

OLD PATHS BAPTIST CHURCH

CHURCH COVENANT

AND

CONSTITUTION

ADOPTED FEBRUARY 22, 2015

# OLD PATHS BAPTIST CHURCH MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI

## CHURCH COVENANT

(Num 30:2; Deut 23:21; 2 Chron 15:12; Eccl 5:4)

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, (John 6:63; John 16:7-11, 14; Rom 8:14) to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, (John 1:12; 1 Thess 2:13) and, on the profession of our faith, (Acts 2:41; Acts 8:37; Mat 10:32-33) having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, (Mat 28:19-20), 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. (1 Cor 12:12-13; Acts 2:42)

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; John 16:13) to walk together in Christian love; (Eph 5:1-2; 1 Thes 4:9; 1 Cor 13:4-8) to strive for the advancement of this church (Eph 2:21-22) in knowledge, (2 Peter 3:18) holiness, (2 Cor 7:1) and comfort; (1 Thes 5:14) to promote its prosperity and spirituality, (Jude 20) to sustain its worship, (Heb 10:24-25) and ordinances, (Mat 28:19-20; 1 Cor 11:24-25) discipline, (2 Thes 3:6; Mat 18:15-20; 1 Cor 5:4-13; 2 Cor 2:4-8; Gal 6:1-2) and doctrines; (Acts 2:42; 2 John 9-11) to contribute cheerfully and regularly (1 Cor 16:1-2) to support of the ministry, (Mat 10:10; Gal 6:6; 1 Cor 9:1-14) the expenses of the church, (Mal 3:10) the relief of the poor, (Acts 11:27-30; 2 Cor 9:1-14) and the spread of the Gospel through all nations. (Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8; Rom 10:14-15)

We also engage to maintain family (Deut 11:18-20) and secret (Mat 6:6) devotions; to religiously educate our children; (Eph 6:4) to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; (Mark 5:19) to walk circumspectly in the world; (Mat 5:16; Eph 5:15; 1 Peter 5:8) to be just in our dealings, (Rom 12:17) faithful in our engagements, (Eph 4:25) and exemplary in our deportment; (Eph 5:8) to avoid all tattling, (1 Tim 5:13) backbiting, (2 Cor 12:20) and excessive anger; (Eph 4:26-31) to abstain from the sale of, and use of, intoxicating drinks as a beverage; (Prov 20:1; 1 Cor 6:10; Eph 5:18) and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour. (Acts 1:8; Acts 8:4). We will not engage in nor condone any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; I Cor. 5:1; 6:9; I Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4). We will promote and acknowledge the joining of one man and one woman as the only legitimate form of marriage (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; I Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23).

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; (Rom 12:10; 1 Thes 5:14-15) to remember one another in prayer; (Eph 6:18; 1 Thes 5:25) to aid one another in sickness and distress; (Gal 6:10; 1 Tim 6:18; Acts 20:35) to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling (1 Cor 12:25-26) and Christian courtesy in speech; (Titus 3:2) to be slow to take offense, (Rom 12:19; Prov 24:29; James 1:19-20) but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Saviour to secure it without delay. (Mat 5:23-24; Mat 18:15-18)

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 the principles of God's Word (Acts 18:27-28; Rom 16:1-2; 1 Cor 15:58; Col 3:23)

# **OLD PATHS BAPTIST CHURCH MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI**

## **CHURCH CONSTITUTION**

Resting our faith wholly in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation, and believing in the teachings of the Holy Bible as the plenary (fully) and verbally inspired Word of the living God, we have affiliated ourselves with one another as a body of immersed believers, and we adopt this constitution as a declaration of our convictions so that we may carry on the Lord's work decently and in order.

### **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this church shall be Old Paths Baptist Church, Meridian, Mississippi and shall be so incorporated under the laws of this state. (Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. (Jer 6:16)

### **ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

The purpose of this church shall be:

1. To evangelize the lost through personal soul-winning, visitation and preaching of the Word of God.
2. To edify believers through the systematic teaching of the Bible;
3. To provide opportunities for Christian fellowship;
4. To establish fundamental Baptist Churches around the world through an energetic missionary program;
5. To carry out the scriptural responsibilities of an autonomous (independent, self-governing) Baptist Church in accordance with the principles of God's Word;
6. To earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints (Jude 3,4)

### **ARTICLE III – ASSOCIATIONS AND COOPERATION**

#### **Section 1**

This church shall be an independent, autonomous Baptist church subject only to Jesus Christ, its Head. It has the right to cooperate and associate with other biblical and scripturally sound groups on a voluntary basis.

