



## **Constitution, By-Laws & Confession of Faith**

Faith Baptist Church, Prosperity, WV

Adopted                      20 April 1983

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## Introduction

This Constitution was approved by the congregation of Faith Baptist Church on 20 April 1983. The Constitution was updated on 24 June 1994, 6 May 2007, 26 July 2015, 26 April 2020, 16 April 2023 and 26 February 2024. It replaces any previous constitution. It is the governing document of the church and is to be adhered to in all matters contained herein. Any amendments approved by the congregation of Faith Baptist Church shall be distributed to the membership in writing and will be included in any future printing.

A constitution is only as valuable as the people make it. It is imperative then that all members of Faith Baptist Church read and study this constitution in order to understand it and follow it.

The church covenant, which is included, is a covenant that, when followed, will promote love, growth and unity among the brethren, and bring glory to God.

Let us take this covenant to heart and do all within our power and God's enabling to fulfill it.

## Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage in a lifestyle that promotes Godliness in the corporate, family, and personal life of the church. It involves abstinence from practices that dishonor Christ and impugn the testimony of the church. We further commit ourselves to a Holy Spirit-directed life that promotes the fruit of the Spirit. It is our passionate desire to show forth Christ to the world in all we say and do (1 Corinthians 10:31).

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.



We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and principles of God's Word.

## Constitution

Adopted 20 April 1983, Updated 26 February 2024

### **Preamble**

We the membership, desiring to maintain a work pleasing to our Lord in our church worship, church government and affiliation, do hereby adopt and set forth the following rules and regulations to be our Constitution, By-Laws and Confession of Faith of Faith Baptist Church.

### **Article I. Name**

The name of this organization shall be Faith Baptist Church, Prosperity, West Virginia, formerly Prosperity Fundamental Baptist Church.

### **Article II. Definition and Purpose**

For purpose of clarification, in principles and operation, this church shall adhere to the view that a church is a local assembly of believers scripturally baptized on a credible confession of faith; having New Testament officers of Elders and Deacons; perpetuating the ordinances of baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper, self-governing in polity; voluntarily banded together for worship, fellowship, service and the worldwide proclamation of the Gospel.

### **Article III. Government**

The membership of this church shall be governed and shall worship and labor together according to the discipline, rules, and fellowship set forth by this Constitution, By-Laws, and Confession of Faith. The corporate membership of this church shall be autonomous; that is, they shall be the sole and final authority in all matters of membership, doctrine, polity or government, property, and affiliation.

### **Article IV. Membership**

The membership of Faith Baptist Church (FBC) shall be made up of born-again children of God whose lifestyle reflects their profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Although the practice of local church membership as we now know it is not expressly taught in the Bible, the leadership of FBC consider membership in a local church invaluable in promoting fellowship, accountability, discipleship, discipline, and in advancing the kingdom of God through world missions.



Membership is required for anyone holding any office in the church (see Constitution Article V, Section 1), and membership requirements for other areas are defined by those individual areas.

### **Section 1. Requirements for Membership**

Each candidate for membership shall:

- A. Give satisfactory evidence of having been born again by the Spirit of God, and of being a willing follower of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- B. Be baptized by immersion following the salvation experience.
- C. Subscribe to the Confession of Faith in this Constitution.
- D. Agree to walk in harmony with the Covenant of this church.
- E. Have taken a membership class.
- F. Children are received into membership upon giving testimony of a personal relationship with Christ, and having been baptized by immersion. Upon baptism, a child is automatically received into membership. Children become voting members at 18 years of age upon:
  - Subscription to the Confession of Faith in this Constitution (C)
  - Agreement to walk in harmony with the Covenant of this church (D)
  - Completion of a membership class (E)

Persons who grew up in Faith Baptist Church and are current attendees, having made a profession of faith in Christ, and having been baptized by immersion, who...

- Subscribe to the Confession of Faith in this Constitution (C)
- Agree to walk in harmony with the Covenant of this church (D) are encouraged to affirm their desire to be members of FBC by attending a membership class (E)

### **Section 2. Reception of Members**

- A. Persons who have fulfilled the requirements for membership (as stated under Article IV, Section 1, above) shall be eligible for membership in one of the following ways:
  - i. By suitable examination by the Elders;
  - ii. By letter of transfer/commendation from a church of like faith and order;



- iii. By membership certification from the candidate's home church (only for Associate Membership).
- B. Persons eligible for membership will be presented to the church and received into membership following a positive simple majority vote.
  - C. Members who for any reason have been excluded or excommunicated, or whose names have been erased from the roll of the church, may be restored to membership upon expression of repentance and/or renewal of interest. They shall be examined by the Elders and recommended to the church for a vote into membership and given the right hand of fellowship. Restoration to church membership does not restore to any office held prior to being dismissed.
  - D. Anyone divorced and remarried, with the former partner still living, shall be eligible for church membership only after being examined by the Elders and a recommendation to the church for a vote into membership and given the right hand of fellowship.
  - E. Categories of membership:
    - i. Full Member: members shall be at least 18 years of age, who are able to fully participate in all voting and service activities of the church;
    - ii. Associate Member: persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of FBC. They have all the privileges and duties of full membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices.

