback and other related information to the pastor and deacons.
- C. Committees are formed to perform certain functions and are expected to carry them out.
- D. When a committee's responsibility is fulfilled, then the committee is disbanded.

ARTICLE 15 – LICENSING, COMMISSIONING, AND ORDINATION

Section 1 – Licensing

When men of the church have evidenced the call of the Lord by their life and actions, then upon the request of the individual, the deacons and pastor will examine the individual and present him to the congregation for a motion to license this one to the ministry.

Section 2 – Commissioning

When an individual is called of the Lord and there is supporting evidence, then the deacons and pastor will meet with the candidate and commission missionaries that meet the like qualifications of our precious faith. A service for commissioning will then be arranged after vote of the church.

Section 3 – Ordination

This church has the right to ordain a man into the ministry who has evidenced the call of God by his ministry. When the Church feels this man is called of God, they may proceed by the following steps for ordination.

- A. The Church will call an ordination council, composed of Pastor, and two messengers from Churches of like precious faith, to examine the candidate concerning his call, education, experience, reputation, character, doctrinal beliefs, and demonstrated efficiency in Christian service, etc.
- B. Upon examination this council will recommend to the Church as to the qualifications of the candidate.
- C. The Church will then proceed as they feel led by God.
- D. This Church has the right to revoke the ordination credentials.

ARTICLE 16 – BY-LAW SUSPENSION

The by-laws may not be suspended at any time.

- A. Adoption – This Constitution and its by-laws shall supersede all others.
- B. Amendments – may be considered at any regular business meeting, provided written notice is given to the membership two weeks prior to that meeting.

ARTICLE 17 – CHURCH BUILDING USE

According to the purposes of this church, we want to be consistent with the use of this building.

- A. Request for use should be given to the pastor, and/or deacons for consideration.
- B. The Pastor will inform the individual of any action taken by the congregation. If the church is pastorless then the chairman of the deacons will inform the party.
- C. Weddings of our people will be considered a privilege.
- D. Others wanting to use the building for any event will be asked about alcoholic beverages, abuse of drugs, etc., which we do not allow in the building or on the grounds at functions following the use of our building.
- E. Charges, if any, will be assessed by the deacons and pastor, for cleaning, and or repairs.

ARTICLE 18 – DISSOLUTION

Section 1

In case of division of the church membership, the building and property will remain in the hands of the group who abide by this constitution.

Section 2

In case of dissolution, all assets shall be given to a tax exempt organization adhering to the purpose, covenant, and doctrinal statement of this church.

Article 5 – Statement of Faith.

Section 1 – The Scriptures We believe that the Holy Bible was (a) written by men controlled by the Holy Spirit; (b) that it has truth without admixture of error for its matter; and (c) therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.

(Explanatory) By “The Holy Bible” we mean that collection of sixty-six books, from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written, does not merely contain and convey the word of God, but is the very Word of God

By “Inspiration” we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.

(a) II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:19-21; Acts 1:16; Acts 28:25

(b) Psalm 119:160; Psalm 119:105; Psalm 119:130; Luke 24:25-27; John 17:17; Luke 24:44-45

(c) Psalm 119:89; Proverbs 30:5-6; Romans 12:48; Isaiah 8:20; Ephesians 6:17; Romans 15:4; Luke 16:31; Psalm 19:7-11; John 5:45-47; John 5:39

Section 2 – The True God We believe that there is (a) one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth; (b) inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; (c) that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

(a) Exodus 20:2-3; Genesis 17:1; I Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6; John 4:24; Psalm 83:18; Psalm 90:2; Jeremiah 10:10

(b) Exodus 15:11; Revelation 4:11; I Timothy 1:17; Romans 11:33; Mark 12:30

(c) Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; I Corinthians 12:4-6; I John 5:7; John 10:30; John 17:5; Acts 5:3-4; I Corinthians 2:10-12; Philippians 2:5-6; Ephesians 2:18; II Corinthians 13:14

Section 3 – The Holy Spirit We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person; (a) equal with God the Father and (b) God the Son and (c) of the same nature; (d) that He was active in the creation; (e) that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the Evil One until God’s purpose is fulfilled; (f) that He convicts of sin, of judgment and of righteousness; (g) that He bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony; (h) that He is the agent in the New Birth; (i) that He seals, baptizes, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer.