#### **Section 2**

This church shall not associate nor cooperate with any person or group which is part of or approves of; liberalism, neo-evangelicalism, the charismatic movement, secret societies or cults or any other organization or association which is not in agreement with our Articles of Faith.

## ARTICLES IV – ARTICLES OF FAITH

### 1. The Scriptures

We believe that the Bible, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the infallible Word of God. It is God's revelation; the original writings (words) were verbally inspired by the Holy Spirit as He inbreathed holy men of God in ancient times. We reject the Apocrypha as being part of the Old Testament Canon, thus believing there are only 66 books in the Bible, 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament. We also believe that the 1611 Authorized Version called the King James Version, is the preserved words of the Lord and is the only inspired, infallible, and inerrant version for the English speaking people of the world today.

We believe the Bible to be the true center of Christian unity and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creed and opinions shall be tried. This church shall use only the King James Version in its preaching and teaching ministry as originally written; that it was verbally and plenary inspired and is the product of Spirit-controlled men. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:19-21)

### 2. The True God

We believe in a Triune God (Ephesians 2:18) Who is –

**God the Father**, perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom, rich in grace, supreme in love, and measureless in power. We rejoice that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of all mankind, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves men from sin and death; all those who come to Him through Jesus Christ, His Son.

**God the Son, Jesus Christ**, God's only begotten Son, conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, sinless in His life, ever obedient unto the Father, and the **only atonement for the sin of this world by His death (through the shedding of His blood)** on the cross. We believe that **He arose bodily** after the third day, ascended into Heaven on the fortieth day, and even now is seated at the Father's right hand, as our High Priest and Only Mediator, making intercession for all His saints. We look for His personal, visible, premillennial, pretribulational, and imminent return to the earth according to His promises; that is our Blessed Hope.

**God the Holy Spirit**, (third part of the trinity, co-equal with the Father and the Son) in all His attributes. He was sent by the Lord Jesus Christ from God the Father to reprove the world of sin, to regenerate all who receive Christ as their personal Saviour, and to indwell, guide, and to teach them the things of God. He empowers the believer to live in victory over sin, self, Satan, and the world. He helps our infirmities and intercedes for us according to the will of God the Father.

### 3. The Devil or Satan

We believe in a personal devil called Satan. He is presumptuous, proud, powerful, wicked, malignant, subtle, deceitful, religious, and fierce. He was cast out of Heaven and is now the prince of the power of the air of this world system. He caused the fall of man, is his constant adversary, and seeks to beguile, tempt, accuse, and devour him. He is the archenemy of God, hater of Christ, and for this he perverts the Scriptures, opposes the work of God, hinders the Gospel, and works lying miracles and wonders. He has

already been judged and someday will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone to be tormented day and night, forever and forever.

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, the Devil; that he was created by God as an angel but through pride and rebellion became the enemy of his Creator; that he became the unholy god of this age and the ruler of all the powers of darkness and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire. (Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:10; Isaiah 14:12-15)

#### **4. Creation**

We believe the Biblical account of the creation of the physical universe, angels and man; that this account is neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of God without any evolutionary process; that man was created by a direct work of God and not from previously existing forms of life; and that all men are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race. (Genesis 1, 2; Colossians 1:16, 17; John 1:3)

#### **5. The Fall of Man**

We believe that man was created in the image of God, but because of Adam's transgression (disobedience), the whole human race fell. Because of this, all men are without Christ, spiritually dead and lost. All men everywhere are sinners, both by nature and by choice. To die in this condition is to be damned forever in the lake of fire and to be eternally separated from God.

