

BETHLEHEM FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS



**Approved and Adopted by BFBC
July 22, 2009**

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ARTICLE 1 – NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION 1.01—NAME AND AFFILIATION

This church shall be known as Bethlehem First Baptist Church, Inc., located at Bethlehem, Georgia; but shall be commonly referred to as Bethlehem First Baptist Church. This church is, and shall be, cooperative with the Appalachian Baptist Association, Georgia Baptist Convention, and Southern Baptist Convention.

We declare and establish this document for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to ensure that the church will be governed in an orderly manner.

This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the building of churches, parsonages, schools, chapels, radio stations, television stations, rescue missions, print shops, daycare centers, and camps; the evangelizing of the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture, both in Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education; and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country.

SECTION 1.02—MOTTO

Our church motto is "Bethlehem, Where LIFE Begins... Again!"

SECTION 1.03—VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to connect people to life by leading them into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

SECTION 1.04 PURPOSE

The "LIFE" acrostic represents the purposes of our church based upon the Great Commandment (Mt 22:37-39) and the Great Commission (Mt 28:19-20).

Loving God - **Worship**

"...love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." Matt 22:37

Inviting and Investing in People – **Evangelism & Discipleship**

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations... teaching them to observe all that I commanded you." Matt 28:19-20

Finding Your Place - **Ministry/Service**

"...love your neighbor as yourself" Matt 22:39

Experiencing LIFE Together - **Assimilation**

"...baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" Matt 28:19

SECTION 1.05—CORE VALUES

The church should always be culturally relevant while remaining doctrinally pure; therefore, our Core Values must be directly related to our purposes:

- L**
 - 1) We believe Christ followers should be Spirit-filled and desire growing intimacy with God, privately and publicly.
 - 2) We believe full devotion to Christ and His cause is normal for every believer.

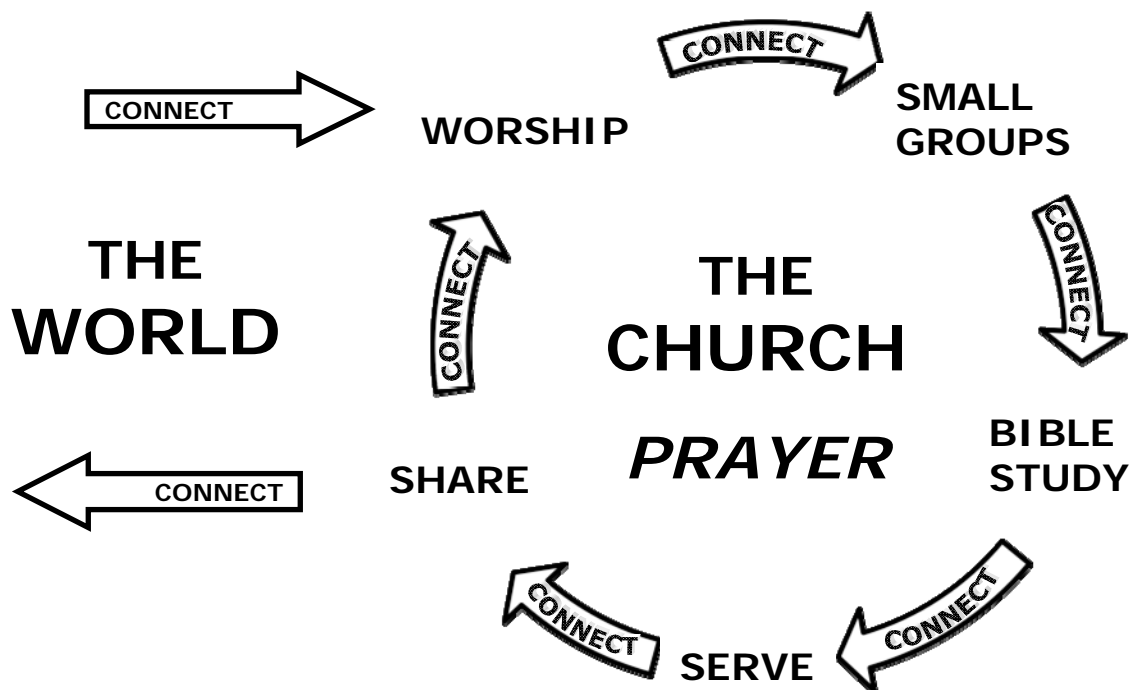
 - I**
 - 1) We believe lost people are important to God and therefore, should be important to us.
 - 2) We believe God's Word is the catalyst for transformation and must be communicated effectively.
 - 3) We believe the Body of Christ is responsible to minister to people; first to the fellowship of believers, and then to others.

 - E**
 - 1) We believe all members comprise a unique part of the Body of Christ and find their place in ministry by stewarding their spiritual gifts, their lives, and their finances.
 - 2) We believe the Body should be led by Spirit-filled believers with the "servant-leadership" character of Christ.
 - 3) We believe excellence honors God and inspires people.

 - E**
 - 1) We believe loving relationships should permeate every aspect of our church life.
 - 2) We believe authentic relationships develop best in small groups.
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SECTION 1.06—BFBC LIFE CYCLE

Bethlehem First Baptist Church's Life Cycle is designed to help people connect to life by connecting to God, connecting to people, and connecting to purpose. Ministry teams are located at each connection point to assist members along with their families and friends as they journey through the life cycle. Refer to pages 38-47 for a detailed list of each Ministry Team with their assigned function.



ARTICLE 2 – STATEMENT OF FAITH

SECTION 2.01—STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following comprise the Scriptural beliefs of this church and its members.

- A. The Holy Scriptures:** The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to man. The Bible is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain throughout eternity, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

- B. God:** There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

1. God the Father: God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

2. God the Son: Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

3. God the Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts

believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

C. Creation: We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11)

D. Mankind: Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

E. Salvation: Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

1. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

2. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.

3. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerated person's life.

4. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and eternal state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

- F. Eternal Security and the Purposes of Grace:** Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free will of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2

G. The Church:

1. We believe that the local church, which is the body and the bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again persons. (1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27)
 2. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. (1 Tim 2:9-14; 3:1-15)
 3. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11)
 4. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4)
 5. We recognize water baptism and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. That the spiritual baptism is the total immersion of the believer in water and is a symbol of his death to sin, his burial of the old life, and his resurrection to new life in Christ Jesus. That the Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby Christians, through partaking of
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the elements, memorialize the death of Christ and anticipate His second coming. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:18; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

6. That the supreme mission of the Church is to proclaim the Gospel by any and all means to the end that the lost might be saved. (Matt. 28:19-20)
7. We believe in a Sabbath day of rest and worship to be observed by all believers. (Gen. 2:2-3; Exod.16:23; 20:8-11)

H. The Kingdom: The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

I. Stewardship and Giving: God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are, we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debt to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the Gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 2 Corinthians 8; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local

church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the tithe or offering once the gift has been made. (Gen. 14:20; Pro. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

- J. Separation:** We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy, unbiblical behavior and appearance of evil.

Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Thess. 5:22

- K. The Second Coming and the Eternal Destiny of Man:** God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth.

Ps 89:3-4; Dan 2:31-45; Zech 14:4-11; 1 Thess 1:10, 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Rev 3:10, 19:11-16, 20:1-6

1. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28, 29; 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13)
 2. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6)
 3. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15)
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- L. Education:** Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4: 1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

- M. Evangelism and Missions:** It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the Gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the Gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

- N. Cooperation:** Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

- O. The Personality of Satan:** We believe that Satan is a real being, the author of sin and the cause of the fall of man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire.

Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Eph 6:12; Rev. 20:10

- P. Civil Government:** We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God.

Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14

Further, the state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God.

The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

Q. The Christian and the Social Order: All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including but not limited to adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, culture and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-

21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

R. Human Sexuality:

1. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 1:27, 2:24; 19:5,13; 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

2. We believe that the only legitimate and accepted marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

S. Family Relationships

1. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to hold the biblical offices of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)

2. God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

God's intention is for marriage to be the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to

submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through prayer, consistent lifestyle example, and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

- T. Divorce and Remarriage.** We believe that God hates divorce. The biblical exceptions for remarriage are the death or adultery of a spouse. God's standard for marriage requires sexual purity and faithfulness between husband and wife. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6; Heb 13:4)
- U. Abortion.** We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)
- V. Love.** We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both those who are not believers and those who oppose us. Although we must sometimes confront people and/or issues, we must do so graciously, gently, patiently, humbly and in a spirit of Christian love. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge,
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or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)

W. Lawsuits Between Believers. We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)

SECTION 2.02—AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is the standard for all members. The pastoral staff shall be the final authority on Biblical interpretation for the church. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Holy Bible.

ARTICLE 3 – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 3.01—QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the church is reserved for those who have made a public profession of faith, declaring evidence of a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, who renounce sin, who endeavor to live a consecrated life wholly unto the Lord and who agree to submit to the authority of the church and its leaders as set forth herein.

Subsequent to agreeing to and signing the Statement of Faith and the Membership Commitment, the candidate will be presented as a candidate for membership during a church service and voted upon during the next quarterly business meeting. The applicant must also comply with any one of the following conditions:

- A. By baptism (immersion) as a true believer in Christ Jesus as personal Savior
- B. By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith
- C. By statement of faith, having been baptized by immersion; or
- D. By restoration, if having been removed from membership, upon satisfactorily evidencing repentance to the pastoral staff and deacons

Because members under 18 cannot legally sign the Statement of Faith and Member Commitment, refer to section 3.08 for membership qualifications for minors.

SECTION 3.02—MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENT

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

We commit, 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, comfort and attendance; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to participate in its worship and ordinances; to support its discipline and doctrines; to give it sacred priority; and to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also commit to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred, acquaintances, and all others; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful to our engagements, and exemplary in our behavior; to avoid all gossip, backbiting, excessive anger; to abstain from substance abuse; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

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

We moreover commit, 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.

SECTION 3.03—DUTIES OF A MEMBER

On becoming a member of this church, in addition to the Statement of Faith and Membership Commitment contained in Article 2, Section 2.01 and 2.02, each one further agrees to love, honor, and esteem the pastor, to pray for him, to recognize his authority in spiritual affairs of the church, to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the church, to support the church in prayer, tithes, offerings and with other financial support as the Lord enables, and in accordance with biblical commands, to support through a lifestyle that affirms the beliefs and practices of the church.

SECTION 3.04—PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

- A.** Only members at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to
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- vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. The eligible membership of the church has certain limited areas to exercise a vote. Any member may request discussion of an issue or concern by bringing it to the Church Council, which requires being placed on the Council's agenda prior to its meeting.
- B.** This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ, with the direction of the Senior Pastor and the assistance of the Church Council. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The Senior Pastor shall oversee all aspects of this church. The Deacons and Church Council shall give advice and assistance to the pastor and pastoral staff.
- C.** Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. Any member of the pastoral staff has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of any member of the pastoral staff, be treated as a trespasser.
- D** A member may request, inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church and/or the minutes of the proceedings of any church ministry team meeting. This information will be available in a timely fashion. The pastoral staff and the ministry team chairperson reserve the right to withhold any information that they deem sensitive, confidential or personal.
1. A member may not, under any circumstances, inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the church or the accounting books and financial records of the church. Authorized members of Finance and Personnel Teams along with the Senior Pastor may have access to these records as needed.
 2. Before releasing the copies to the member, the church may impose a reasonable charge to the member in order to cover the costs of labor and material for making copies.
- E.** All members grant unrestricted right and permission for use of their family names, address, phone number, e-mail and photos, in any church publication or marketing instrument. Information shall not be sold or shared for any other purpose. Members not wanting to be included should submit a written statement to this effect to the church office.
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SECTION 3.05—DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER

- A.** There shall be a discipline committee consisting of the pastoral staff and the active deacons. These men shall have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the Statement of Faith and violations of the Membership Commitment. If a pastor or a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the discipline committee. A pastor and deacon shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.
 - B.** Members are expected to be devoted to one another in brotherly love. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and testimony, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.
 - C.** If reconciliation is not reached, a second member, either a deacon or a pastor, is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
 - D.** If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, the discipline committee, as the church representatives biblically responsible for resolving such issues, shall hear the matter.
 - E.** If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B), (C), and (D) have been taken, such members who refuse to repent and be restored are to be removed from the membership of the church upon a majority vote of the discipline committee (pastoral staff and active deacons) present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action.
 - F.** No matter may be heard by the discipline committee or the church unless the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, except in the case of a public offense, as determined by the discipline committee.
 - G.** If a member chooses to resign membership to avoid discipline, the discipline process will end at that point.
 - H.** The procedures provided in this section are based on Rom. 12:10; Matt. 18:15-20; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:1-11; Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6, 10-15; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.
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SECTION 3.06—TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Members not under the disciplinary process of Section 3.05 may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church of like faith and practice.

