

Highland Baptist Church

Constitution



Parkesburg, Pennsylvania

OUR CHURCH: Contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

OUR THEME: The Lord Jesus Christ and Him crucified, who is over all.

OUR HOPE: The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

OUR GOAL: To glorify God in seeking the salvation of the lost and in edifying the saints.

HIGHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH

CONSTITUTION

Adopted at a special business meeting September, 1984

Amended – May 2, 1999, April 29, 2007

PREAMBLE

We, being born again and Bible believing Christians by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, believing the Bible to be the divinely inspired and authoritative Word of God and final authority for all Christian faith and practice, accepting the historic Baptist distinctives, 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, therefore, band ourselves together as a body of immersed believers in Jesus Christ, and do adopt the following constitution as the statement of our faith and principles for the government of our local church.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this church shall be Highland Baptist Church, Parkesburg, Pennsylvania. It was incorporated in 1984 in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

ARTICLE II. DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Section 1. Purpose

The following doctrines are fundamental to the Christian faith and are the basis upon which this church stands.

Section 2. The Holy Scriptures

The Holy Scriptures, consisting of the Old and New Testaments only, are the plenary, verbally inspired Word of God, are inerrant in the original manuscripts, authoritative, infallible and God-breathed, and are the supreme and final authority for faith and practice. (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:20-21; Mt. 5:18; I Cor. 2:10-13)

Section 3. The Godhead

There is one God, coexisting in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each is eternal in being, identical in essence, equal in power and glory, and have the same divine attributes and perfection, yet exercising them in varied offices. (Dt. 6:4; Mt. 28:19; Jn. 14:7-12, 16:7; II Cor. 13:14)

Section 4. The Person and Work of Jesus Christ

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. (Mt. 1:18-20; Jn. 1:2,14,18; Lk. 1:35)

The Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins as a substitutionary sacrifice, and all who receive Him are justified by His shed blood. (Rom. 3:24-26, 4:25; I Cor. 15:3-4; II Cor. 5:21)

The crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ was resurrected physically from the dead and our redemption and salvation are guaranteed to us by His resurrection. He ascended bodily into heaven and is there for us as High Priest and Intercessor. (Mt. 28:5-6; I Cor. 15:12-19; Acts 1:9; Heb. 4:14-16, 7:23-25, 9:24; I Jn. 2:1-2)

The Lord Jesus Christ, in a visible, pretribulational, premillennial imminent return, will rapture the New Testament saints. (I Cor. 15:51-53; I Thess. 4:14-17; Titus 2:13; I Jn. 3:2-3)

Section 5. The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is a divine person equal with the Father and the Son and of the same essence and nature. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. He bears witness to the truth that He is the agent of the new birth. He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies and helps the believer. He baptizes them into the Church, the Body of Christ, indwells them permanently, seals them unto the day of redemption, bestows spiritual gifts upon each one, and fills for service those yielded to Him. Certain spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Church such as apostleship, prophesy, and tongues were temporary, needed only in the infancy of the Church, and are not to be expected today. The Holy Spirit testifies concerning Jesus Christ, not of Himself, and never leads any person, at any time, contrary to the teaching of the Holy Bible. (Jn. 3:8, 14:16, 15:26-27, 16:7-15; Acts 5:1-4; I Cor. 12:4-13, 13:8-11; Eph. 4:30, 5:18)

Section 6. The Depravity of Man

Man was created in the image and likeness of God but, in Adam's sin, the race fell and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. All men are born with a sinful nature, and are now sinners by birth and by choice, positively inclined to evil, and therefore are under just condemnation to eternal ruin in a literal Hell without defense or excuse. (Gen. 1:26, 3:1-24; II Cor. 4:3-4; Rom. 3:23, 5:12; Eph. 2:1-6,12; Rev. 20:1-10)

Section 7. Salvation

Salvation is a gift of God brought to men by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of sins. Salvation is solely through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and, being a free gift, is not earned by any good works whatsoever. All those who receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour are regenerated and become sons of God. (Eph. 1:7, 2:8, 9; Jn. 1:12, 3:5-7)