#### **6. Salvation**

We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ only for salvation. To obtain this salvation is to repent as a sinner toward God and to have faith toward Christ (to receive Him in heart by faith). This great salvation is by grace, a free gift, through the merits of the shed blood of the Son of God. **The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ was shed for the sins of all mankind**, not merely for a selected few. When one obtains salvation, he can never be lost, for all the redeemed everywhere, once saved shall be kept saved forever because of the very nature and power of God and of the divine gift of eternal life. It entails what Christ called **the new birth**, being born again from above by the Word of God (the instrument), and the Spirit of God (the person).

#### **7. The Priesthood of the Believer**

We believe in the priesthood of all believers; that all believers have immediate access into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; that we need no human agency to intercede for us before the throne of grace and that Jesus Christ is our only mediator before God. (1 Timothy 2:5 Hebrews 10:19; 13:15; 1 Peter 2:1-10)

#### **8. Justification**

We believe that justification is that judicial act of God whereby He declares the believer righteous upon the basis of the imputed righteousness of Christ; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's shed blood. (Romans 3:24; 4:5; 5:1, 9; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9)

#### **9. The Security of the Saints**

We believe that once one has been convicted and saved from sin (born again), they should be separated, that is, to be set apart from the world, sin, self, and Satan, and to be separated "unto the praise of His glory" and the furtherance of the Gospel. We believe that each of us should be born of the Spirit (John 3:5-8), walk in the

Spirit (Galatians 5:16), be led by the Spirit (Galatians 5:18), and be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18), that by His power and grace we might bear the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). We believe in striving to be separated from pride, lying, tattling, backbiting, envy, jealousy, bitterness, malice, foolish talking, ingratitude, covetousness, and all other sins of the flesh or spirit (Galatians 5:24). We know and believe that there are times we will all fall short and still sin, but by the blood of Jesus Christ, there is redemption and forgiveness for sin. We believe that all those that are saved (born again) should strive to live life daily abstaining from worldly things, that is but not limited to the following: indulging in alcoholic beverages, drugs (except for medicinal purposes), immodesty, gambling, or anything else that dishonors our Lord Jesus Christ or jeopardizes our witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## **10. The Church**

We believe in the church (the Body of Christ) who is made up of all blood-bought, born-again believers from the public ministry of Christ until His coming again for His own (the Rapture). Some are already in Heaven. The group has never all been together at one time; so, in this respect we could say that the church is in prospect. The church will be together for the first time at the time of the Rapture. We also believe in the local assemblies (or churches). The Holy Scriptures teach us more concerning the local churches than the Church. These local churches consist of regenerated believers who have been baptized spiritually into the body of Christ and are banded together for worship, work, and spiritual fellowship, spreading the Gospel to the ends of the earth, according to the specific teachings of the New Testament. Christ is the Head of the Church. We believe that immersion in water in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the only true Scriptural baptism. The prerequisite to Scriptural baptism is the new birth. We believe that the Lord's Supper consists of unleavened bread, and unfermented fruit of the vine, and that they are mere symbols of His body and of His blood which were broken and poured out on the cross for our sins. The prerequisite to Scriptural observance of the Lord's Supper are the new birth, immersion in water (baptism), and membership in a local New Testament Church. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only ordinances of the New Testament assemblies and are not for believers apart from the assemblies. Each local assembly (church) is to be independent and autonomous and free from political authority or ecclesiastical hierarchy. We believe in religious liberty, in separation of church and state, and in Christians being good citizens.

## **11. Civil Government**

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for; conscientiously honored, and obeyed, except in those things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming King of Kings. (Romans 13:1-7; 2 Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21, 22; Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:29, 20; Daniel 3:17, 18)

## **12. Israel**

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people, that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ, and that she will be regathered in the Holy Land and, after the completion of the Church, will be saved as a nation at the second advent of Christ. (Genesis 13:14-17; Romans 11:1-32; Ezekiel 37)

## **13. Section 4.13 Marriage**

Marriage has been ordained (or established or instituted) by God. This church defines "marriage" as the exclusive covenantal union of one man and one woman in which such union is a lifetime commitment. A civil

government's sanction of a union will be recognized as a legitimate marriage by the church only to the extent that it is consistent with the definition of "marriage" found in these Articles. Genesis 2:20-24, Matthew 19:5, Mark 10:7, Ephesians 5:31