We believe that the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance) is the evidence of His indwelling rather than the speaking in tongues and other spectacular demonstrations.

(a) John 14:16-17 (b) Matthew 28:19 (c) Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35

(d) Genesis 1:1-3 (e) II Thessalonians 2:7 (f) John 16:8-11 (g) John 15:26-27; Acts 5:30-32

(h) John 3:5-6

(i) Ephesians 1:13-14; Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; John 16:13; John 14:26; Romans 8:16; II Thessalonians 2:13; I Peter 1:2; Romans 8:26-27; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 5:18-21

Section 4 – Sanctification We believe that sanctification has a two-fold meaning; (a) that of the setting apart of things, days, or persons specifically for God, and that the believer at the time of his regeneration is so set apart by God the Father; (b) the progressive work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer, to the Word of God, experiences the power of the indwelling Christ for holiness of life and victory over the old nature, which work will be completed when the believer stands in Christ's presence

(a) I Corinthians 1:30; Hebrews 10:10, 14 (b) Colossians 1:28-28; John 17:17; I Thessalonians 5:23; II Corinthians 3:18

Section 5 – The Devil, or Satan We believe that Satan was once (a) holy and enjoyed heavenly honors; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell and (b) drew after him a host of angels; that he is now (c) the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world. We (d) hold him to be man's great tempter, (e) the enemy of God and His Christ, (f) the accuser of the saints, (g) the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy; (h) the Lord of the Antichrist, and (i) the author of all powers of darkness – destined however (j) to final defeat at the hands of God's Son, and (k) to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels.

(a) Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:14-17 (b) Revelation 12:9; Jude 6; II Peter 2:4 (c) Ephesians 2:2; John 14:30 (d) I Peter 5:8; I Thessalonians 3:5; Matthew 4:1,3 (e) Zechariah 1:3; I John 3:6; Matthew 13:25, 37-39; Luke 22:3-4 (f) Revelation 12:10 (g) II Corinthians 11:13-15; Mark 13:21-22 (h) I John 4:3; II John 1:7; I John 2:22 (i) Revelation 13:13-14; II Thessalonians 2:8-11 (j) Revelation 19:11; II Thessalonians 2:8-11 (k) Revelations 20:10; Matthew 25:41

Section 6 – The Creation We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and (a) that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively; (b) that man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness; (c) that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms; (d) that all animal and vegetable life was made directly, and God's established law was they should bring forth only "after their kind."

(a) Genesis 1:1; Exodus 20:11; Acts 4:24; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 11:3; John 1:3; Revelation 10:6; Romans 1:20; Acts 17:23-26; Jeremiah 10:12; Hebrews 9:6

(b) Genesis 1:26-27; I Corinthians 11:7 (c) Genesis 2:7; Genesis 2:21-23 (d) Genesis 1:11; Genesis 1:24

Section 7 – The Fall of Man We believe (a) that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but (b) by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state, (c) in consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but of choice; and (d) therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse.

(a) Genesis 3:1-6, 24, (b) Romans 5:12; Romans 5:19 (c) Romans 3:10-19; Ephesians 2:1,3; Romans 1:18; Ezekiel 18:19-20 (d) Romans 1:32; Romans 1:20; Romans 1:28; Galatians 3:22

Section 8 – The Virgin Birth We believe that (a) Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner; (b) born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman, and (c) that He is both Son of God, and God, the Son.

