

The Constitution

. . . and . . .

The Articles of Faith

. . . of the . . .

First Baptist Church

Butler, Pennsylvania

The Constitution

Article 1

Confession of Faith

Believing the Articles of Faith as adopted by the Baptist Bible Union of America in conference at Kansas City, MO., May 15, 1923, to be that body of truth for which Baptists of North America have always stood, and in accordance with Article 2 of the charter of the First Baptist Church, we accept the same as the “Articles of Faith” of this church.

Article 2

Purpose

The purpose of this church is to maintain its doctrines and fulfill and execute the vows contained in its covenant in accordance with Sections 2 and 12 of the charter of the First Baptist Church.

Article 3

Membership

Section 1. *Admission of Members*

Clause (A) Every candidate for admission to the church by baptism, experience, or letter, shall relate his or her religious experience to the Board of Deacons.

Clause (B) The Deacons, having satisfied themselves that the candidate is eligible for church membership, shall recommend the same to the church. Candidates may be received at any regular meeting of the church as well as any business meeting.

Clause (C) The candidate shall be required to subscribe to the Articles of Faith, the Church Covenant, and to attend a course in membership training prior to receiving the privilege of membership.

Clause (D) The candidate may be received by majority vote, unless opposed publicly by five members who state satisfactory objections.

Clause (E) The letters or certificates of all persons from other churches of like faith and order, desiring to unite with the church, shall be presented to the Board of Deacons and by them submitted to the church, provided they are satisfied that such union is desirable and proper.

Clause (F) Persons, who, for any reason are unable to present letters, may relate their experience to the Board of Deacons and upon their recommendation to the church, may be received.

Clause (G) Excluded members may be restored to membership upon recommendation of the Board of Deacons, after such member has given to them acceptable evidences of honest

repentance and has made full confession of wrongdoing, and in accordance with clause D of this section.

Clause (H) Should it not be possible for a candidate to come before the Board of Deacons, a committee of three members of the Board appointed for that purpose shall act for the Board.

Section 2. *Duties of Members*

The duties of members are set forth in general terms in the church covenant.

Section 3. *Dismission of Members*

Clause (A) A letter of dismissal, upon recommendation of the Board of Deacons, may be granted by a majority vote to any member in good and regular standing who wishes to unite with any other regular Baptist church, or a certificate of Christian character to any member wishing to unite with another evangelical church.

Clause (B) Open letters will not be granted for a period longer than 60 days. If the clerk of the church has not been notified by the expiration of this time, he or she shall record the name as dropped, stating the reason therefor.

Clause (C) Persons possessing letters of dismissal from this church, and not uniting with any other church, shall be denied the right of participation in any business meetings of the church whatsoever.

Clause (D) Persons possessing letters of dismissal from this church who desire to again become active members, may do so in the accepted way as set forth in Section 1 of this Article 3.

Section 4. *Suspension of Members*

Clause (A) Members whose whereabouts shall be unknown to the church after proper efforts to discover the same, shall, upon the recommendation of the Board of Deacons, be placed upon the list of suspended members and shall be deprived of the right to speak or vote at any meeting of the church whatsoever.

Clause (B) Members who absent themselves for long periods of time from the stated services of the church and who thus violate their covenant obligations, upon recommendation of the Board of Deacons, shall be placed upon the list of suspended members and shall be deprived of the right to speak or vote at any meeting of the church whatsoever.

The Board of Deacons in determining this covenant violation should be governed by the age, health, location, conduct toward the church, etc., of the one considered.

Clause (C) Members who do not contribute or who do not contribute systematically to the support of the church and who thus violate their covenant obligations, upon

recommendation of the Board of Deacons, shall be placed upon the list of suspended members and shall be deprived of the right to speak or vote at any meeting of the church whatsoever.

The Board of Deacons in determining this violation of the covenant should be governed by the records of the Financial Secretary, the age, earning capacity, conduct toward the church, etc., of the one considered.

Clause (D) All members placed upon the suspended list shall be notified by the clerk at place of last address. If there is no response upon the part of the suspended member within three (3) months from the date of notification, he or she shall be dropped from the rolls of the church.

Clause (E) A suspended member may be placed on the active list of members of the church upon appeal to the Board of Deacons and upon its approval.

Section 5. *Discipline of Members*

Clause (A) The Board of Deacons, with the pastor, shall constitute the Discipline Committee of the Church.

Clause (B) In case of personal difference between members of the church, the Board of Deacons shall recommend that the parties endeavor to settle their differences in the manner laid down by our Savior in Matthew 18:15-16.

Clause (C) Any member of the church in good and regular standing may prefer charges to the Board of Deacons against any other member where it is claimed that such accused member has violated the covenant or been guilty of immoral or other conduct contrary to our principles and practices as Baptists or unbecoming in a follower of Christ.

Clause (D) Where charges are made against a member, the accused shall be notified personally or by letter of the nature of the charges and shall be summoned to appear before the Board of Deacons to make answer to the charges. If the accused does not appear in response to the summons, unless a satisfactory reason is given for such non-appearance, the Board of Deacons shall recommend to the church the exclusion of such a member. If the accused appears before the Board of Deacons, there shall be a full and fair hearing of the case and the Board of Deacons are empowered to acquit the accused, if a majority of those present vote that the accused is innocent of the charges. If, on the other hand, a majority of the Deacons present vote that the accused is guilty of the charges preferred, they shall recommend to the church that the accused be excluded from the membership of the church.