## **14. Human Sexuality**

Legitimate sexual relations are exercised solely within marriage. Hence, sexual activities outside of marriage (referred to in the New Testament as "porneia") including but not limited to, adultery, premarital sex, homosexuality, and pedophilia are inconsistent with the teachings of the Bible and the Church. Further, an unrepentant homosexual disposition, lascivious conduct, transgender behavior, and the creation and/or distribution and/or viewing of pornography, are incompatible with the biblical witness and subject to immediate dismissal from any position held as teacher, deacon, or pastor including dismissal from church membership. Membership Romans 1:23-24, Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9, 1 Timothy 1:10, 2 Timothy 3:13, Jude 1:7

## **ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1 – Reception of Members**

- A. This church shall be composed of members who profess to be saved by grace, through faith, and who have been baptized following their confession of faith in Christ, by single immersion in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- B. All persons desiring to unite with this church shall meet with the pastor and deacons (or other appointed for this responsibility), and shall give testimony of conversion and Christian experience, and affirm acceptance of and adherence to the articles of faith, constitution and covenant of this church. No one shall be considered for membership who is a member of a secret society, or who is living contrary to Biblical principles of morality.
- C. Members may be received in one of four ways
  - 1. By scriptural baptism following salvation
  - 2. By a letter from a church of like faith and order.
  - 3. By confession of faith (when impossible to secure a church letter), having been saved and immersed.
  - 4. By restoration.

### **Section 2 – Responsibilities of Members**

All persons becoming members of this church by whatever constitutional method voluntarily accept these responsibilities.

- A. Active participation in the work of the church;
- B. Faithful attendance at the church's regular meetings;
- C. Sincere support of the church and its ministries through prayer;
- D. Regular financial support of the church's ministries;

- E. A general deportment in matters of language, habits, entertainment, dress, and general appearance, which will enhance the testimony of the church at all times.

### **Section 3 – Discipline of Members**

- A. The purpose of church discipline shall be:
  - 1. To help errant members recognize and repent of their sins so they may be restored to fellowship with the Lord and this church (Galatians 6:1;
  - 2. To maintain the purity of this church by removing those who are unrepentant toward their sins (1 Corinthians 5:7, 11)
- B. Any unscriptural attitude, action or violation of the church covenant may be deemed sufficient cause for discipline. A charge or accusation must be made in writing, signed, and presented to the pastor or deacons before it will be considered. The pastor and deacons shall first handle situations, which may require disciplinary action. Discipline may include loss of office, placement on the inactive list or dismissal from membership. Loss of office or dismissal from membership shall be by vote of the church.
- C. Members, in good standing, may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church.
- D. Members who are absent from the services of this church for a period of 90 days, without due cause, shall be removed from membership by vote of the church.

### **Section 4 -- Termination of Membership**

- A. Members who unite with other churches shall be removed from membership. Letters of dismissal with a recommendation may be sent upon request to other churches of like faith for those members in good standing.
- B. Members who are disciplined by exclusion shall be removed from membership.
- C. Members who have died shall be removed from membership.

## **ARTICLE VI – ORDINANCES**

Ordinances are ceremonies established by the Lord Jesus Christ, which He gave as symbolic reminders to the church.

### **Section 1 – Baptism**

Those professing faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior shall, upon authorization of the church, be immersed in water by the pastor or someone appointed by the church. Those who are baptized shall at the same time be received into the membership of this church. Therefore, only those who are being received into the membership of the church shall be baptized. Believer's baptism shall be a prerequisite to church membership. This church shall not baptize infants.

## **Section 2 – The Lord’s Supper**

The Lord’s Supper shall be served at regular intervals to the assembled church by the pastor and/or deacons, or some other person(s) authorized by the church. Since it is the Lord’s Supper, none who are born-again and baptized by immersion shall be barred. The pastor shall explain the meaning of the ordinance, encouraging those present to examine their own lives before participating. The element shall be unleavened bread and grape juice.