SECTION 3.07—CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP STATUS

- A.** The voting privileges of any individual member shall be automatically terminated if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church in the preceding six months excluding medical reasons, military service, college students, missionaries, evangelists or others who are legitimately unable to regularly attend services. Valid evidence of said attendance would include Sunday School or giving records. Upon good cause being shown to the pastoral staff, this provision for termination may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the pastoral staff. Voting privilege may be restored by attending at least 50% of services over a period of 3 months.
- B.** If any member unites in membership with another church, that person's membership is automatically terminated without notice.
- C.** A member may resign at any time but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the pastoral staff.

SECTION 3.08—QUALIFICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OF MINORS

- A.** Candidates for membership under the age of 18, who are legally unable to sign the Statement of Faith and Membership Commitment, but who meet the other qualifications for membership as stated in Section 3.01 shall be accepted as members without voting privileges.
 - B.** At age 18, membership will terminate. Upon signing the Statement of Faith and Membership Commitment, membership will be reinstated with voting rights.
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ARTICLE 4 – CORPORATE OFFICERS

SECTION 4.01—THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- A.** The Trustees shall make up the executive committee of the corporation and shall discharge all required business of the corporation as directed by the church.
- B.** The Trustees shall be the legal guardians of the church property and shall act in all matters of legal consequence involving the church upon approval of the church and all matters of investment and insurance.
- C.** The Trustees shall establish an inventory of assets.
- D.** Upon authorization and direction determined by the church, the Board of Trustees shall exercise the following specific powers:
 - 1.** To purchase, hold, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the church, and to take real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church
 - 2.** To sell, convey, alienate, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, and to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the church, to borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and the use of the church; to cause to be executed, issued, and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and to secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, or pledges, and
 - 3.** To exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church corporation.

SECTION 4.02—ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE

- A.** The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith. All corporate officers, upon request by any church member, shall affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith as set forth in Article 2.
 - B.** Only those having been a church member for a minimum of three (3) years are eligible to serve on the Board of Trustees. The Chairman of the Board must be a church member for a minimum of five (5) years.
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SECTION 4.03—TERMS OF OFFICE

- A.** The deacons shall recommend the nominees for the Board of Trustees to the Church Council. Upon their approval, the church shall elect a Board of Trustees for the corporation.
- B.** Board of the Trustees shall be composed of five (5) voting members elected for a 5-year term with one (1) member rotating off each year. The term of office shall be by calendar year. The Senior Pastor shall be a non-voting ex-officio member of the Trustees.
- C.** The Trustees shall elect their own officers at the first meeting of each year. The five voting members shall consist of the CEO, CFO, Secretary and two (2) agents. The Chairman of the Trustees shall serve as CEO.
- D.** Candidates for a vacancy occurring on the Board of Trustees shall be selected by the Deacons. All nominations shall be approved by the church.
- E.** The annual election of Trustees by the church membership shall occur in the last quarter of the calendar year.
- F.** After rotating off, a Trustee shall not be considered to serve as a Trustee again for at least one year.

SECTION 4.04—REMOVAL OF TRUSTEES

Any Trustee who neglects his or her duties as outlined in the bylaws may be removed from office at the discretion of the Church Council upon majority vote and another may be elected to serve the unexpired term.

ARTICLE 5 – CHURCH OFFICERS

The church officers are the Senior Pastor, the Church Clerk and the Treasurer. No person may hold more than one of these offices at the same time.

SECTION 5.01— OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

A. THE SENIOR PASTOR

1. DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE SENIOR PASTOR

- a.** The Senior Pastor shall have charge of the general welfare and oversight of the church and its officers. He shall oversee the worship services, give leadership to the entire program, moderate at all business meetings unless he designates otherwise, give attention to the spiritual growth and well-being of the membership, and work in cooperation with the elected leadership of the church and its various organizations.
 - b.** Under the leadership of the Senior Pastor, the pastoral staff shall provide oversight to all leadership groups, teams, committees and organizations of the church. However, in meetings of the groups, teams, or committees, only one pastor has the right to vote.
 - c.** Whenever possible, the Senior Pastor or whomever he designates shall represent the church in the meetings of religious organizations with which the church maintains relationships as set forth in Article 1.01.
 - d.** The Senior Pastor, as he deems appropriate, may recommend additional church officers. A new office will be established only with Church Council approval and church membership vote.
 - e.** The Senior Pastor is charged with the primary responsibility of recommending staff ministry positions to the Church Council.
 - f.** The Senior Pastor has the primary responsibility to locate and identify potential pastoral staff members, and to refer them to the Personnel Team.
 - g.** Duties of all pastoral staff, descriptions of employment, or their resignation, shall be determined by the church upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor, Personnel Team, and approval by the Church Council.
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- h.** As spiritual leader of the church, the Senior Pastor shall be responsible for assigning a member of the pastoral staff as ex-officio member to all ministry teams.
- i.** All pastoral staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the Senior Pastor who has the authority to dismiss the same at his discretion. Disciplinary removal of the Pastoral staff member from office automatically terminates his membership. A restoration to membership after disciplinary removal will be subject to the requirements of Section 3.01(D).

2. CALLING OF THE SENIOR PASTOR

- a.** A Senior Pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. The Church Council shall nominate a Pastoral Search Committee and the nominees shall be affirmed by a church vote. The Search Committee shall have five members, chosen at the discretion of the Council.
- b.** This Pastoral Search Committee shall examine all prospective Pastors, (one at a time) thoroughly determining as completely as possible, their qualifications, doctrines, conviction, and beliefs.
- c.** The Personnel Team shall be responsible for establishment of a salary and benefits package in conjunction with the Council.
- d.** After unanimous agreement, the Search Committee shall recommend the Senior Pastor nominee to the church. At least two weeks notice shall be given prior to bringing him before the church for Sunday morning worship service sermon. A three-fourths affirmative vote of those present and voting shall be necessary to extend a call.
- e.** The Senior Pastor, thus elected, shall serve for an indefinite period and until the relationship is terminated as in Article 5.02 (A).

3. TERMS OF OFFICE

- a.** The relationship between the Senior Pastor and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of a 30-day notice, or less by mutual consent. The calling of a Senior Pastor or severance of the relationship between the Senior Pastor and the church must first be approved by the Church Council prior to being taken before the church. A three-fourths majority of the eligible church members present and voting shall be required to call a
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Senior Pastor or to sever the relationship between the Senior Pastor and the church. Disciplinary removal of the Senior Pastor from office automatically terminates his membership. A restoration to membership after disciplinary removal will be subject to the requirements of Section 3.01(D).