(a) Genesis 3:15 (b) Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; Mark 1:1; John 1:14; Psalm 2:7; Galatians 4:4 (c) I John 5:20; I Corinthians 15:47

Section 9 -- The Atonement for Sin We believe (a) that the salvation of sinners is of grace (b) through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins; (c) that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ the Lord bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; (d) that, having risen from the dead His is now enthroned in heaven, and uniting in His wonderful person the most tender sympathies with divine perfection, He is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and an all-sufficient Savior.

(a) Ephesians 2:8; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24 (b) John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:14; Isaiah 53:4-7; Romans 3:25; I John 4:10; I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21 (c) John 10:18; Philippians 2:8; Galatians 1:4; I Peter 2:24; I Peter 3:18; Isaiah 53:11; Hebrews 12:2 (d) I Corinthians 15:20; Isaiah 53:11-12; Hebrews 9:12-15 Hebrews 7:25; I John 2:2

Section 10 – Grace in the New Creation We believe (a) that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again: (b) that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; (c) that it is instantaneous and not a process; (d) that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; (e) that the new creation is brought in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; (f) that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.

(a) John 3:3 (b) II Corinthians 5:17 (c) Luke 5:27; I John 5:1; John 3:6-7; Acts 2:41; Acts 16:30-33 (d) II Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1; II Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 2:13 (e) John 3:8; John 1:12-13 (f) Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 5:9

Section 11 – The Freeness of Salvation We believe in (a) God's electing grace; (b) that the blessings of salvation are made free to all through the gospel; (c) that it is the immediate duty of

all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, obedient faith; and (d) that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel; (e) which rejection involved him in an aggravated condemnation.

(a) I Thessalonians 1:4; Colossians 3:12; I Peter 1:2; Titus 1:1; Romans 8:29-30 (b) Matthew 11:28; Isaiah 55:1; Revelation 22:17; Romans 10:13; John 6:37 (c) Isaiah 55:7; Acts 2:38 (d) Isaiah 55:7; John 3:15-16; I Timothy 1:15; I Corinthians 15:10; Ephesians 2:4-5; John 5:40 (e) John 3:18; John 3:36

Section 12 – Justification We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is Justification: (a) that Justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness; (b) that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done; but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us.

(a) Acts 13:39; Isaiah 53:11; Zechariah 13:1; Romans 8:1; Romans 5:9; Romans 5:1

(b) Titus 3:5-7; Romans 1:17; Habakkuk 2:4; Galatians 3:11; Romans 4:1-8; Hebrews 10:38

Section 13 – Repentance and Faith We believe that Repentance and Faith are (a) solemn obligations, and (b) also inseparable graces, (c) wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God; (d) thereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy; (e) at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Savior.

(a) Acts 20:21 (b) Mark 1:15 (c) Acts 2:27-38 (d) Luke 18:13; Romans 10:13; Psalm 51:1-4; Psalm 51:7; Isaiah 55:6-7 (e) Luke 12:8; Romans 9:11

Section 14 – The Church We believe that a church of Christ is a congregation of baptized (immersed) believers (a) associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; (b) observing the ordinances of Christ; (c) governed by His laws; and (d) exercising the gifts, right and privileges invested in them, by His Word; (e) that its scripturally designated officers are pastor (elders) and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures; (f) we believe the true mission of the church is found in the great commission: First to make individual disciples; second to baptize them; third, to teach and instruct, as He has commanded. We do not believe in the reversal of this order. We hold that (g) the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit; that it is (h) scriptural for true churches to co-operate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its co-operation; (i) on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

(a) Acts 2:41-42 (b) Acts 2:42; I Corinthians 11:2 (c) Ephesians 1:22-23 (d) Ephesians 4:11; I Corinthians 12:4, 8-11 (e) Acts 14:23; Acts 6:5-6; Acts 15:23; Acts 20:17-28; I Timothy 3:1-7; I Timothy 3:8-13 (f) Matthew 28:19-20 (g) Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23-24; I Peter 5:1-4 (h)