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. The person becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus; and without regeneration salvation is impossible. (Jn. 3:3-6; II Cor. 5:17; I Pet. 1:23; Titus 3:5)

Justification is the act of God whereby He declares the believer to be righteous through faith in Jesus Christ. This includes the pardon of sin and the imputation of God's righteousness. (Rom. 5:1-9, 8:1)

The salvation of every believer is secure for all eternity from the moment of regeneration. This security is guaranteed to each believer by: a) the fact that the life received is eternal life, b) the keeping power of God, c) the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit, and d) the interceding ministry of Christ. (Jn. 5:24; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1,29,30,38,39; Eph. 4:30)

Section 8. Sanctification

Immediate positional sanctification is the 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 Jn. 3:1; Rom. 8:14-17; I Cor. 1:2; Heb. 10:10-14)

Sanctification is the process by which, according to God's will, we are made partakers of His holiness. It is progressive, begun in regeneration, progresses if the believer is yielded to the Holy Spirit's control, and 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. (I Thess. 4:3, 5:23; Prov. 4:18; I Jn. 2:29; Eph. 6:18; Jn. 17:17)

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 resurrected body, free from every trace of sin and rebellion. (I Jn. 3:2; I Cor. 15:52-54; Eph. 4:30, 5:27)

Section 9. The Future Events

The personal, pretribulational, coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His own, the church, is imminent. His subsequent, personal, premillennial, visible return to the earth will establish His kingdom. He will reign for a

millenium over the entire earth from the throne of David. (II Sam. 7:12-16; Zech. 14; Lk. 1:30-33; I Thess. 4:13-18; I Cor. 15:51-52; Rev. 19:11-16, 20:6)

Section 10. The Eternal State

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. However, the soul of the unbeliever remains, after death, in conscious misery until the final judgment of the Great White Throne at the end of the millenium, 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. (Lk. 16:19-26, 23:43; II Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; II Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:11-15, 14:9-14)

Section 11. The Church

The Church is a living, spiritual body of which Christ is the head. (Mt. 16:16-18; I Cor. 12:12,13; Eph. 1:22,23, 5:25-27)

Each local church is a visible expression of the Body of Christ and is a congregation of believers in Jesus Christ, established on a credible confession of faith, and associated together by covenant for worship, evangelism, observance of the ordinances, and fellowship. The local church is the center of God's program for this age and every believer is bound by Scripture to give his unhindered cooperation to the program of His local church. (Acts 2:41-47, 20:17; I Tim. 3:1-6; Titus 1:5-11; I Cor. 3:10-17, 5:1-5, 11:2)

The Bible teaches that the leadership offices of Pastor and Deacon should be held by men only. (I Tim. 2:12; Acts 6)

We believe that women are very important to the church (I Tim 5:14; Rom. 16:1-15). In the organizational structure of the church, however, they are never to usurp authority or to publicly teach men (I Tim. 2:9-15; I Cor. 14:34-35).

Section 12. Ordinances

Baptism is only for the believer in Christ and is the single immersion in water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to show, by solemn and accurate symbolism, the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, and is a Scriptural prerequisite to church membership. (Mt. 28:19; Acts 8:36-39; Rom. 6:3-5; I Pet. 3:21; Acts 2:41,47)

The Lord's Supper is the partaking of bread and the fruit of the vine as symbols of Christ's body and blood, commemorating His suffering and death for us. Participation should be limited to believers who are walking in obedience to the Word of God and should be preceded by careful self-examination. (I Cor. 11:23-32, 9:1-5; Mt. 18:15-17)

Section 13. Responsibility of Believers

All believers should seek to walk by the Spirit, not bringing reproach upon their Lord and Saviour, exercising Christian liberty regulated by love, separating from worldly pleasures and practices, and separating from organizational association with apostate groups. (Rom. 12:1,2; Gal. 6:6; II Cor. 6:14-17)

It is the responsibility of all believers to witness by life and word to the truths of the Scriptures and to assume responsibility for the propagation of the gospel to all the world. (Mt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8)

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 of the regular services of the church as the Lord enables, and to voluntarily submit to the watchcare and discipline of the local church. (I Cor. 16:2; Heb. 10:19-25, 13:17-18)

Section 14. Creation

God created the heavens and the earth, including all life, by direct act and not by any process of evolution. The days of creation in Genesis chapter 1 were twenty-four hour days. (Gen. 1,2; Col. 1:16,17; Jn. 1:3; Ex. 31:17)

Section 15. Satan

Satan is literal and personal. He is the agent of the Fall, the prince and power of this world, and shall be judged and eternally punished. (Rev. 20:1-10; Eph. 2:1-4)

Section 16. Biblical Separation

All believers are called into a life of separation. This separation is in at least three areas: moral, personal, and ecclesiastical.