### **Section 3. Standards for Members**

In these days of worldliness among professing Christians, it is necessary that we call the attention of believers to the plain teaching of God's Word concerning worldly amusements and habits, entangling alliances with unbelievers, and un-Christ like conduct. Special attention should be given to the following Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; Romans 14:21; Psalm 34:13; Proverbs 21:23; James 3:1–18. These Scriptures exhort the child of God to refrain from the carnal pleasures of the world, indulgences in any questionable practices which are associated with vice and crime. Scripture further prohibits divorce except for the cause of fornication. (Matthew 5:32)

#### **A. Church Discipline/Restoration**

When a member does not refrain from the carnal pleasures of the world and indulges in action which brings dishonor on the name of Christ, the Church and himself, the following procedure will be followed, with the desired end being the recognition of sin in the person's



life, confession of that sin to the church and a change of behavior which restores them to fellowship with God and the church:

The errant member shall be counseled on the basis of the steps of Matthew 18:15–18 as soon as possible. If he refuses to heed the Elders' counsel involving public confession, the usual practice being the reading of a confession letter by the Lead Pastor with the person present, he will be summoned to meet with the Elders to seek further compliance and reconciliation. After further investigation is made, using all available witnesses and facts, the findings will be reported at a specially called business meeting. If he remains uncooperative, having been fully apprised of the above process, the Elders will recommend that he be removed from the membership of the church. A ballot vote will be taken and a majority vote required for dismissal. This step will be taken with the utmost concern, dignity and compassion.

#### **Section 4. Dismissal of Members**

- A. By Letter: A member in good standing may request a letter of transfer to another like-minded church.
- B. By Erasure: The name of any member who shall absent himself from the service of the church for a period of twelve (12) months without giving satisfactory reason for such absence, or for failure in his Christian duty as defined by the By-Laws, may be erased from the roll of the membership after recommendation by Elders and a majority vote of the membership. If possible, each member affected will be informed of this action. Members leaving the city for a time and who desire that their membership be retained should keep the church informed of their whereabouts through correspondence with the Clerk.
- C. By Excommunication: In all cases of disorderly conduct, propagation of heresy, causing and abetting factions, personal slander of fellow members, or opposing the church's life as to destroy its fellowship, and having followed the procedure outlined in Section 3, it shall be recommended that the guilty member's name be stricken from the roll and excommunicated. A simple majority vote of the church shall decide the issue. An announcement of this action will be given the following Sunday. Any action on the part of the accused as to intentionally impair or make impossible the fulfilling of Matthew 18:15–18, or failure to meet with the Elders shall not prevent a decision and/or recommendation according to the information received.

#### **Section 5. Duties of Members**

- A. To keep their covenant vows with the Lord's help.
- B. To perform their other obligations as defined by this Constitution and By-Laws.





- C. To love, honor, and esteem their leaders, to pray fervently and daily for them, and to manifest a tender regard for their reputations.
- D. We as members of Faith Baptist Church covenant together to abstain from the use of recreational drugs, and prescription drug abuse, gambling and immorality including but not limited to pornography and homosexuality.
- E. All attendees applying for membership shall attend a membership class.

## **Section 6. Ordinances**

- A. Baptism by immersion, a symbol of death and resurrection with Christ, is a prerequisite to membership of this church.
- B. The Lord's Supper, symbolizing Christ's broken body and shed blood, will be celebrated at least the first Sunday of each quarter. It is a time for each believer to fellowship with Christ as he identifies himself with Christ's work for him (See also Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement).

## **Article V. Officers**

### **Section 1. Summary**

The Biblical offices in the church are Elders and Deacons. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative positions under this constitution of Clerk and Treasurer. All officers shall be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

### **Section 2. Elders**

- A. The Elders shall be comprised of not less than three men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of Elder set forth in I Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9. No Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure.
- B. The Elder board shall not vote on any matter without half of the Lay Elders present, and the number of Staff Elders voting on a matter shall not exceed the number of Lay Elders.
  - i. If this condition cannot be met temporarily (due to absence), a Staff Elder may abstain to achieve parity.
  - ii. In the event of a longer-term gap in lay/staff parity (due to vacancy) the Elders will invite a Deacon to participate in voting matters until the office can be filled.
- C. Subject to the will of the congregation, the Elders shall oversee the ministry of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6 and I Peter 5:1–4, the Elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock.