Acts 15:22; Jude 3-4; II Corinthians 8:23-24; I Corinthians 16:1; Malachi 3:10; Leviticus 27:32; I Corinthians 16:2 (i) I Corinthians 6:1-3; I Corinthians 5:11-13

Section 15 – Baptism and the Lord’s Supper We believe that Christian Baptism is (a) the believer’s immersion in water; (b) into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; (c) to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; (d) that in scriptural order baptism precedes the privileges of church membership and is the public recognition of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We believe that the Lord’s Supper (e) is a memorial service in which the elements of bread and wine remind us of the love of God in Christ Jesus, “Who spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all.” And that this ordinance is to be observed in anticipation of His coming and preceded always by solemn self-examination.

(a) Acts 8:36-39; Matthew 3:6; John 3:23; Romans 6:4-5; Matthew 3:16 (b) Matthew 28:19 (c) Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12 (d) Acts 2:41-42; Matthew 29:19-20 (e) I Corinthians 11:23-28; Romans 8:32

Section 16 – The Perseverance and Preservation of the Saints We believe (a) that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; (b) that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; (c) that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and (d) that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation.

(a) John 8:31-32; Colossians 1:21,23 (b) I John 2:19; Matthew 13:19-20 (c) Romans 8:28; Matthew 6:30; Psalm 121:3; Hebrews 1:14; (d) I Peter 1:5; Philippians 1:6; John 10:28; John 10:29; John 16:8; Romans 8:35-39

Section 17 – The Righteous and the Wicked We believe that (a) there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; (b) that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem; (c) while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight, wicked, and under the curse; (d) and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost.

(a) Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17-18; Proverbs 11:31; I Peter 4:18 (b) Romans 1:17; I Corinthians 15:22; Acts 10:34-35; I John 2:29; I John 3:7 (c) Romans 6:16; I John 5:19; Galatians 3:10; Romans 7:6; Romans 6:23 (d) Proverbs 14:12; Luke 16:25; Matthew 25:13-14; John 8:21; Luke 9:26; John 12:25; Matthew 7:13-14

Section 18 – Civil Government We believe that civil government is (a) of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; (b) that magistrates are to be prayed for conscientiously honored and obeyed; (c) except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ; (d) who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth.

(a) Romans 13:1-7; II Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21;22 (b) Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13-14; I Peter 2:17 (c) Acts 5:29; Acts 4:19-20; Daniel 3:17-18 (d) Matthew 10:28; Matthew 23:10; Revelations 10:6; Philippians 2:10-11; Psalm 72:11

Section 19 – The Resurrection, Return of Christ, and Related Events

- A. Bodily Resurrection: Matthew 28:6,7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; I Corinthians 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2,
- B. The Ascension: Acts 1:9: 1:1; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19; Revelation 3:21; Hebrews 8:1; Hebrews 12:2
- C. The High Priesthood: Hebrews 8:6; I Timothy 2:5; I John 2:1; Hebrews 2:17; Hebrews 5:9-10
- D. The Second Coming: John 14:3; Acts 1;11; I Thessalonians 4:16; Matthew 24:27; Matthew 25:13; James 5:8; Matthew 24:42; Hebrews 9:28
- E. The Premillennial and Pre-Tribulation coming of Christ: We believe the rapture of the church[1] will take place before the tribulation and the revelation of Christ will take place at the end of the tribulation and before the millennium: Matthew 24; II Thessalonians 1:6-12; Revelation 20:1-6
- F. The Resurrection of the Righteous Dead[2]: I Thessalonians 4:16; I Corinthians 15:42-44; I Corinthians 15:52
- G. The Change of the Living in Christ: I Corinthians 15:51-53; I Thessalonians 4:17; Philippians 3:20-21
- H. On the Throne of David: Luke 1:32; Isaiah 9:6-7; Acts 2:29-30
- I. His Reign on Earth: I Corinthians 15:25; Isaiah 32:1; Isaiah 11:4-5; Psalm 72:8; Revelation 20:1-4; Revelation 20:6

CURRENT