Moral: The Ten Commandments are God's perfect standard for a perfect man. We are commanded to perfect holiness in the fear of God. The believer is to never suffer as an evil doer but is commanded to be clean in body and mind. (II Cor. 7:1; I Pet. 4:15; II Cor. 10:5).

Personal: Romans 14 explains that there are areas in which the believers are going to disagree regarding matters that they call sin. The stronger will do things that the weaker will not. In matters of eating, holy days, etc., every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind. (Rom. 14:5)

Ecclesiastical: While recognizing the unity of all true believers, it is also evident that unbelief and error in many organized fellowships have 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 will have no fellowship or union with the ecumenical movement, neo-orthodoxy, new evangelicalism, cooperative evangelism, etc. between churches and peoples not of like faith. (II Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11-12; Lk. 12:51)

The healing and tongues movement of today is unscriptural and contrary to sound doctrine. (I Cor. 14:33-40, 13:8-11)

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Qualifications for Membership

- A. The membership of this church shall be constituted of persons who, having professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, exhibit conduct consistent with their profession, have convictions in harmony with the faith and practice of this church as set forth in the doctrinal statement, and have, after baptism by immersion, been elected into membership of the church.
- B. Church membership is encouraged to provide for mutual growth and support, fellowship, and accountability (Acts 6:1-8, Heb 10:23-25, I Cor. 5:1-7).
- C. Persons desiring membership must attend a membership class. This class shall include a reviewing of the candidate's salvation testimony and reasons for desiring membership, an overview of the church constitution and general requirements and responsibilities of church membership.
- D. No member shall be received on the basis of a letter or transfer of membership from another church.

Section 2. Receiving of Members

- A. Anyone desiring to unite with this church must appear before the membership committee of the Board of Deacons. Candidates must be examined and must meet with the unanimous approval of this committee and be recommended to the church. All candidates must appear before the church and give public testimony, except those who are unable to do so because of physical handicap. No candidate shall become a member who is a member of any secret society, such as the Masons, or of any group that teaches or practices civil disobedience. (Jn. 18:20; Rom. 13)
- B. Candidates shall be received into the membership by a majority voice vote at any regular church service. Any member casting a dissenting vote shall appear immediately before the candidate, Pastor and Deacons and give scriptural reasons for the objection. If the dissention is ruled valid, the application shall be deferred pending further investigation and resolution by the Pastor and Deacons.
- C. All candidates shall have a copy of the constitution made available to them prior to applying for membership and shall complete a written application prior to meeting with the membership committee.

Section 3. Types of Membership

- A. Active member: A member who attends regularly the meetings held in this church, and contributes to and participates in the work of this church according to New Testament teaching.
- B. Inactive member: A member who, without just cause or reason in the opinion of the Board of Deacons, fails to attend or manifest any interest in the church.
 - 1. The inactive member shall be placed on the inactive list and lose his right to speak or vote at a business meeting in the church.
 - 2. The Board of Deacons shall make every effort to reestablish the member's fellowship with the church and may restore an inactive member to active membership status whenever such a person indicates a desire to be reinstated by their regular attendance for three months.
 - 3. Names remaining on the inactive list for over six months shall be dropped from the church.
- C. Involuntary inactive member: A member who is ill, or moved to a community where no church of like faith exists, and who faithfully supports the church with their tithes or those who, through circumstances beyond their control, cannot faithfully attend this assembly. Each case shall be considered on its own merits.
- D. Associate membership: From time to time, active members may temporarily locate out of the area because of college, military service, etc. and desire to remain connected with this local body. For the duration of their absence, these members shall be assigned associate member status. Upon relocation back into the area, and faithfully attending for thirty days, the associate member shall be counted as an active member.