- D. The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as Elders. This recognition shall be affirmed by an 80% approval of voting members and reaffirmed by the church triennially. After an Elder (other than the Lead or Associate Pastor) has served two consecutive three-year terms, he may only be re-elected to the office of Elder after at least one year out of office.
- E. An Elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an Elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the Elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and I Timothy 5:17–21. Any of the Elders may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members at any members' meeting of the church. [See By-Laws, Section 6C]
- F. The Elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the Deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. Further, the Elders should seek to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, affirm our fundamental Gospel convictions and do not teach our church anything contrary to the Statement of Faith.
- G. The Elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The Elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill the positions of Lead and Associate Pastor(s). The Elders shall annually select a chairman, vice chairman and secretary.

### **Section 3. The Lead Pastor**

- A. The lead Pastor shall be a Staff Elder. He shall perform the duties of an Elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the vocational ministry of preaching and teaching.
- B. His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in Article 5, Section 2D, for Elders.
- C. He shall be responsible for the church's public services, including preaching and the administration of the ordinances of baptism and communion; and performing such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the constitution.
- D. The lead Pastor shall have primary responsibility for the supervision and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member.



- E. In the absence or incapacity of the lead Pastor the Elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

#### **Section 4. Associate Pastor**

- A. The church may call additional Pastors whose relationship to the Lead Pastor is that of associate.
- B. An Associate Pastor shall be a Staff Elder. He shall perform the duties of an Elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the vocational ministry of preaching and teaching.
- C. His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in Article 5, Section 2D, for Elders.
- D. He shall assist the Lead Pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of Pastor, or as set forth in the constitution, or which may be specifically assigned to him by the congregation.
- E. In the absence or incapacity of the Lead Pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the Associate Pastor(s) shall assume the responsibility for his duties under the oversight of the Elders.

#### **Section 5. Deacons & Deaconesses**

- A. The office of Deacon is described in I Timothy 3:8–13. The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men and women who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of service. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6, these members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as Deacons and Deaconesses. This recognition shall be affirmed by an 80% approval of voting members and reaffirmed by the church triennially. After a Deacon or Deaconess has served two consecutive three-year terms, they may only be re-elected to the office of Deacon or Deaconess after at least one year out of office.
- B. A Deacon's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that a Deacon should be dismissed should express such concern to the Elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and I Timothy 5:17–21. Any of the Deacons may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members at any members' meeting of the church. [See By Laws, Section 6C]
- C. Deacons and Deaconesses shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to the accommodations for public worship including maintaining church facilities and grounds, and encourage and support those able to help others and those with gifts of administration.
- D. The Deacons and Deaconesses shall receive, hold, and disburse a fund for benevolence, reporting on its use to the Elders at their request, and reporting to the church its total receipts and total disbursements only.



- E. The Deacons and Deaconesses, with the agreement of the Elders, may establish unpaid administrative positions or committees of members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the church.
- F. The Deacons and Deaconesses shall appoint from their midst a trustee or trustees for the real and personal property of the church, to be recorded in the office of the clerk of the county court of Raleigh County in accordance with West Virginia Code §35-1-5 & §35-1-6.

#### **Section 6. Election of Officers**

- A. The Elders shall meet the first week in October and shall thoroughly investigate the character and qualifications of the nominees for church offices before presenting them to the church. The names of the nominees shall be given to the church membership two (2) weeks prior to the date of election. [See By-Laws Sections 1-6]
- B. Election by Ballot: The election of officers is held in November. The church members shall elect all officers for the next fiscal year by ballot. New officers will take office in January. [See By-Laws Section 2]

#### **Section 7. Church Office**

- A. Faith Baptist Church will maintain an official Church Office.
- B. The Lead Pastor will assign an office for each of his Pastoral Staff.
- C. The Lead Pastor will hire a Church Secretary.

#### **Section 8. Treasurer**

- A. The Treasurer shall be elected for one year, but can be re-elected.
- B. The Treasurer shall account for all funds of the church, unless stipulated otherwise in this document. The treasurer shall oversee the paying of all bills in a timely manner, in compliance with the budget, paying no bills that are not authorized by the Budget or the church.
- C. The Treasurer shall submit a financial report each month and at the Annual Meeting.
- D. The Treasurer is directly responsible to the Finance Committee.

#### **Section 9. Finance Committee**

- A. The Finance Committee is chaired by the Treasurer and is responsible to form and administer all financial policies of the church.



- B. The Finance Committee is made up of the church Treasurer, an Elder, a Deacon, and a member at large. Others may be invited at the discretion of the committee.
- C. The Finance Committee prepares the annual church budget, with guidance from the Elders concerning the direction of the ministry. They will receive budget requests and projections from all departments. The budget will then be presented to the Deacons for final approval. An appointed member of the Finance Committee will present the budget to the Congregation for their discussion and final approval in November.
- D. Encumbering Church Finances: No commitments affecting church finances may be made without prior approval of the church.
- E. See Finance Committee Handbook for financial policies in place.