- b.** In the event of a vacancy in the office of Senior Pastor, the Church Council and Personnel Team shall determine who will fulfill the duties of this office until the church makes other arrangements according to Section 5.01(A2).

B. CHURCH CLERK

1. DUTIES AND POWERS

The Church Clerk shall:

- a.** Certify and keep the original bylaws or a copy, including all amendments or alterations, at the church office
- b.** Keep at the church office a record of the proceedings of church business meetings
- c.** Sign, certify, or attest documents as may be required by law
- d.** Be custodian of church records, including the membership roll, baptisms, certificates of ordination, licenses and commissions
- e.** Properly keep and file documents and records as required by law
- f.** Keep an account of any special events in the life of the church which are of historical interest
- g.** Keep all records and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office
- h.** Give an annual report of the church membership roll

2. ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE

- a.** The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith. All church officers, upon request by any church member, shall affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith as set forth in Article 2.
 - b.** Only those having been a voting church member for a minimum of three (3) years are eligible for election to the church office of Church Clerk.
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3. TERMS OF OFFICE

- a.** The term of service for the Church Clerk shall be one (1) year, at the expiration of which they may be re-elected. The term of office shall be by calendar year. Nominees for Church Clerk shall be selected by the Personnel Team. All nominees will be approved by Church Council and elected by the church.

C. CHURCH TREASURER

1. DUTIES AND POWERS

The Church Treasurer shall:

- a.** Be responsible for all funds of the church and ensure the accuracy and integrity of deposits of funds in the name of the church in banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected by the Trustees
 - b.** Disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the church as may be directed by a Pastor, the Finance Team, or the budget adopted by the members of the church at the annual church business meeting, taking proper vouchers for the disbursements
 - c.** Keep and maintain adequate and correct accounts of the church business transactions including account of its financial assets, liabilities, receipts, disbursements, and capital
 - d.** Make all expenditures of the church (except miscellaneous petty cash disbursements) by check or credit card account
 - e.** When requested, render to the Senior Pastor and the Church Council accounts of all transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the church
 - f.** Present a financial statement at the regular quarterly church business meetings
 - g.** Be assisted by the church financial secretary in keeping financial records, preparing reports and preparing checks for payment
 - h.** Serve as an ex-officio member of the Finance Team
 - i.** Keep all church financial records at the office of the church and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office
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2. ASSISTANT TREASURER

While not an officer of the church, an Assistant Treasurer shall be elected annually by the church and is authorized to sign checks according to the approved budget and/or by church vote. An Assistant Treasurer must be a voting church member for a minimum of three (3) years.

3. ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE

- a. The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith. All church officers, upon request by any church member, shall affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith as set forth in Article 2.
- b. Only those having been a voting church member for a minimum of three (3) years are eligible for election to the church office of Treasurer.

4. TERMS OF OFFICE

- a. The term of service for the Treasurer shall be one year, at the expiration of which they may be re-elected. The term of office shall be by calendar year. Nominees for Treasurer will be selected by the Personnel Team. All nominees will be approved by Church Council and elected by the church.
- b. In the absence or disability of the Treasurer, the Finance Team Chairman shall fulfill the role of Treasurer on an interim basis until a new Treasurer is elected by the church. If the Finance Team Chairman is not available, the Vice Chairman shall fulfill the interim role.
- c. The Church Treasurer shall not simultaneously serve as BCA Chief Financial Officer.

SECTION 5.02— REMOVAL OF CHURCH OFFICERS

Any church officer, with the exception of the Senior Pastor, who neglects his or her duties as outlined in the bylaws may be removed from office at the discretion of the Church Council by majority vote, and another may be elected by the church to serve the unexpired term. Guidelines for removal of the Senior Pastor are stated in Section 5.01(A).

Article 6: Deacons

Section 6.01 - Deacons

The function of the Deacon body is spiritual and they shall at all times regard themselves as servants of the church and co-laborers in ministry with the pastors. This also includes oversight of church discipline, benevolence and the general maintenance of spiritual relationships with all members of the church. They shall assist the Pastors as needed in the observance of the ordinances and in the general spiritual well-being of the church. The Senior Pastor or Chairman may call the Deacons into special sessions whenever the need for such arises, providing a quorum being a majority of active deacons is present.