Likewise, persons may temporarily locate into the area for similar reasons, and desire to join with this local body for the duration of their stay. Upon being voted into membership, these persons shall be given associate member status.

No member on associate member status shall vote at any official church business meeting.

Section 4. Letters of Transfer

Letters of transfer shall not be granted.

Section 5. Discipline

The aim of practicing corrective discipline is to glorify God, to preserve the welfare and purity of the church, and to restore the offender. Offenders shall be brought before the Pastor and Board of Deacons for a recommendation to the church, according to the following principles:

- A. Corrective discipline implies imperfection and a tendency to sin and to cause offense. No offense should be brought before the church until the pattern of Christ is followed. Every effort shall be taken to remove offenses before church action is taken. The censure will be erasure from the roll. (Mt. 5:23-24, 18:15-17).
- B. Any person dismissed, who gives satisfactory evidence of a repentant spirit, shall be restored.
- C. Dismissal shall be by a majority vote at a business meeting. Restoration shall be decided by the same process as initial membership (See ARTICLE III, Section 2 B)

Section 6. Pastoral Membership

The Pastor and Assistant Pastor(s) of the church and their wives shall be considered members of the church. Their children shall be voted into membership according to Article III, Sections 1 and 2.

Section 7. Requirement for Service

Membership is required for any adult to serve in any official capacity in the church. Any person ceasing to be a member in good standing automatically forfeits any office he holds in any church organization and shall return, within one week, any funds, books, minutes, or any other property of the organization.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

Section 1. Officers

- A. The officers of the church shall consist of the elected offices of Pastor, Assistant Pastor(s), Deacons, Clerk, and Treasurer and all other appointed offices.
- B. All officers of the church shall be active members in good standing. (See Article III, Section 3A).
- C. No member shall be nominated to become an officer of the church unless he or she has been a member of the church for at least six months. (Exception - Pastor and Assistant Pastor)
- D. No member shall be eligible to hold an office until he or she has reached the age of twenty-one.
- E. An officer is be above reproach, and thus is not given to worldly vices such as alcoholic beverages, tobacco, illegal drugs, pornography or gambling.
- F. Assumption of the office shall take place within two weeks of the annual business meeting. The outgoing officer shall assist the incoming officer to assure a smooth transition.
- G. Proven immorality, heresy in doctrine, apostasy, or failure to properly attend his duty are grounds for dismissal proceedings against any officer. Dismissal requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the church, except for the Pastor and Assistant Pastor (See Article IV, Section 2 D and Section 3 D).

Section 2. The Pastor

- A. Qualifications of the Pastor:
 - 1. His qualifications shall reflect the requirements as stated in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
 - 2. He shall be a licensed or ordained Baptist minister, subscribing without reservation to the doctrinal statement found in Article II.
 - 3. He shall not be a member of any group connected with the ecumenical movement, the National Council of Churches, American Baptist Convention, or any organization that is in conflict with our doctrinal statement.
- B. Calling a Pastor: When a vacancy occurs in the pastorate, the Board of Deacons shall elect a pulpit committee consisting of the Deacons and two members of the church. The chairman of the Deacons shall serve as the committee chairman. The Deacons shall be responsible for the pulpit supply during the vacancy.

This committee must approve, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, any candidate before they present him to the church. Any candidate recommended to the church must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote before extending to him a call to the pastorate. One candidate for pastor shall be considered at a time.

The salary shall be determined by the church at the time of the election of the Pastor and may be changed at any business meeting of the church. The Pastor shall be entitled to an annual vacation with pay, not to exceed one month. The Pastor may be absent with the approval of the Board of Deacons, to do evangelistic or Bible conference work. On such occasions, the Pastor shall be responsible for the pulpit supply and salary with consideration of the Board of Deacons.