#### **Section 10. Church Clerk**

- A. The Church Clerk position may be filled by the Church Secretary or other qualified person, as approved by the Elders and elected annually by the church.
- B. The Clerk shall record all congregational business and shall have custody of all church records except those kept by the Elders, Deacons, and Treasurer. All old records will be stored in the church office.
- C. The Clerk shall keep a record of all members of the church, with date of their reception and removal, shall record baptisms, marriages, deaths, and make full report to the church at the annual meeting.
- D. The Clerk will make certain that updates to the official documents are made in a timely manner, as approved by the Congregation.

#### **Section 11. Director of Church Education (DCE)**

- A. An Elder will be appointed to oversee Christian Education.
- B. He shall be responsible for the spiritual welfare and growth of all departments in which teaching takes place.
- C. He will appoint all department heads after consultation with the Elders.
- D. He shall work with these department heads in developing the Christian Education Ministry of the church.
- E. All teacher appointments shall be approved by the Elders.
- F. The DCE will enforce the personnel requirements of the Child Protection Policy.



## **Section 12. Staff Ministry**

- A. The Elders of Faith Baptist Church will participate only in marriages consistent with the Statement of Faith. [See Article XX, page 29].
- B. Weddings conducted in Faith Baptist Church facilities are Christian Worship Services.
- C. The use of Faith Baptist Church facilities are limited to functions and services consistent with Faith Baptist Church's Statement of Faith.



## By-Laws

### Section 1. Congregational Meetings

- A. There will be two annual congregational meetings for the purpose of handling church matters. These meetings shall be announced two Sundays prior to the meetings.
  - i. In November a meeting is held to Elect Officers and adopt the Church Budget.
  - ii. The Annual Meeting is held in January for the purpose of reviewing the previous year's financial report, hearing departmental reports and allocating any surplus funds from the last budget year.
- B. Special Called Meetings may be scheduled by the Elders & Deacons for the transaction of any legitimate business and notice shall be publicly announced from the pulpit the preceding Lord's Day, or as otherwise stated herein.
- C. As far as feasible, items of business shall be announced for both regular and special called meetings.
- D. All matters originating from church members shall first be presented to the Elders, in writing, two weeks prior to the congregational meeting for prayerful consideration. It will be the responsibility of the Elders to ensure that all matters are appropriately addressed according to scriptural principles. It shall not be the policy of this church to act upon new matters from the floor.
- E. All matters presented to the Congregation will first be approved by the Elders.
- F. Voting for items at a congregational meeting will be handled via in-person votes during the meeting or via absentee ballots cast prior to the meeting subject to the following guidelines:
  - i. Members who are eligible to vote and who are present at a congregational meeting are expected to vote in the usual manner for the item under discussion (e.g. voice vote, hand vote, ballot vote, etc.).
  - ii. If eligible members cannot be present to vote, they may cast an absentee ballot in the following manner:
    - a. They must come to the church office or church building during normal operating hours in the week prior to the vote;
    - b. They must sign the "Absentee Ballot Registry" and receive their ballot and an envelope from the Church Clerk or the Clerk's designated appointee;



- c. After filling out the desired ballot entries, they must place the ballot into the envelope and seal it, then return the envelope to the Church Clerk;
  - d. The Church Clerk will hold all absentee ballots until the congregational meeting, and will turn them over to the head teller when the in-person ballots are gathered;
  - e. Ballots cast via this absentee ballot process are final, and cannot be changed, or removed as there will be no way to distinguish and identify the ballot;
  - f. Members who vote via this absentee ballot process may not vote during the in-person meeting. If it has been determined that a person on the Absentee Ballot Registry has also cast an in-person ballot, the entire ballot will be declared void, and a new ballot date will be determined.
- iii. If members cannot vote in-person during the congregational meeting, and they are unable to come to the church office to participate in the absentee process noted in F.ii, above, they will be able to cast their vote utilizing Internet-based programs as they become available and approved for use in the church. It is important to have a record of who is using this tool as well as provide the security and privacy of the ballot.

## **Section 2. Fiscal Year**

The church year shall be from January 1 through December 31.

## **Section 3. Amendments.**

Any amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws must be submitted to the members at least two Sundays prior to the meeting; and a two-thirds majority of all votes cast shall be required for adoption. It is understood there shall be no alterations or amendments to those provisions having to do with doctrine, ownership, or control of Faith Baptist Church.

## **Section 4. Rules of Order**

All business of the church shall be conducted using Robert's Rule of Order, and always in harmony with the Scriptures.

## **Section 5. Right to Vote**

The right to vote upon church affairs is limited to members of the church who are in good standing, and who are eighteen years of age and over. However, this right shall be denied to those who have





for the previous six months refused, neglected or failed to attend the services, failed or neglected to communicate with the church, or participate in its activities.