## **Section 3 – Budget Committee**

The budget committee shall consist of the pastor, trustees, the treasurer and the deacons. It shall be the duty of the committee to prepare the budget for the ensuing year, for presentation to the church for its approval at the annual business meeting. The committee shall function throughout the year to recommend budget revisions to the church as may be deemed necessary.

## **Section 4 – The Missions Committee**

- A. The missions committee shall consist of the Pastor, deacons, and two other chosen from the church at large. The committee shall recommend to the church, missionaries or mission projects to be considered for support.
- B. The committee shall maintain contacts with missionaries supported by the church, and encourage prayer for, and church-wide interest in, these and other missionaries.
- C. The committee shall draw up guidelines to be presented to the church for its approval, in determining eligibility for mission support.

# **ARTICLE VII – ORDINATION**

## **Section 1 – Ordination Qualifications:**

Any member of this Church or its mission churches, who gives evidence of a genuine call of God unto the work of the ministry and possesses the qualifications stated in 1 Tim 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, may be ordained as a Bishop of the Gospel

## **Section 2 – Ordination Procedure:**

- A. Upon a conference with the Pastor and after the Pastor has approved the candidate for ordination, the Pastor shall call a council to examine and pass on the qualification of the candidate. The ordination council shall consist of ordained Bishops or Deacons of like faith invited to participate in the examination of the candidate.
- B. If the candidate is found worthy of the ordination by the council, the ordination council may ordain the candidate on behalf of the Church.
- C. The Pastor and the chairman of the deacons shall arrange for the ordination service.

## **ARTICLE VIII – OFFICERS**

### **Section 1 – Officers of the Church**

- A. The initial elected officers of the church shall be pastor and deacons, clerk, treasurer and financial secretary. Afterwards, any teachers, leaders or other officers deemed necessary by the church to implement its stated purpose might be added.
- B. No person shall be elected to office that has not been a member of this church for at least six months. Any exception to this rule will be by congregational action of the entire church body. All officers and leaders shall be spiritually mature, loyal to the Word of God, faithful in attendance and support of the regular services and business meetings of the church. Their moral conduct shall be beyond reproach and free of carnal indulgences, such as the use of intoxicating beverages, tobacco in all forms, narcotic drugs and other worldly practices.
- C. All officers, with the exception of the pastor, shall normally assume their duties at the conclusion of the annual business meeting. Any officer unable or unwilling to fulfill the duties of his office shall resign or the church may vote to declare the office vacant and shall elect another to fulfill the duties of that office.

### **Section 2 – Pastor**

- A. The pastor shall be a Fundamental Baptist minister who meets the qualifications listed in 1st Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. He shall be a spiritually mature man who evidences a burden for lost souls and who is in agreement with the covenant, constitution and articles of faith of this church. He shall be a man who has never been divorced nor married to a divorced woman.
- B. The pulpit committee as to his salvation, doctrine, Christian conduct and call to the ministry shall carefully examine a candidate for the pastorate. If he has served in other churches, his ministry should be explored for evidence of the Lord's blessing. Pastoral candidates shall have opportunity to question and be questioned by the church membership.
- C. A vote to call a candidate as pastor may be taken at a meeting of the church called for that purpose and announced from the pulpit for two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting. Voting shall be by written ballot. Only one candidate shall be considered at any given meeting. A three-fourths majority of those present and voting shall be necessary for a call. The deacons shall inform the candidate of the church decision as soon as possible. If favorable, a written notification shall be sent to the prospective pastor giving details of the church-pastoral relationship, including salary, housing and car allowances, insurance, vacations...etc.
- D. The pastor shall serve for an indeterminate time, and shall continue as pastor as long as it is mutually agreeable to him and the church. The pastor may announce his resignation at any time but shall not terminate his duties until thirty days after his announcement or at a time mutually agreeable to both him and the church.
- E. The pastor may be dismissed by a three-fourths ballot vote at a meeting called for that purpose and announced from the pulpit on the two preceding Sundays. If dismissed, the pastor's duties shall end immediately. He shall receive thirty days salary and have thirty days use of the parsonage. If in the judgment of the Board of Deacons, a doctrinal or moral issue is involved, the two-week advance

announcement may be waived, and a meeting of the church may be called as soon as possible to deal with the issue.