- C. Duties of the Pastor:
 - 1. The Pastor must endeavor as a minister to hold forth the Word of God as a faithful servant.
 - 2. The Pastor shall have the general oversight of the spiritual life, services, and administration of the ordinances of the church; shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees connected with the church or any of its organizations, and shall conscientiously perform such duties as may be arranged between the Board of Deacons and himself.
 - 3. The Pastor and Board of Deacons shall approve and invite all speakers to occupy the pulpit. The visiting speakers must support and uphold the doctrinal statement of our church.
 - 4. The Pastor shall approve all speakers for church organizations.
 - 5. The Pastor shall be responsible for all education ministries in the church.
 - 6. The Pastor shall set the standard for music, dress, and conduct for all church activities.
 - 7. The Pastor shall recommend all non-elected officers in the church and shall recommend candidates for various offices of the Board of Deacons.
- D. Termination or Dismissal of the Pastor:
 - 1. The Pastor shall be free to resign as he feels led of the Holy Spirit, but out of Christian courtesy, he shall give a thirty (30) day written notice to the church.
 - 2. Proven immorality, heresy in doctrine, apostasy, or failure to properly attend his duties are grounds for dismissal proceedings against the Pastor. Dismissal requires a three-fourths (3/4) vote at a special meeting

of the church. In the event the congregation votes to terminate the Pastor's services abruptly, the salary involved shall continue for thirty (30) days.

Section 3. The Assistant Pastor(s):

A. Qualifications of Assistant Pastor:

1. His qualifications shall reflect the requirements as stated in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
2. He shall be a licensed or ordained Baptist minister, subscribing without reservation to the doctrinal statement found in Article II.
3. He shall not be a member of any group connected with the ecumenical movement, the National Council of Churches, American Baptist Convention, or any organization that is in conflict with our doctrinal statement.

B. Calling Assistant Pastor: When the need for an Assistant Pastor occurs, the Pastor and the Board of Deacons shall examine the candidate and, upon approval, present him to the church. Calling requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote. His salary shall be determined at the time of election and may be changed at any business meeting of the church. The Assistant Pastor shall be entitled to an annual vacation of two weeks with pay. After two years of service, he shall be entitled to one month.

C. Duties of the Assistant Pastor: The Assistant Pastor shall be responsible to the church through the Pastor. He shall be directly under the supervision of the Pastor for his duties.

D. Dismissal of the Assistant Pastor:

1. The Assistant Pastor shall be free to resign as he feels led of the Holy Spirit, but out of Christian courtesy, he shall give a minimum of a thirty (30) day written notice.
2. In the event the congregation votes to terminate the Assistant Pastor's services abruptly, the salary involved shall continue for thirty (30) days.
3. Dismissal of an Assistant Pastor requires a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the church.

Section 4. Board of Deacons

A. Deacons:

1. The qualifications of Deacons shall be those set forth in I Tim. 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-6.
2. There shall be a minimum of three male members, if there are this many who possess the qualifications. Additional deacons, until five have been elected for the first one hundred members, may be added. After this, one deacon for each fifty members may be added. Deacons shall be elected at each annual business meeting to serve for a term of three years, unless otherwise designated prior to the elections. Deacons shall not immediately succeed themselves except when filling an unexpired term of less than one year (See Article V, Section 3).
3. The Deacons shall meet monthly and shall elect their own chairman, secretary, and treasurer at their first meeting after the annual business meeting. A quorum for any Board of Deacons meeting shall be a majority of the Deacons.
4. The Deacons shall be governed in their duties and responsibilities by the church charter of incorporation and the constitution. They are responsible to the church at all times and in all matters.
5. Treasurer of the Board of Deacons shall maintain the Deacons' Fund. He shall also operate as Treasurer if the church Treasurer is unable to carry out his duties.
6. The Board of Deacons may appoint committees to accomplish specific tasks as needed.

B. Duties of the Deacons

1. General

- a. Assist the Pastor in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church, including such activities as visitation and discipleship, and in conducting the religious services and administration of the ordinances.
- b. Provide speakers for the pulpit in the absence of the Pastor.
- c. Engage and dismiss all paid employees.

2. Membership

- a. Consider all applicants for membership before making recommendations to the church.
- b. Visit the sick, distressed and inactive members of the church.