## **Section 6. Quorum**

- A. No matters will be voted upon without a quorum.
- B. Quorum is defined as the number of members present at a properly stated or called meeting to handle church matters. This number has no relationship to ballots or other votes cast. We have defined this number as more than one-third of the best reckoned count of eligible members. In the event that the only purpose of the meeting is to conduct a vote, and if any absentee ballots have been cast, Quorum is defined by the number of members present plus the number of absentee ballots cast, provided that the total meets or exceeds the above defined amount.
- C. A simple majority is required to pass a motion, except as noted in this document: calling an Elder or Deacon requires 80% [Article V, Sections 2 & 5], removal of an Elder or Deacon requires  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority [Article V, Sections 2 & 5], Amendments to Constitution/By-Laws require  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority [By-Laws, Section 3].

## **Section 7. Organizations and Committees**

- A. The Missions Committee

The Missions Committee shall consist of not less than four and normally not more than six members who shall represent the Elders and the congregation as a whole. These shall be approved by the Elders and appointed by church membership. The Missions Committee shall serve according to the purposes, plans and procedures set forth in the Missionary Policy of the church. See MC Handbook.

- B. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee will be chaired by the Treasurer, recommend and give oversight to the financial policies of the church, prepare and recommend budget figures annually. See FC Handbook.

- C. Church Education Committee

The Church Education Committee will be chaired by the Director of Church Education. He will research and oversee the educational programs of all church departments. See CEC Handbook.



#### D. Building Committee

The building Committee is chaired by the Lead Pastor, and functions as a vision casting arm of the church with reference to long range planning, properties use and building programs. The chairman of the Deacons is a member of this committee.

#### E. Other Church Ministries

All Church Ministries using the church name, property, or influence, shall not be formed without the knowledge and consent of the Elders. Each ministry shall fully subscribe to and share the view of this Constitution, By-Laws and Confession of Faith. Each group will petition the Finance Committee for an account with the Treasurer and will not incur indebtedness which is not covered by their budget without prior approval of the Treasurer. All ministries come under the oversight of the Elders. Each ministry will schedule their meeting times by coordinating with the church office and reporting these to the office.

F. All officers, leaders and anyone holding a position of responsibility shall be members of the church.

G. All ministries shall be free to elect their own officers, and free to use their own funds in spiritual ways, but never to take funds away from the church budget or its regular program.

H. No ministry of the church may take on the regular support of any work or missionary project without first consulting with the Elders, and approval of the Missions Committee.

I. The purpose of each ministry shall be to promote evangelism, education, the spreading of the Gospel, edification, prayer, study of the Word, submission to the Will of God, missionary education and assistance.

J. All ministries shall schedule regular planning sessions to plan and promote the best possible meetings.

K. All ministries shall submit written annual reports at the annual meeting in November.

L. All ministries shall announce forthcoming meetings publicly and/or by notifying the office of items for the bulletin, giving invitation for attendance.

### **Section 8. Raising Funds**

All funds of the church shall be raised on a voluntary basis in tithes and offerings, except for major projects in which case funds may be borrowed.



## **Section 9. Social Agencies**

No community social agencies shall be formed or have chapters in this church.

## **Section 10. Property**

- A. The purchasing or selling of church property may only be authorized by the Church upon recommendation of the Deacons.
- B. The rights to any property that may be acquired by this church shall be and remain vested in that body of believers who shall remain faithful to the standards of faith, doctrine, and practice contained in this Constitution, By-Laws, and Confession of Faith.
- C. All matters with reference to properties, church and equipment are the responsibility of the Deacons. These matters include, but are not limited to the following: maintenance of buildings/grounds, cleaning, acquisition/sale and use of buildings.
- D. Joint usage of properties, buildings and equipment present unique circumstances for implementation and reportability, requiring careful communication and understanding that the Deacons are the lawful custodians of all FBC properties/buildings/equipment. Anyone delegated responsibility in any of these areas is ultimately responsible and reportable to the Chairman of the Deacons.
- E. Each department which purchases equipment with church funds must keep an accurate record of the date, amount and place of purchase, warranty and parts information. The equipment may be assigned for personal use and will be amortized for depletion. Each department is responsible to keep accurate records of, and know where that equipment under their supervision is located.

## **Section 11. Ordination**

- A. When, in the judgment of the Elders, a man in this membership is called to the Christian ministry, it shall be within the power of the Elders to call and conduct a council for ordination, provided that this authority is granted by a vote of the church.
- B. The ordaining council shall thoroughly examine all applicants for ordination as to their call to the Christian ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation and character, doctrinal belief, and a demonstrated efficiency in Christian service.



## **Section 12. Dissolution**

Should this church be dissolved, all assets, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all liabilities, shall be distributed to one or more mission organizations which the church had been supporting.