- F. The pastor, his wife and any qualified children resident in his household shall be received into the membership of this church.
- G. The pastor shall be the administrative overseer of the church. He shall be responsible for co-ordinating the church programs and ministries. The pastor may call a meeting of the church, deacons or committees at any time and may moderate such meetings. He shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- H. The pastor shall receive no less than two weeks of paid vacation annually. He and his wife may be sent to two conferences per year, approved by the deacons with all expenses paid by the church. Time so spent shall not be considered as vacation time.
- I. The pastor's salary shall be reviewed and determined annually with consideration given to rising costs of living, particular needs, and housing and expense allowances.

### **Section 3 – Deacons/Trustees**

- A. Deacons shall be spiritually mature men. They shall be actively engaged in seeking to win the lost, have a good family testimony with neither the man nor his wife having been divorced and shall be in a hearty agreement with the policies and programs of this church. They must meet the standards of Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- B. The deacons shall assist the pastor in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church, serving as his helpers and counselors. They shall exercise prudent watch-care over the church membership, visiting the sick and examining candidates for baptism and membership. They shall assist at baptisms and with the preparation and distribution of the Lord's Supper.
- C. The deacons shall serve as trustees of this church for legal purposes. They shall have authority to acquire and dispose of church property up to the value of five hundred dollars. All transactions exceeding that amount shall first be approved by vote of the church except for routine budget matters. The deacons shall be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the church facilities, equipment and properties.
- D. The deacons shall serve on the pulpit committee when a vacancy occurs in the office of pastor.

### **Section 4 – Church Secretary**

- A. A church secretary shall be elected each year at the annual business meeting. The clerk shall record and maintain a printed record of the minutes of all business meetings of this church, receive and keep on file the quarterly and annual reports from all administrative committees, maintain a current record of membership, baptisms, receptions and dismissals of members.
- B. The church secretary shall be responsible for all official correspondence requiring an official signature. The clerk shall certify annually to the bank the names of officers who are authorized to have access to accounts, to any safety deposit boxes and to sign checks for the disbursement of funds.

- C. The church secretary shall make available all records, files or documents upon request to the pastor, deacons or church. Upon retirement or removal from office, the clerk shall promptly deliver all records, files and papers belonging to the church to the newly elected clerk or to the deacons.
- D. The church secretary shall maintain other records of historical value for the information and benefit of those who follow after.

### **Section 5 – Treasurer**

- A. A treasurer shall be elected each year at the annual business meeting. The treasurer shall be responsible for keeping an accurate and permanent record of all financial transactions of church funds and shall make monthly, quarterly and annual reports to the pastor, deacons and church.
- B. The treasurer shall be responsible for depositing all funds in appropriate accounts at an approved banking facility. He/She shall pay and record all bills and routine expenses approved by the pastor and deacons as well as disburse funds and salaries as directed by the church. The financial secretary must also countersign checks written and signed by the treasurer.

## **ARTICLE IX – FINANCES**

### **Section 1 – General Fund**

- A. This church and its ministries shall be financed through the tithes and offerings of God’s people. No sales, suppers or other commercial means shall be used. All monies are to be placed in the General Fund under a unified budget. Additional monies may be borrowed when approved by vote of the church.
- B. The salaries of the pastor and staff personnel shall be paid from the General Fund and shall be shall be reviewed at least once a year with consideration being given to the rising cost of living.
- C. All expenses for special meetings and speakers shall be paid from the General Fund with speakers being reimbursed for their travel expenses. They shall receive honorariums determined by the pastor, trustees and deacons.
- D. The systematic giving of money for the support of the work of the Lord is worship as well as duty. It must be kept on the plane of voluntary, freewill offerings, untarnished by any hope of material gain. All members are expected to give regular financial support to the church and to the advancement of the projects it shall sponsor. In determining the Lord’s portion, we believe and affirm with the Scriptures that at least one-tenth of one’s income should be faithfully and cheerfully given by each one (2 Corinthians 9:6, 7), and many can and should give more than the tithes, for all we have belongs to Christ. (1 Corinthians 9:14, 16)

### **Section 2 – Missions Fund**

All missionary support shall be paid from the Missions Fund. Each month at least ten percent of the regular income of the church (or higher amount approved by the church) shall be transferred from the General Fund to the Missions Fund. In addition, all special offerings received for missions shall be transferred to the Missions Fund. Monies will be received for and sent only to those missionaries who meet the requirements of Article XII.