- c. Review the church roll regularly and prior to the annual business meeting, in cooperation with the church clerk.
 - d. Execute church discipline in accordance with Article III – Section 5.
3. Fiscal
- a. Manage the church’s finances in accordance with Article XI. Keep, through the Treasurer, a faithful account of all receipts and disbursements. Present accurate and detailed reports of all finances to the church at the annual meetings and at other times as may seem necessary.
 - b. Distribute the Deacon’s Fund of the church, which exists for the relief of the needy of the church and of the community.
 - c. At least one (1) deacon shall assist the Financial Secretary in counting all church offerings.
4. Property
- a. Oversee and maintain the property and facilities of the church, seeking consent of the church for major changes.
 - b. The Secretary of the Board shall be custodian of all the legal documents of the church.
- C. Deacons’ Wives
- 1. The Deacons’ wives shall assist in the administration of various church ministries.
 - a. Care for the baptismal robes and the vessels used in the observance of the Lord’s Supper and arrange for the assistance of the ladies at the time of their baptism.
 - b. Assist the Pastor in the social life of the church, as it pertains to the whole church body, such as New Year’s Services, Easter Sunrise services, hymn sings, etc. They are not responsible for wedding receptions.
 - c. Provide for the staffing of the nursery at all regular and special meetings of the church.
 - 2. The Deacons may appoint other ladies to assist in these ministries as needed.

Section 5. Church Treasurer

- A. The Church Treasurer may be either a man or a woman.
- B. Term - The Treasurer shall be elected for a one-year term by the members of the church and may serve up to five consecutive terms. There shall be a lapse of at least one full year before he is eligible for re-election.
- C. Duties
 - 1. Reception and disbursement of all funds in accordance with the orders of the church or the Board of Deacons.
 - 2. Keep full and faithful accounts of all funds, recording the purposes for which they are received and expended.
 - 3. Report to the church quarterly and annually and to the Board of Deacons as often as he may be required to do so.
- D. The books and accounts shall be examined annually by a Public Accountant.

Section 6. Church Clerk

- A. The Clerk may be either a man or a woman.
- B. Term - The Clerk shall be elected for a one-year term, and may serve for a total of five consecutive terms.
- C. Duties
 - 1. Keep a full and careful record of all activities in the church.
 - 2. Maintain a complete register of the names and residences of church members, admissions, dismissals, deaths, baptisms, ordination services, etc.
 - 3. Keep an accurate record of the history of the church.

Section 7. Appointed Officers

- A. Sunday School Superintendent
 - 1. The Superintendent shall be appointed by the Pastor
 - 2. Term – the appointment shall be for a period of one year and he shall be able to succeed himself.
 - 3. Duties
 - a. Along with the Pastor, appoint a Sunday School Secretary and Registrar as needed.
 - b. Review and evaluate classes and curriculum.
 - c. Encourage teacher training
 - d. Initiate Sunday School activities to promote enthusiasm and increased attendance in the Sunday School.

- B. Financial Secretary
 - 1. The Financial Secretary shall be appointed by the Pastor and Board of Deacons, and may be either a man or a woman.
 - 2. Term – The appointment shall be for one year and shall be reviewed annually by the Pastor and Board of Deacons.
 - 3. Duties
 - a. Assist the Deacons in the counting of all funds received and prepare bank documents required for deposit. (See Article IV, Section 4, B3c)
 - b. Keep records of the donations to the church for the purpose of providing an annual statement to the donors.
 - c. Produce and distribute confidential annual statements to the donors.
- C. Ushers
 - 1. The Head Usher of the church shall be a male member in good standing, and shall be appointed by the Pastor and Board of Deacons within two weeks following the annual business meeting.
 - 2. The Head Usher is responsible to the Pastor and Board of Deacons and is to report regularly to them.
 - 3. The ushers shall meet quarterly.
- D. All other appointed officers shall act in accordance with Article IV, Section 1.

ARTICLE V. ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS

Section 1. Election of Officers and Their Tenure

- A. All offices of elective status shall be filled at the annual business meeting of the church. (See Article VI, Section 2)
- B. An individual may be elected to more than one office if he is qualified and can fulfill all the responsibilities designated.