## **Section 13. Affiliation**

The church is independent. This church does not claim or acknowledge membership, affiliation, connection, nor is a constituent in any denominational convention, association, or religious body.



## Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement

### Article I. The Scriptures

- A. We believe that the Holy Bible
  - i. was written by men controlled by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:19–21; Acts 1:16; 2:25);
  - ii. has truth without any mixture of error (Psalms 119:105, 160; 130; Luke 24:25–27; John 17:17; Luke 24:44–45); and
  - iii. 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 (Psalm 119:89; Proverbs 30:5–6; Romans 3:4; 1 Peter 1:23; Revelation 22:19; John 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).
- B. By “The Holy Bible” we mean the 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.
- C. 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.

### Article II. The True God

We believe that

- A. there is only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth (Exodus 20:2–3; Genesis 17:1; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6; John 2:24; Psalms 147:5; 83:18; 90:2; Jeremiah 10:10);
- B. He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love (Exodus 15:11; Revelation 4:11; 1 Timothy 1:17; Romans 11:33; Mark 12:30); and
- C. in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in ever divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 12:4–6; 1 John 5:7;



John 10:30; John 17:5; Acts 5:3–4; 1 Corinthians 2:10–11; Philippians 2:5–6; Ephesians 2:18; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

### **Article III. The Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit

- A. is a divine person equal with God the Father (John 14:16–17) and God the Son (Matthew 28:19);
- B. is of the same nature (Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35);
- C. was active in the creation (Genesis 1:1–3);
- D. in His relation to the unbelieving world restrains the Evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled (2 Thessalonians 2:7);
- E. convicts of sin, judgment and righteousness (John 16:8–11);
- F. bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony (John 15:26–27; Acts 5:30–32);
- G. is the agent in the New Birth (John 3:5–6);
- H. seals, baptizes, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer (Ephesians 1:13–14; Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:29; John 16:13; John 14:26; Romans 8:14; Romans 8:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; Romans 8:26–27; Galatians 5:22–23; Ephesians 5:18–21); and
- I. shows His indwelling in the believer by the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance) rather than by speaking in tongues and other spectacular demonstrations.

### **Article IV. Sanctification**

We believe that sanctification has a twofold meaning:

- A. that of 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 (1 Corinthians 1:30; Hebrews 10:10, 14); and
- B. the progressive work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer, obedient to the Word of God experiences the power of the indwelling Christ for holiness of life and Victory over the old



nature, whose work will be completed when the believer stands in Christ's presence (Colossians 1:26–28; John 17:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

## **Article V. The Devil, or Satan**

We believe that Satan

- A. was once holy and enjoyed heavenly honors but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell (Isaiah 14:12–15; Ezekiel 28:14–17);
- B. drew after him a host of angels; (Revelation 12:9; Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:40);
- C. is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world (Ephesians 2:2, John 14:30);
- D. is man's greatest tempter, (1 Peter 5:8; 1 Thessalonians 3:5; Matthew 4:1,3);
- E. is the enemy of God and His Christ (Zechariah 1:3; 1 John 3:8; Matthew 13:25, 37–39; Luke 22:3–4);
- F. is the accuser of the saints (Revelation 12:10);
- G. is the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy (2 Corinthians 11:13–15; Mark 13:21–22);
- H. is the lord of the Antichrist (1 John 4:3; 2 John 2:22);
- I. is the author of all powers of darkness (Revelation 13:13–14; 2 Thessalonians 2:8–11);
- J. is destined to final defeat at the hand of God's Son, and (Revelation 19:11; 16, 20; Revelation 12:7–9; Revelation 20:1–3); and
- K. is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels (Revelation 20:10; Matthew 25:41).

## **Article VI. The Creation**

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and

- A. that it is to be accepted literally, not allegorically nor figuratively (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; Nehemiah 9:6);
- B. that man was created directly in God's own image and after his own likeness (Genesis 1:26–27; 1 Corinthians 11:17);



- C. that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change in species, or in development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms (Genesis 2:7; Genesis 2:21–23); and
- D. that all animal and vegetable life was made directly and by God's established law, that they should bring forth only "after their kind" (Genesis 1:11; Genesis 1:24).

## **Article VII. The Fall of Man**

We believe that

- A. man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker but (Genesis 3:1–6);
- B. by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state (Romans 5:12; Romans 5:19);
- C. in consequence of which transgression, all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but by choice (Romans 3:10–19; Ephesians 2:1,3; Romans 1:18; Ezekiel 18:19–20); and
- D. man is therefore under just condemnation and without defense or excuse (Romans 1:32; Romans 1:20; Romans 1:28; Galatians 3:22).