### **Section 3 – Building Fund**

A building fund shall be maintained for the purpose of acquiring properties, constructing and maintaining the facilities of this church. Each month at least five percent of the regular income of the church (or an amount approved by the church) shall be transferred from the General Fund to the Building Fund. In addition, all special offerings received for the Building Fund shall be transferred to the Building Fund.

## **ARTICLE X – TAX-EXEMPT PROVISIONS**

### **Section 1 – Political Involvement:**

No substantial part of the activities of the Church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The Church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

### **Section 2 – Racial Non-Discrimination:**

The Church shall have a racially nondiscriminatory policy and therefore shall not discriminate against members, applicants, and other on the basis of race, color, or national ethnic origin.

## **ARTICLE XI – COMMITTEES**

Such committees as may be deemed necessary may be appointed by the pastor and deacons or established by vote of the church for the furtherance of this ministry. Each committee chairman shall submit a written report of discussions, decisions and plans to the pastor and deacons and shall submit written quarterly and annual reports to the church. Committees shall make available upon request, all records and materials, to the pastor, deacons, or church. The pastor and deacons shall have the right to overrule any plans or decisions made by any committee. No committee or subsidiary organization shall engage in any practice or conduct contrary to the position and policies of this church.

### **Section 1 – Budget Committee**

The budget committee shall consist of the pastor, trustees, deacons, and the treasurer. It shall be the duty of the committee to prepare the budget for the ensuing year, for presentation to the church for its approval at the annual business meeting. The committee shall function throughout the year to recommend budget revisions to the church as may be deemed necessary.

### **Section 2 – The Hospitality Committee**

The hospitality committee shall consist of three members who shall be elected from the church at large. This committee shall be responsible to arrange hospitality for visiting speakers in consultation with the pastor. The committee shall also be responsible for organizing meals or refreshments at fellowship activities of the church.

### **Section 3 – Building Committee**

The building committee will be composed of: the pastor, deacons, and two members elected during the annual business meeting.

### **Section 4 – Public Worship**

- A. Public Worship services shall be held regularly, morning and evening, on the Lord's Day. These services shall not normally be given over to anything but prayer and the preaching and teaching of the Word, with an appropriate musical ministry. Any other special presentation or arrangement shall be subject to approval by the pastor and deacons. Neither shall they be merged into union services with other denominations.
- B. At least once each week there shall be a meeting for Bible study, prayer and praise.
- C. It shall be the practice of this church to observe the Lord's Supper at least once a quarter, at which time it may be appropriate that the covenant be read.
- D. The pastor, in consultation with the deacons, may arrange for special meetings for the spiritual or educational advancement of the church.

### **Section 5 – Business Meetings**

- A. The annual business meeting shall be held during the month of January on a day set by the pastor and deacons and announced at least two weeks in advance.
- B. Quarterly business meetings shall be held during the months of April, July, and October on a day set by the pastor and deacons and shall be announced at least two weeks in advance.
- C. Special business meetings may be called at any time by the pastor or deacons (with the pastor's knowledge) or upon written request to the pastor and deacons by ten unrelated voting members. Advance notice on two consecutive Sundays, with the reason given is required for the following Purposes: calling or dismissing a pastor; buying, selling or in any other way transferring property valued at more than five hundred dollars; amending or otherwise altering this constitution, receiving charges against a member; election of or dismissing deacons or other church officers.
- D. The pastor shall moderate all business meetings. Should the office of pastor be vacant, or if for some reason, the pastor cannot moderate (such as a charge against him), someone, preferably one of the deacons, should be elected from the church to chair the meeting.
- E. *The BIBLE* shall be the final authority when disagreement arises in procedural matters, unless such matters are covered by this constitution.
- F. A suggested order of business follows:
  - 1. Reading and approval of minutes of previous meetings
  - 2. Clerk's Report
  - 3. Treasurer's Report
  - 4. Deacons/Trustee's Report