- A.** There shall be one active Deacon for every fifty members of the church. However, the number of active Deacons can be less than one per fifty members depending on the number of qualified men.
 - B.** Deacons shall be elected in regular conference of the church; this nomination is to take place in August of each year. Election will take place in October. If additional Deacons are needed, special election may be held. Special election nominations are to take place in February and election in April. One month between nomination and election will be designated for screening the candidates.
 - C.** The method of election shall be as follows:
 - 1. Qualifications of deacons are to be distributed before nominations are submitted. Two months prior to the election date, nominations will be open, and one month prior to the election all nominations will be closed. A nominations box will be placed in the church during August (and February, if needed) for a period of one month.
 - 2. The criteria for electing Deacons shall be the spiritual qualifications set forth in Acts 6:1-4 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. These qualifications set forth in Acts 6:1-4 and I Timothy 3:8-13. These qualifications are as follows:
 - a) Acts 6:3- He must have a good reputation in and outside the church
 - b) Acts 6:3- He must be full of the Spirit (giving evidence of the fruit & work of the Spirit in his life)
 - c) Acts 6:3- He must possess wisdom (a solid knowledge of God's Word; a fearful reverence of God; and an ability to discern between good and evil)
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- d) Acts 6:3- He must be spiritually mature and responsible, in order to be put in charge of a given task
 - e) 1 Timothy 3:8- He must be a man of dignity, worthy of respect in and outside the church
 - f) 1 Timothy 3:8- He must not be double-tongued (he must be sincere and truthful in speech, not hypocritical)
 - g) 1 Timothy 3:8- He must not be given to or addicted too much wine
 - h) 1 Timothy 3:8- He must not be fond of sordid gain
 - i) (dishonest or greedy gain in business dealings)
 - j) 1 Timothy 3:9: He must hold to the mystery of the faith with clear conscience (must have an understanding of sound doctrine and live accordingly)
 - k) 1 Timothy 3:10- He must be tested in the above qualifications and can serve. A wife can disqualify a man from the office of deacon
 - l) 1 Timothy 3:11- His wife must be dignified, not a malicious gossip; she must be temperate and faithful in all things. This verse does not refer to women serving as deacons, but is direct statement that wives must be qualified before their husbands can serve. A wife can disqualify a man from the office of deacon
 - m) 1 Timothy 3:12- He must be the husband of one wife; committed to her in faithfulness and sexual purity. He must also be a good manager of his household
3. In addition to these biblical qualifications, the following shall be required of active Deacons in this church.
- a) He must be a minimum of 25 years of age
 - b) He must have been a member of the church for one year
 - c) He must regularly attend the services of this church (Hebrews 10:24-25)
 - d) He must be a financial supporter of the church, giving at least a tithe (10%) to the general budget (Malachi 3:8-10)
 - e) He must be active in the progress of the church through participation in fulfilling the purposes of the church (see Article 1.04; James 1:22)
 - f) A deacon must exemplify excellence of moral character and avoid any appearance of evil; 1 Thessalonians 5:22 and I Corinthians 10:11-13)
4. Those who are nominated and interested in serving as a Deacon shall complete the "Information Sheet for Prospective Deacons" and return it to the church office no later than three (3) weeks prior to the election date.
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5. A Deacon Screening Team, consisting of the Senior Pastor, a pastoral staff representative, and all active Deacons, shall be responsible for screenings all nominees prior to the church vote. The team shall present a list of qualified men to the church, according to the above-mentioned qualifications, and the church shall elect Deacons from the list. Specifically, their responsibility shall be:
 - a) The Deacon Screening Team shall begin work immediately upon the opening of nominations for Deacon.
 - b) The Deacon Screening Team shall examine each "Information Sheet for Prospective Deacons" one by one (the names of those who have completed the form shall not be disclosed). The committee shall consider the information on each form and separate those who do qualify to serve as Deacons from those who do not.
 - c) After all the forms have been examined, the names of those who have qualified shall be disclosed to the committee. The Screening Team shall then interview those men who qualify. All those who meet the qualifications and who are willing to serve shall be placed on a list and presented to the church for election.
 - d) All the original information sheets shall be kept on file for a period of five years.
 6. The church will then vote by secret ballot on the number of men required. The church will elect those men receiving the highest number of votes. No vote will be needed if the number of candidates does not exceed the number for election
- D.** Any elected Deacon, not previously ordained, shall be examined by a Deacon Screening Team. Upon receiving a recommendation, he shall be ordained by the church in order to serve as a Deacon.
- E.** The Deacon shall serve a three-year term on the active list and shall not be considered to serve again as an active Deacon until the minimum of one year shall have passed.
- G.** The active Deacon body shall elect a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Church Council Representative and Alternate Council Representative annually
- H.** The active deacons along with the pastoral staff shall serve as the Discipline Team of the church and in connection with matters of church discipline shall follow the procedures set forth in Article 3 Section 3.05
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- I. In the event that a Deacon becomes inactive or fails to meet the criteria as stated above, the Pastors and Deacons shall be obligated to counsel him in the spirit of love and encourage him toward complete restoration. In the event that this fails, by majority vote of the Pastors and Deacons, the Deacons are obligated to replace him using the procedure described herein.



ARTICLE 7 – CHURCH COUNCIL

INTRODUCTION:

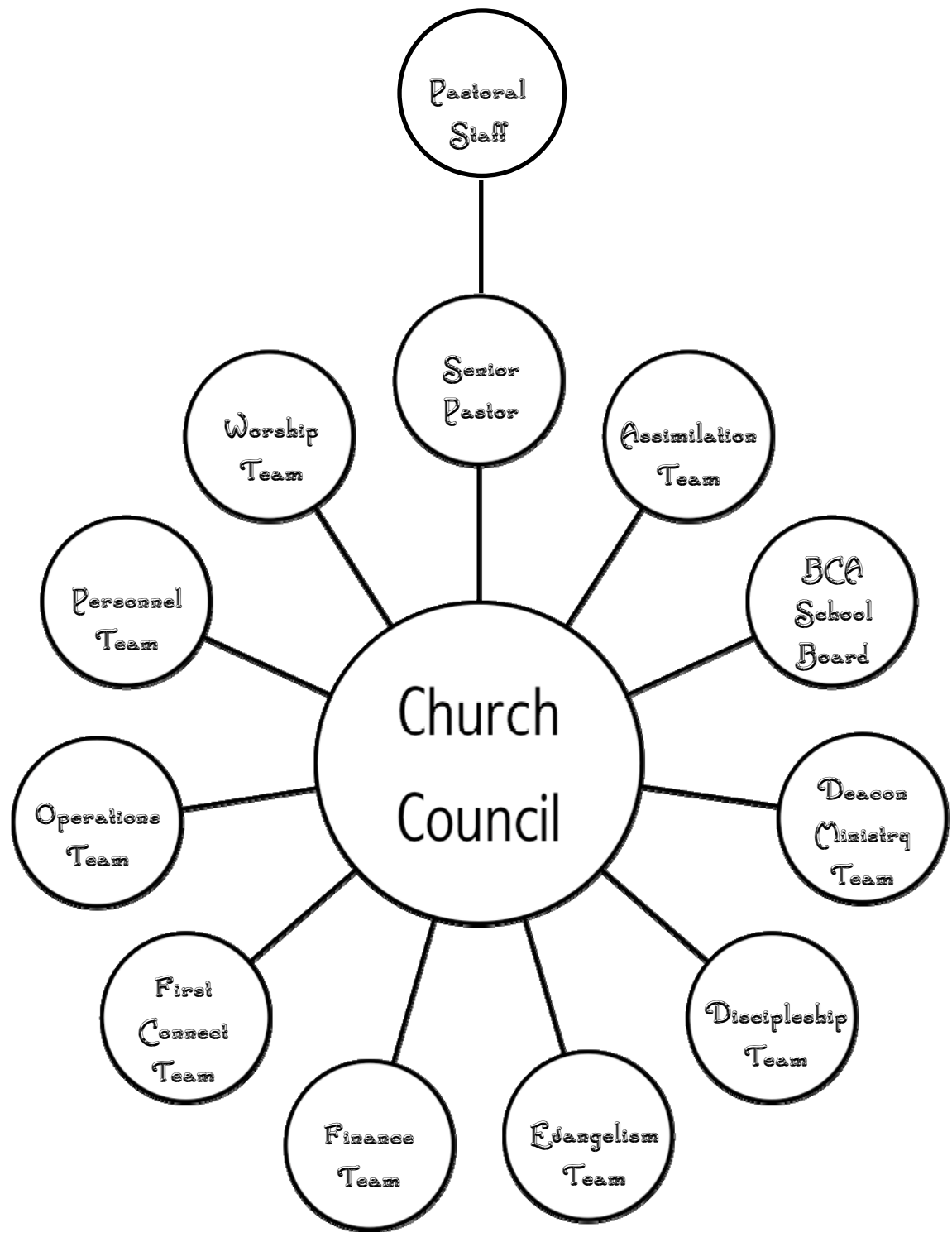
The church has chosen to utilize a Church Council format comprised of elected individuals who represent the church congregation in decision-making. While these persons will oversee and evaluate the various ministries and programs, the final responsibility for major decisions will rest with the congregation as a whole.