## **Article VIII. The Virgin Birth**

We believe that Jesus Christ

- A. was begotten of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner (Genesis 3:15);
- B. was born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of a woman (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:35; Mark 1:1; John 1:14; Psalm 2:7; Galatians 4:4); and
- C. is both the Son of God, and God, the Son (I John 5:20; 1 Corinthians 15:47).

## **Article IX. The Atonement**

We believe that

- A. the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace (Ephesians 2:8; Acts 5:11; Romans 3:24);
- B. through the mediatory offices of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the father, freely took upon Himself our nature, yet was without sin, and honored the divine law by His personal obedience;
- C. by His death, Jesus Christ made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins (John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:14; Isaiah 53:4–7; Romans 3:25; 1 John 4:10; 2 Corinthians 5:21);





- D. 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 (John 10:18; Philippians 2:8; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18; Isaiah 53:11; Hebrews 12:2); and
- E. having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His wonderful person the tender sympathies with divine perfection. He is in every way qualified to be suitable, compassionate and all sufficient Savior, (1 Corinthians 15:20; Isaiah 53:12, Hebrews 9:12–15, Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:2).

## **Article X. Grace in the New Creation**

We believe that

- A. in order to be saved, sinners must be born again (John 3:3);
- B. the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:17);
- C. it is instantaneous and not a process (Luke 5:27; 1 John 5:1; John 3:6–7; Acts 16:30–33);
- D. 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 (2 Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 2:13),
- E. the new creation is brought about 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 (John 3:8; John 1:2–13); and
- F. that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruit of repentance and faith and newness of life (Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 5:9).

## **Article XI. The Cost of Salvation**

We believe

- A. in God's unconditional electing grace (1 Thessalonians 1:4; Colossians 3:12; 1 Peter 1:2; Titus 1:1; Romans 8:29–30);
- B. that the blessings of salvation are made free to all through the Gospel (Matthew 11:28; Isaiah 55:1; Revelation 22:17; Romans 10:13; John 6:37);
- C. that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent and obedient faith (Isaiah 55:6; Acts 2:38);



- D. that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel (Isaiah 55:7; John 3:15–16; 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Ephesians 2:4–5; John 5:40); and
- E. that rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation (John 3:18; John 3:36).

## **Article XII. Justification**

We believe that the great Gospel 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 (Acts 13:39; Isaiah 53:11; Zechariah 13:1; Romans 8:1; Romans 5:9; Romans 5:1);
- B. that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith on the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us (Titus 3:5–7; Romans 1:17; Habakkuk 2:4; Galatians 3:11; Romans 4:1–8; Hebrews 10:38).

## **Article XIII. Repentance and Faith**

We believe that Repentance and Faith are

- A. solemn obligations, (Acts 20:21);
- B. inseparable graces (Mark 1:15);
- C. wrought in our souls by the life-giving Spirit of God (Acts 2:27–36);
- D. used thereby so that, 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 (Luke 18:13; Romans 10:13; Psalm 51:104; Psalm 51:7; Isaiah 55:6–7);
- E. at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all sufficient Savior (Luke 12:8; Romans 9:11).

## **Article XIV. The Church**

We believe that the church, the body of Christ, is composed of all those who have true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we further believe that a local New Testament Church is a congregation of baptized believers:

- A. associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel (Acts 2:41–42);
- B. observing the ordinances of Christ (Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 11:2);



- C. governed by His laws (Ephesians 1:22–23);
- D. exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:4, 8–11);
- E. with scripturally designated officers (Elders and Deacons), whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures (Acts 14:23; Acts 6:5–6; Acts 15:23; Acts 20:17–28; 1 Timothy 3:1–7; 2 Timothy 3:8–13);
- F. whose true mission is found in the Great Commission: first, to make individual disciples; second, to baptize them; third, to teach and instruct, as He has commanded (Matthew 28:19–20);
- G. with the absolute right of hierarchy of individuals or organizations, and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23–24; 1 Peter 5:1–4);
- H. that has a scriptural basis for cooperation 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 cooperation (Acts 15:22; Jude 2–3; 2 Corinthians 8:23–24; 1 Corinthians 16:1; Malachi 3:10; Leviticus 27:32; 1 Corinthians 16:2); and
- I. with a final will on matters of membership, polity, government, discipline and benevolence (1 Corinthians 6:1–3; 1 Corinthians 5:11–13).

## **Article XV. Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

We believe that Christian baptism is

- A. the believer's immersion in water (Acts 8:36–39; Matthew 3:6; John 3:23; Romans 6:4–5; Matthew 3:16);
- B. in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19);
- 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 (Romans 6:3–5; Colossians 2:12); and
- D. an act that in scriptural order precedes the privileges of church membership and is the public recognition of the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41–42; Matthew 28:19–20);

We further believe that the Lord's Supper 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"; that this ordinance is to be observed in anticipation of His coming and preceded always by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:23–28; Romans 8:32).