5. Reports from auxiliary organizations
6. Committee Reports
7. Election of Officers
8. Unfinished business
9. New Business
10. Adjournment

- G. The presence of twenty-five percent of the voting members shall constitute a quorum. However, when calling or dismissing a pastor or amending the constitution, thirty-five percent of the voting members must be present to constitute a quorum and seventy-five percent of the vote is required to carry the ballot. Active members eighteen years of age and older shall be eligible to vote. All elections and matters of business shall be decided by majority vote of members present unless stated in this constitution.
- H. Special elections to complete unexpired terms shall be held as the Pastor recommends. Newly elected officers shall assume their responsibilities at the close of the business meeting during which they were elected.

## **ARTICLE XII – MISSIONS**

Missionaries, mission agencies and organizations desiring to speak in or be supported by this church shall be a Baptist in name and practice. They shall be in agreement with the doctrinal position of this church and shall be separated from all forms of apostasy, including liberalism, modernism, neo-orthodoxy, new evangelicalism, or so called Pentecostalism or charismatic, and those who compromise therewith.

Missionaries shall be affiliated with a fundamental Baptist sending body whose policies and practices are in agreement with those of this church. All missionaries, mission agencies, or other persons or organizations desiring support of this church must submit a written statement of agreement with the Statement of Faith as held by this church before being recommended to the church by the missions committee.

## **ARTICLE XIII – MISSIONS**

Subsidiary organizations such as Sunday School, Bible Training Fellowship, Men for Missions, Women's Fellowship... etc, may be organized with church approval as the need for such groups arises. All such organizations are subject to the control of the church in accordance with its constitution and policies. The purpose must be in line with the stated purpose of this church.

All regular teachers or leaders must be members of this church in good standing and shall be elected by the church. All officers must be members of this church in good standing. Anyone whose conduct or teaching is considered injurious to the class, school or church shall be referred to the pastor and deacons for necessary action. No organization of the church shall engage in any practice or hold any policy or conduct any activity contrary to the general position of the church itself. The pastor and deacons shall approve any literature used.

## **ARTICLE XIV – GENERAL**

### **Section 1 – Use of the church property and name**

- A. The use of the property for other than regularly scheduled meetings; shall first be approved by the pastor and deacons.
- B. All gatherings off the church property held in the name of the church shall be subject to the approval of the pastor and deacons.
- C. No pastor or pulpit orator will be permitted to preach in the church that fails to confess clearly the fundamentals of the faith once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3). Any visiting speaker must have the approval of the pastor and deacons.

## **Section 2 – Legal Provisions**

- A. This church shall have the right to own, buy or sell tangible properties, both real and personal, in its own name and through properly elected officers when authorized by vote of the church.
- B. No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any individuals from the assets, holdings or other transaction in which this corporation may become involved.
- C. In the event of the dissolution of this corporation, all of its debts shall be full satisfied. None of its assets or holding shall be divided among the members or other individuals, but shall be irrevocably designated by corporate vote prior to dissolution to such other nonprofit religious corporations as are in agreement with the letter and spirit of the articles of faith adopted by this church, and in conformity with requirements of the United States Internal Revenue Service Code of 1986 (Section 501 C-3).

## **ARTICLE XV – RULES OF ORDER**

The Holy bible shall provide the basis for all our actions, the Church Constitution and By-laws shall provide guidance.

## **ARTICLE XVI – AMENDMENTS AND BYLAWS**

This constitution may be amended, altered or revised at any regular or specially called business meeting provided such proposed changes shall have been presented to the church in writing and announced for at least two consecutive Sundays prior to the voting. At least thirty-five percent of the members who are eligible to vote must be present to constitute a quorum for such proposed amendments or changes and a seven-fifty percent of the vote of those present and eligible to vote is necessary to pass an amendment or revision.

The church may adopt from time to time such bylaws in amplification hereof as may be necessary or desirable, and shall provide therein for amendment of the same.

CONSTITUTION ADOPTED – 22 February 2015