Section 2. Nominating Committee

- A. Membership: This committee shall consist of the Pastor (as chairman), Deacons, and two adult members of the church, not in the immediate family of any officer of the church. The Deacons shall present a list of nominees from the church membership at large from which the church shall elect two members to serve on this committee. These two individuals shall be elected at a special business meeting to be held eight weeks prior to the annual business meeting. The committee shall elect a secretary from among its members.
- B. Duties:
 - 1. Select those candidates from the church membership that it believes are best qualified for each elective office.
 - 2. Recommend to the church one or more candidates for each elective office. These candidates shall be notified and interviewed as to their agreement and ability to accept the office should they be elected.
 - 3. Prepare and post a list of candidates, along with the offices to be filled and the present office holders, at least three weeks prior to the election.
- C. At a stated service, two weeks prior to the election, the church shall meet and additional nominations may be made from the floor. No further nominations may be made after this time. The committee will interview each of these further nominees and if they are agreeable and qualified, their names will be placed on the ballot.

Section 3. Vacancies

When any vacancy occurs, the Pastor and Deacons shall appoint a qualified member to serve until the annual business meeting, at which time the church shall elect a qualified member to fill the vacant office. The appointment to fill an unexpired term of less than one year shall not be counted as part of a term.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH

Section 1. Worship Services

- 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 as the Pastor and Deacons recommend. Extenuating circumstances alone may alter this weekly format.
- B. The Sunday School shall meet every Sunday for the study of the Bible and shall be under the supervision of the Sunday School Superintendent.
- C. The King James Version will be the recommended translation for use in this church for teaching or preaching. The Revised Standard Version, The Good News Bible, The Living Bible, etc. shall not be used. We do recognize that other translations, such as the New King James Version or the New American Standard Version, can be greatly beneficial for study. If any of these latter translations would be used for preaching or teaching, they must be approved by both the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.
- D. Membership is required to serve in any official capacity in this church (See Article IV, Section 2 - C3 and C4 concerning special speakers or program features.)

Section 2. Business Meetings

- A. Annual Business Meeting: This shall be held on the second Sunday in January. The Pastor, Assistant Pastor(s), Board of Deacons, Treasurer, and all other organizations shall give a written report of their activities of the previous year.
- B. Special Business Meetings: Special meetings may be called by the Pastor, Board of Deacons, or by written request to the church Clerk signed by not less than seven (7) adult members in good standing. Notice shall be posted two 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. No other business shall be transacted.
- C. Order of Meetings:
 - 1. The Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall preside over all business meetings. In his absence, he shall appoint another deacon to fill this role.
 - 2. Rules of order at a business meeting shall follow parliamentary procedure.
- D. Voting :
 - 1. Active church members eighteen (18) years of age and over are eligible to vote.
 - 2. All votes of the church shall be determined by a majority unless otherwise required.
 - 3. Votes shall be determined by those active members present and voting.

E. Quorum

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

ARTICLE VII. ORDINANCES

Section 1. The Lord's Supper

The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed by the church, in accordance with Article II, Section 12, on the first Lord's day of every month. At this time, an offering for the Deacon's Fund shall be received.

Section 2. Baptism

The ordinance of baptism shall administered by request in accordance with Article II, Section 12.

ARTICLE VIII. ORGANIZATIONS

It is recognized that this church may have within it various subsidiary organizations such as Sunday School, youth groups, etc.

Section 1. Relationship of These Groups to the Church

- A. All such groups shall be considered arms of the church and shall exist for the purpose of extending the ministry and outreach of the church.
- B. All such groups shall be governed by the constitution of the church. No individual policy or practice shall conflict in any way with that of the church.
- C. All such groups shall be under the supervision of the Pastor and shall be responsible to the church as a whole.

Section 2. Subsidiary Organizations

A. Sunday School

- 1. The Sunday School is a teaching arm of the church and shall function under the direction of the Pastor.
- 2. Officers and Teachers:
 - a. The officers of the Sunday School may consist of Superintendent, Secretary, and Registrar.
 - b. The Secretary, Registrar, and all teachers shall be appointed by Pastor and Superintendent.
 - c. All officers and teachers of the Sunday School shall be members of the church in good standing.