## **Article XVI. The Perseverance of the Saints**

We believe that

- A. true believers will endure unto the end (John 8:31–32; Colossians 1:21, 23);
- B. their preserving attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes believing Saints from superficial professors (1 John 2:19; Matthew 13:19–20);
- C. a special Providence watches over their welfare (Romans 8:28; Matthew 6:30; Psalm 121:3; Hebrews 1:14); and
- D. they are kept by the power of the God through faith unto eternal salvation (1 Peter 1:5; Philippians 1:6; John 10:29; John 16:8; Romans 8:35–39).

## **Article XVII. The Righteous and the Wicked**

We believe that

- A. there is radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17–18; Proverbs 11:31; 1 Peter 4:18);
- B. only those who, through faith, are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His sight (Romans 1:17; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Acts 10:34–35; 1 John 2:29; 1 John 3:7; Romans 6:16);
- C. those who demonstrate unbelief and a lack of repentance for their sins are wicked in His sight, and under the curse (Romans 6:16; Romans 3:3; 1 John 5:19; Galatians 3:10; Romans 7:6; Romans 6:23); and
- D. this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting blessedness of the righteous and the everlasting conscious suffering of the wicked (Proverbs 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matthew 25:34, 41; John 8:21; Luke 9:26; John 12:25; Matthew 7:13–14).



## Article XVIII. Civil Government

We believe that civil government is

- A. of a divine appointment, for the interest and good order of human society (Romans 13:1–7; II Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21–22);
- B. administered by magistrates who are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed (Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13–14, 17); and
- C. to be obeyed except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 5:20; Acts 4:19–20; Daniel 3:17–18), who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth (Matthew 10:28; Matthew 23:10; Revelation 10:6; Philippians 2:10–11; Psalm 72:11).

## Article XIX. The Resurrection, Return of Christ and Related Events

We believe in:

- A. The bodily resurrection (Matthew 28:6–7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; 1 Corinthians 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2, 4–6);
- B. The ascension (Acts 1:9; Acts 1:11; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19; Revelation 3:21; Hebrews 8:1; Hebrews 12:2);
- C. The high priesthood (Hebrews 8:6; 1 Timothy 2:4; 1 John 2:1; Hebrews 2:17; Hebrews 5:9–10);
- D. The second coming (John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Matthew 24:27; Matthew 25:13; James 5:8; Matthew 24:42; Hebrews 9:28);
- E. The resurrection of the righteous dead (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15:42–44; 1 Corinthians 15:52);
- F. The change of the living Christ (1 Corinthians 15:51–53; 1 Thessalonians 4:17; Philippians 3:20–21);
- G. The throne of David (Luke 1:32; Isaiah 9:6–7; Acts 2:29–30); and
- H. His reign on earth (1 Corinthians 15:25; Isaiah 32:1; Isaiah 11:4–5; Psalm 72:8; Revelation 20:1–2, 6).



## Article XX. The Family

We believe

- A. marriage was ordained by God as one male and one female becoming one flesh. We believe it was God's design that a man and woman enter the marriage union for life. (Genesis 2:18–25; Matthew 19:3–9; Romans 7:2; Ephesians 5:22–32)
- B. God has provided for intimate sexual relations between a man and a woman within the covenant of marriage. Sexual relations outside the bonds of marriage, including but not limited to; homosexuality, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, adultery, fornication, and pedophilia are a sin. (Genesis 2:24; 19:5, 12–13; Leviticus 18:1–30; Romans 1:18–32; 1 Corinthians 6:9–10; 7:3–5; Hebrews 13:4; Ephesians 5:3–5)
- C. acts that defile God's human creation such as gender modification, through medical procedure or otherwise are against the will of God, and are sins. (Leviticus 18:1–30; Romans 1:18–32; Ephesians 5:3–5)
- D. participation in sexual degradation through pornography and other means are attacks against the family unit, are against the will of God, and are sins. (Leviticus 18:1–30; Romans 1:18–32; 1 Corinthians 7:3–5; Hebrews 13:4; Ephesians 5:3–5; 1 Thessalonians 4:8)
- E. in the sanctity of human life. We believe human life begins at conception and from conception through the elderly adult years should be respected as a creation of God. We believe abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, suicide, assisted suicide, and other similar acts are acts of murder and therefore against the will of God. (Genesis 1:27; Exodus 20:13; Leviticus 19:32; Job 12:12; Psalm 139:13–14; Isaiah 44:2, 24; Jeremiah 1:5; Romans 9:20–22; 1 Timothy 5:1–2)
- F. children are a blessing from God and are to be taught spiritual and moral values by their parents, who are to rear them with loving discipline following the example and instruction of the Lord. (Deuteronomy 6:6–7; Psalms 78:4–7; 127:3; Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4)

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