- A.** The Church Council will be an eleven-member body consisting of the Senior Pastor as Chairman and Moderator, a representative from each of the Ministry Teams: Assimilation, BCA School Board, Deacons, Discipleship, Evangelism, Finance, First Connect, Operations, Personnel, and Worship.
 - B.** The Church Council will meet at least one time every month and more often if needed.
 - C.** Any Church Council Representative can call a meeting of the Council providing there is at least a 24-hour notice given to all members and a quorum consisting of at least six of eleven Ministry Team Representatives and a pastor.
 - D.** Each Ministry Team shall annually elect two members to attend Council meetings. One shall be given the authority to vote but both can supply input to the Council. This voting member shall be the designated Church Council representative. In order to facilitate continuity and train future leaders, the Council Alternate is encouraged to attend meetings, but will only vote in the absence of the Council Representative.
 - E.** Qualifications for Church Council representatives, not to include the alternates, shall include membership in the church for at least one year. They must also demonstrate spiritual and emotional maturity. No immediate family members, including in-laws, may serve as Council representatives at the same time.
 - F.** A Church Council member may invite anyone to attend a Council meeting when needed for input. In addition, church members may attend and observe. If Executive Session is necessary, all parties with the exception of voting members will be dismissed. The Moderator will have discretion to make exceptions as he sees fit.
 - G.** The Church Council representatives are expected to attend the regular Church Business Meetings unless providentially hindered.
 - H.** The Church Council shall annually nominate members for the Personnel Ministry Team, with the approval of the church. If a vacancy occurs in the Personnel Ministry Team the Church
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Council will provide nominees to the church for approval to fill the unexpired term.

- I. An Associate Pastor shall be a vice-chairman to moderate meetings in the event that the Senior Pastor is absent.
 - J. The Church Council will have responsibility to:
 1. Think proactively in addressing circumstances and future needs
 2. Serve as a sounding board in the consideration of proposals made by Ministry Teams
 3. Verify that existing or proposed ministries and programs are in agreement with the overall vision of the church and to ensure that they are biblically aligned
 4. Determine the spiritual, human, financial and physical resources needed to successfully accomplish existing and proposed programs or ministries
 5. Promote operational excellence in various ministries and programs
 6. Evaluate ministry effectiveness in fulfilling the purposes of the church (see Article 1.04) and seek to maintain a proper balance between them
 7. Provide assistance and support to the various church ministries as needed
 8. Conduct routine church business
 9. Approve all church Business Meeting Agendas
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Church Council Organizational Structure



ARTICLE 8 – MINISTRY TEAMS

MINISTRY TEAMS INTRODUCTION

- A. No one shall serve in any ministry or leadership capacity in the church who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith.
 - B. All ministries of the church shall be assigned to a Ministry Team.
 - C. A member of the pastoral staff shall be a voting, ex-officio member of each Team, but shall not be the Council representative.
 - D. All Ministry Teams shall have an annual election to select a Chairperson, Secretary, Church Council Representative and an Alternate Church Council Representative.
 - E. All Ministry Teams must obtain church approval for their annual budget. Each team is responsible for reviewing and submitting budget requests to the finance team.
 - F. All Ministry Teams are responsible for establishing and overseeing ad hoc committees as needed.
 - G. All Ministry Teams will partner with each other when needed.
 - H. In the event of a conflict of interest regarding a decision within any Ministry Team the member in question shall be recused.
 - I. All policy manuals, including revisions, must be brought before the Church Council for approval.
 - J. Any team member completing a term shall not be considered to serve again on the same ministry team for a minimum of one year.
 - K. No immediate family member, including in-laws, may serve on the same ministry team simultaneously with the exception of the Deacon Ministry Team.
 - L. With the exception of the pastoral staff, church members shall not serve on more than two (2) Ministry Teams at the same time and no one can serve as a Council Representative for more than one team simultaneously.
 - M. Any Ministry Team member serving an unexpired term left vacant by another will not be considered for re-election for a full term if he or she has served as much as two-thirds of the term.
 - N. All decisions and actions of a Ministry Team must be decided upon by majority vote.
 - O. Any Ministry Team member, with the exception of the pastors who neglect his or her duties as outlined in the Bylaws may be removed from office at the discretion of the Church Council by majority vote, and another may be elected by the Church to serve the unexpired term. Guidelines for removal of pastors are stated in Section 5.01.
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1. ASSIMILATION TEAM

- A.** The role of the Assimilation Team is to connect people to small groups where relationships develop with God and each other. In addition, the team will help people discover their spiritual gifts and connect them to a place of service.
 - B.** The Assimilation Team shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Communicating the importance of connecting to a small group
 - 2. Hosting informational classes for perspective and new members as needed
 - 3. Partnering with the Discipleship Ministry Team in developing and assimilating prospects
 - 4. Providing opportunities to discover spiritual gifts and places of service
 - 5. Maintaining a current record of those serving in various places within the church body
 - 6. Planning and supervising church-wide social activities
 - C.** This team shall be composed of seven (7) members including the ex-officio member. The six (6) elected members shall have 3-year terms and rotate off, two per year.
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2. BETHLEHEM CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

A. PURPOSE

The church believes the home and church are responsible to God for providing Christian education. The purpose of this program is to provide an educational, spiritual program that will benefit the students, parents and community. To this end, the church shall engage in educational ministries in keeping with the following dictates.

B. CHURCH PARTICIPATION

All Christian day school educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the body of Christ. However, others may participate in church educational programs when space is available. Admission to the Academy requires that student and parents are willing to agree to the Parent/Guardian Agreement and the Family Lifestyle Statement.

C. STATEMENT OF FAITH ACCORD

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the Statement of Faith of the church (Article 2). The School shall not hire, appoint, or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs that fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith and the Lifestyle Statement.

D. UNITY

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the church.

E. TEACHING

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted consistent with the teaching of the inerrant Word of God. Any assertion or belief which conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every instructor or teacher to present the inerrant Word of God as the sole infallible source of knowledge and wisdom.

F. CHRISTIAN WALK

All administrators, instructors, and teachers shall continue or adopt a lifestyle consistent with the Lifestyle Statement of Bethlehem Christian Academy and the Statement of Faith of Bethlehem First Baptist Church (Article 2).