B. Youth Groups

- 1. The youth groups are church governed organizations, which shall be under the supervision of the Pastor or church member to whom the Pastor delegates this responsibility.
- 2. All outside speakers shall be approved by the Pastor and be subject to Article IV, Section 2 – C3.
- 3. The youth groups shall not fellowship, join, or in any way unite with any outside organization without the approval of the Pastor and Board of Deacons.

Section 3. Finances of Subsidiary Organizations

- A. No organization shall have a separate bank account. Any special fund proposed by any organization of the church shall be approved by the Board of Deacons. These funds shall be kept by the Church Treasurer and shall be separate from the church's treasuries.
- B. No organization shall financially support missionary projects separately from the church, without the approval of the Board of Deacons.

ARTICLE IX. MISSIONS

Section 1.

It shall be the policy of the church to support through the general fund, only missions engaged in evangelism and in establishing New Testament churches. They shall be in agreement with our doctrinal statement, both in doctrine and in practice.

Section 2.

No missionary or mission board that is a member of the American Baptist Convention, National Council of Churches, or any group connected with the ecumenical movement shall be supported by this church. (See Article II Section 16.)

Section 3.

Any mission or missionary seeking to receive support shall be approved by the church. Such persons or groups shall be thoroughly investigated by the Pastor and Board of Deacons prior to any recommendation to the church.

ARTICLE X. LICENSING AND ORDINATION

Section 1. Licensing

Since it is the desire of this church that Spirit-filled men will be led 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 two-thirds (2/3) vote of the church, providing the Pastor and Board of Deacons have given their unanimous recommendation that the man in question has the Scriptural qualifications, suitable gifts, necessary training, and has had the blessing of God upon his life.

Section 2. Ordination

When the church decides that it has a candidate that 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 the ordination of the candidate, approval requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

Section 3. 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. (See Article II, Section 11)

ARTICLE XI. FINANCIAL POLICY

Section 1. The entire program of this church shall be supported by tithes and offerings of its members and those who are led by the Holy Spirit to contribute to its support. At no time may this church use any unscriptural method for raising funds. Fund raising methods that are not supported by the teaching of the Bible are prohibited.

Section 2. The church budget shall be a single unified budget. It shall not consist of several budgets. All funds shall be kept by the Church Treasurer and all bills will be paid by him. Before each annual business meeting, each organization shall present a suggested budget to the Board of Deacons. The Board of Deacons shall present a consolidated budget to the church. All collections, other than those specifically taken for social events, shall be kept by the Church Treasurer.

Section 3. No member or organization of the church shall incur an expense without permission of the Board of Deacons.

Section 4. The Board of Deacons may not purchase, sell, mortgage or encumber any real estate, or gift of any kind, devised to the church, without authority given by the church at a regular or special business meeting.

Section 5. Disbursements of more than \$1000 that are not budgeted items must be approved by the church.

Section 6. The Deacons' Fund shall operate separately from the general fund of the church.

ARTICLE XII. AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

The church may affiliate with any other Christian organization whose doctrinal statement and practices are in agreement with ours. We shall not become a permanent member of any organization and shall reserve the right to withdraw our affiliation.

ARTICLE XIII. AMMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the church by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, providing the notice of such amendments is presented to the church in writing at least one month before the meeting.

ARTICLE XIV. DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of this Corporation, assets shall be applied, first to the payment of its just debts and expenses in closing its affairs; second, the residue of the property and assets shall be given to one or more associations or corporation. None of its assets remaining after meeting all responsibilities and payment of all just obligations shall

accrue to the benefit of any individual member of the corporation, board member, Pastor, missionary, employee, or other private individual. All such assets, if any, shall in the event of dissolution, be turned over, by the decision of the congregation at an annual or special meeting, to an organization, or organizations, which is or are in harmony with the objectives and doctrinal position as stated in the constitution of this church.

ARTICLE XV. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year shall end on the last day of December.

ARTICLE XVI. OTHER POLICIES

The Pastor and Board of Deacons shall establish other policies as required in the operation of the church; including, but not limited to, leadership, appointed offices, missions, finances, sexual abuse, and infectious disease.

ARTICLE XVII. REVOCATION OF PREVIOUS DOCUMENTS

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