G. BETHLEHEM CHRISTIAN ACADEMY SCHOOL BOARD

1. The role of the Board of Directors of Bethlehem Christian Academy is to connect quality Christian education and a biblical worldview to students and to connect their families to the body of Christ.
 2. Although a separate corporation, Bethlehem Christian Academy is a ministry of Bethlehem First Baptist Church.
 3. The School Board shall be responsible for:
 - a) Setting the spiritual tone of the school and supporting the school in prayer
 - b) Establishing the various policies necessary for operation of the school
 - c) Supervising the school's financial and business affairs
 - d) Selecting and evaluating the school's administrative officers
 - e) Overseeing the recruitment and hiring of suitable faculty and non-teaching staff
 - f) Establishing annual and capital funds as well as recruiting contributors to said funds
 - g) Set mission, vision and purpose in agreement with the church Statement of Faith (article 2)
 4. The School Board shall provide a monthly detailed financial report to the Finance Team. A summary of this report shall be provided to the Church Council and quarterly business meetings. Requests for Bethlehem Christian Academy budget details shall be directed to the Bethlehem Christian Academy administration and not provided by the church.
 5. The School Board shall be composed of seven (7) members elected for 5 year terms. All school board members will be BFBC members in good standing. The Head of Academy, Pastor Representative and BCA Chief Financial Officer shall be voting, ex-officio members.
 6. The BCA Chief Financial Officer shall not simultaneously serve as BFBC Church Treasurer
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3. DEACON MINISTRY TEAM

- A.** The role of the Deacon Ministry Team is to connect biblical ministry to the needs of the body.
- B.** The Ministry Team shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Providing servant leadership whenever the body assembles
 - 2. Assisting the pastors and ministry leaders of various small groups in caring for the needs of the church family
 - 3. Serving with the Pastoral Staff in administering church discipline in accordance with Article 3 section 3.05
 - 4. Ministering to church family benevolence needs, widows and shut-ins
 - 5. Preparing and assisting with the ordinances of the church; baptism and the Lord's Supper
 - 6. Providing nominees to the Church Council for any vacancies in the Trustees
- C.** The Deacons shall serve a three-year term on the active list before rotating off. See Article 6.

4. DISCIPLESHIP TEAM

- A.** The role of the Discipleship Team is to connect people to God's Word and develop fully-devoted followers of Jesus Christ.
 - B.** The Discipleship Team shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Overseeing the recruiting, training and encouragement of teachers and small group ministry leaders
 - 2. Obtaining, reviewing and approving Bible study curriculum and discipleship training materials
 - 3. Working with the Personnel Team to establish job descriptions and expectations for positions within the discipleship ministry
 - 4. Proposing and approving new discipleship programs
 - 5. Encouraging, Assisting, and overseeing small group Bible studies
 - C.** This team will be composed of seven (7) members including the ex-officio member. The six (6) elected members shall have 3-year terms and rotate off, two per year.
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5. EVANGELISM TEAM

- A. The role of the Evangelism Team is to connect the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the community and the world.
- B. The Evangelism Team shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Encouraging the body to pray according to Matt 9:37-38 "Then He said to His disciples, The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest. " NASB
 - 2. Keeping the church informed and involved in local, state, national and international outreach opportunities
 - 3. Providing evangelism training for church members
 - 4. Encouraging Cooperative Program giving and special missions offerings
 - 5. Organizing and promoting mission conferences, mission trips, and local evangelistic efforts
 - 6. Maintaining counseling/baptism areas and the prayer room
 - 7. Coordinating lay counselor training, assisting in decisions at the altar, and serving baptism candidates
- C. This team shall be composed of seven (7) members including the ex-officio member. The remaining six (6) elected members shall have 3-year terms and rotate off, two per year.

6. FINANCE TEAM

- A. The purpose of the Finance Team is to connect biblical stewardship principles to the body while monitoring the ongoing church finances and developing creative ideas of acquiring funds for future needs.
 - B. The Finance Team shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Biblical stewardship training
 - 2. Visionary methods of fundraising
 - 3. Capital Campaigns
 - 4. Estate planning initiatives
 - 5. Various accounting duties including:
 - a. Monthly reconciliation of the bank statements and checkbooks
 - b. Bank deposits
 - c. Recording all receipts and expenditures
 - d. All tax reports, and tax with-holding
 - e. Audits as required
 - f. Maintaining records of General and Designated funds
 - g. Prepare and submit an annual budget to the church for approval
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- C. A special discretionary fund shall be held within the Designated Funds account. The fund shall only be used with the approval of the Church Council. In the event that the fund is depleted, the Council may request the church to approve additional discretionary funds.
- D. As needed, the Finance Team shall establish approval limits for purchases, including budgeted items wherein each Ministry Team shall submit a request for approval based on the availability of funds.
- E. In the event of limited available funds for ministry team needs, the Council shall prioritize the allocation of funds. No payments shall be made for which there are not sufficient funds to cover.
- F. In the event that funds are not sufficient, Council is to be notified immediately to decide the next course of action. Salaries and operational expenses shall be given priority.
- G. Upon church approval, the BCA Board shall administer its annual budget.
- H. At each Quarterly Business Meeting, a financial statement shall be made available. Monthly financial statements shall be given to the Church Council.
- I. A minimum of two persons shall be required to count and validate all offerings or contributions to the church. All funds are to be deposited in a timely fashion to maintain safety and integrity.
- J. The Church Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer will be the only persons authorized to sign checks.
- K. This team shall be composed of seven (7) voting members, four of which are ex-officio, which consist of: (1) pastoral staff, (1) Church Treasurer, (1) BCA Board member and the Church Financial Secretary. The remaining three (3) team members shall serve a three (3) year term and rotate off, one per year.

7. FIRST CONNECT TEAM

- A. The role of the First Connect Team is to connect the community to the church and create a lasting positive impression.
 - B. The First Connect Team shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Promotion of the church to the community
 - 2. Creating a warm and inviting impression of the church year-round
 - 3. Involvement in community events
 - 4. Overseeing Recreation Ministry
 - 5. Overseeing the Wednesday Night Meal Ministry
 - C. This team shall be composed of seven (7) members including the ex-officio member. The remaining six (6) elected members shall have 3-year terms and rotate off, two per year.
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8. OPERATIONS TEAM

- A.** The role of the Operations Team is to connect a safe, attractive and functional campus to our church family and the community.
- B.** The Operations Team shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Maintenance and security of the campus and property as well as working with other ministry teams to establish and administer related policies
 - 2. Identifying future building and property needs
- C.** This team shall be composed of seven (7) members, including the ex-officio member. The remaining six (6) elected members shall have 3-year terms and rotate off, two per year.

9. PERSONNEL TEAM

- A.** The role of the Personnel Team is to connect spirit-filled believers to leadership positions within the church.
 - B.** The Personnel Team shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Providing care and support for all staff members and their families
 - 2. Maintaining and administering a personnel policy manual for all paid staff
 - 3. Reviewing all pastoral staff members and developing their salaries and benefits package
 - 4. Working with the pastors and Church Council to provide nominees for any vacancies on church Ministry Teams (excluding Deacons, Personnel, and Trustees)
 - 5. Working with the Finance Team to establish budget requirements to properly compensate all paid staff and meet the other personnel needs of the church
 - 6. Anticipating future personnel needs of the church
 - 7. Seeing that all personnel documents and records are properly kept and filed
 - C.** This team shall be composed of seven (7) members including the ex-officio member. The remaining six (6) elected members shall have 3-year terms and rotate off, two per year.
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10. WORSHIP TEAM

- A.** The role of the Worship Team is to connect people to God by assisting the pastoral staff in providing a dynamic relevant worship experience.
 - B.** The Worship Team shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Encouraging creative biblical expressions of worship
 - 2. Identifying, recommending, and overseeing the tools and equipment needed to create an atmosphere conducive for worship
 - 3. Staffing, training, and overseeing all volunteer worship ministry personnel including directors, musicians, and technicians
 - 4. Working with Personnel to staff related paid positions
 - 5. Set up and operation of audio-visual equipment for special events such as weddings, funerals, seminars, etc.
 - 6. Supervising the production and duplication of services and special events as needed
 - 7. Overseeing and supervising weddings and wedding policy
 - C.** This team shall be composed of seven (7) members including the ex-officio member. The remaining six (6) elected members shall have a 3-year term and rotate off, two per year.
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ARTICLE 9- MEETINGS

SECTION 9.01—MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

- A.** Unless otherwise determined by the pastor, the church shall meet each Sunday for public worship and at least once during the week for Bible study and prayer. Members are encouraged to participate in Bible studies, home groups and other fellowship and discipleship opportunities. Except when circumstances forbid it, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed on at least a quarterly basis.
- B.** Bible conferences, missionary conferences, revivals, etc. may be held as the Senior Pastor deems beneficial.

SECTION 9.02— CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS

- A.** Church meetings shall be held on a quarterly basis. A quorum shall consist of the voting members present.
 - B.** The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling.
 - C.** For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require nonmembers to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. The moderator shall have full authority to order the removal of all children (ages to be determined by the moderator) if the moderator determines, in his sole discretion, that circumstances so warrant. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, the moderator may, in his sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises in accordance with Section 3.03(C) and treat the person as a trespasser.
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SECTION 9.03—SPECIAL CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS

The Senior Pastor or Church Council may call a special meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called to the church from the pulpit at least one Sunday and not less than one week prior to said meeting. A meeting for the calling of a pastor or the severance of the relationship between the church and pastor shall be called in accordance with the provision of Section 5.01(A2).

SECTION 9.04—FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the church shall begin January 1st and end December 31st.



ARTICLE 10 – INDEMNIFICATION

SECTION 10.01—ACTIONS SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

The church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church, against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding; and if that person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

SECTION 10.02—EXPENSES SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

To the extent that a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in this Article, or in defense of any claim, issue, or matter in that action, suit, or proceeding, he or she may be indemnified against expenses, including attorneys' fees, actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding.

SECTION 10.03—LIMITATIONS OF INDEMNIFICATION

Any indemnification made under this Article, may be made by the church only as authorized in the specific case on a determination that indemnification of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Section 1 of this Article. The determination shall be made (a) by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the pastor and deacons who were not and are not parties to or threatened with the action, suit, or proceeding; (b) if the described quorum is not obtainable or if a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested deacons so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by a majority vote of the members of the church.

SECTION 10.04—TIMING OF INDEMNIFICATION

Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article, may be paid by the church as they are incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, as authorized by the board of trustees in the specific case, on receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the church.

SECTION 10.05—EXTENT OF INDEMNIFICATION

The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise required as a matter of law or under any agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the church, both as to action of each person seeking indemnification under this Article in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding that office, and may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent and may inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

SECTION 10.06—INSURANCE

The church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this Article.

ARTICLE 11 – DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS

From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Contributors may suggest uses for their contributions, but all suggestions shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. All contributions made to specific funds or otherwise designated shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the Finance Team. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Section 1.04.

ARTICLE 12 – BINDING ARBITRATION

SECTION 12.01—SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION

Believing that lawsuits between believers are prohibited by Scripture, all members of this church agree to submit to binding arbitration any matters which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bringing any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

SECTION 12.02—NOTICE OF ARBITRATION

In the event of any dispute, claim, question, or disagreement arising out of or relating to these bylaws or any other church matter, the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreement as befits Christians. To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interests not to disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution. If they do not reach such solution within a period of sixty (60) days, then upon notice by either party to the other, disputes, claims, questions, or differences shall be finally settled by arbitration as described in section 12.01, above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to Section 12.04, below.

SECTION 12.03—LIMITATIONS ON ARBITRATION DECISIONS

- A.** Should any dispute involve matters of church discipline, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures for church discipline as outlined under Section 3.05, were followed.
- B.** Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the pastor or any church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in Section 3.05 were followed.

SECTION 12.04—ARBITRATION PROCEDURES

The Procedures for Arbitration shall be as adopted by the Senior Pastor and the deacons.

ARTICLE 13 – AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be revised or amended by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any regular church administration meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing and announced from the pulpit fourteen (14) days before the vote is taken.



ARTICLE 14 – APPENDICES

SECTION 14.01 BETHLEHEM CHRISTIAN ACADEMY BY-LAWS AND BOARD MANUAL

The BCA By-Laws and Board Manual are a part of the Bylaws of Bethlehem First Baptist Church. Copies of the documents are available upon request.

SECTION 14.02 GUIDELINES FOR ARBITRATION

The Church Council has adopted guidelines for arbitration. Copies of the document are available upon request.

SECTION 14.03 NEW MEMBERSHIP DOCUMENT

A Copy of the New Member Document is available upon request from the church office.

ADOPTION

These bylaws were adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present.

These bylaws supersede any other bylaws of _____ church.

Date

Church Clerk