Clause (E) Anyone against whom charges have been made and in whose case the Deacons have recommended exclusion, may appeal to the church for a hearing of the case before the church. The church shall then decide whether to hear the case or whether it will act, without such hearing, upon the recommendation of the Board of Deacons.

Clause (F) One purpose of this section is to give full protection to any member who may be accused and yet at the same time protect the church from interruptions of its regular

business and its spiritual activities by matters of discipline, whose details might be wasteful of the time of the church, harmful to the young or discouraging to the membership.

Clause (G) It is specifically directed that the Board of Deacons, in safe-guarding the purity and peace of the church, shall move with especial promptness and vigor against anyone who is obstructing the work or disturbing the peace of the church by slander, falsehood, unseemly gossip, conspiracy or other unfair and unchristian methods. It is recognized that a Baptist Church must be a democracy in which the majority shall rule. It is recognized further, that while the minority has the right of private opinion on all questions, and the right of appeal in any constitutional and proper manner, they shall not have the right of engaging in secret or open propaganda, or of deliberately disturbing the peace and interrupting the work of the church or bringing it into disrepute before the public by such wrong methods in their effort to discourage the faithful, injure the cause and thereby finally gain control of the organization. It is further recognized, that when the church in regular order by proper vote has determined upon a course of action, that course becomes the duty of every member of the church.

Clause (H) The Board of Deacons are empowered to make their own rules and regulations concerning the ways in which cases of discipline shall be conducted.

Article 4

Officers and Boards

Section 1 *Officers of the Church*

Clause (A) The officers of the church shall be Pastor, Deacons, Clerk, Trustees, Missionary Treasurer, Church Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Sunday School Superintendent.

Clause (B) A member shall not be nominated for an elective office unless he or she has been a member for 12 months immediately preceding his or her election.

Clause (C) All elective officers of the church shall be required to subscribe yearly, at the annual business meeting or as soon thereafter as possible, to the Articles of Faith of the Church. Any member refusing to do so, upon recommendation of the Board of Deacons, his office shall be declared vacant.

Section 2 *Pastor*

Clause (A) The Pastor shall be elected at a special meeting of the church called for that purpose by public notice given on two Sundays immediately preceding the date of meeting and two-thirds of the ballots cast shall be necessary for his election.

Clause (B) The Pastor shall continue in office until he resigns or his resignation is requested by at least a majority of those present at a special meeting called for that purpose of which the customary notice has been given.

Clause (C) The duties of the Pastor shall include but not be limited to: tenderly watching over the spiritual interests of the membership, preaching the Gospel regularly, overseeing the teaching ministries of the church, administering the church ordinances, officiating at occasions such as weddings and memorial services, designating responsibilities of other ministering church staff, and planning the overall church ministry.

Clause (D) The Pastor shall be ex-officio member of all Committees and Boards of the church.

Clause (E) In accordance with Article 10 and 11 of the charter of the church and Clause (B) Section 1, Article 4 of these By-Laws, the Pastor shall be required to subscribe to the Articles of Faith of the church before entering upon his office, and yearly thereafter at the annual business meeting of the church.

Section 3 *Board of Deacons*

Clause (A) Members of the Board of Deacons shall be seven in number, elected by ballot at the annual business meeting of the church for a term of five years.

Clause (B) The present Board of Deacons at the time of the adoption of these By-Laws shall continue in office until the expiration of their respective terms unless their office shall become vacant by resignation, removal, etc. Should a vacancy occur before the expiration of any term of office, such vacancy may be filled by the church at any regular or special meeting providing due notice of such meeting is announced from the pulpit on the preceding Sunday.

Clause (C) It shall be the duties of the Deacons to engage actively in all the spiritual work of the church, seek out such members as need assistance and administer the alms of the church for their relief; inquire into the fitness and qualifications of applicants for membership; visit the sick; prepare and distribute the elements of the Lord's Supper; advise and aid the pastor in all matters relating to the spiritual interests of the church; in case of vacancy in the pastoral office, to constitute the pulpit committee in securing supplies and recommending a candidate for the pastorate; they shall, together with the pastor, constitute the Discipline Committee to act in accordance with Sections 4 and 5 of Article 3 of these By-Laws.

Section 4. *Clerk*

The Church Clerk shall have charge of all official correspondence, and shall keep a record of all the business transactions of the church; a record of reception and dismissal and suspension of members, and perform such other duties that properly belong to the office.

Section 5. *Trustees*

The Board of Trustees shall be seven in number, elected by ballot at the annual business meeting of the church for a period of five years. In the event that three terms expire in any one year, vote for two to serve five (5) years and for one to serve one (1) year. The present Board at the time of the adoption of these By-Laws shall continue until expiration of their respective terms. Clause (B) Section 3, Article 4, shall apply to the Board of Trustees.

The duties of the Board of Trustees are described in Articles 6 to 9 of the church charter.

Section 6. *Board of Missions*

Clause (A) The Board of Missions shall be seven in number, elected by ballot at the annual business meeting of the Church for a period of five years. In the event that three terms expire in any one year, vote for two to serve five (5) years and for one to serve one (1) year. Clause (B) Section 3, Article 4, shall apply to the Board of Missions.

Clause (B) It shall be the duties of the Board of Missions to advise the Church as to its various benevolent and missionary enterprises; to recommend to the Church a schedule for the distribution of the funds of this division; to deal with the important work of enlisting and mobilizing the entire membership in the missionary work; and to guide the Church in the support and promotion of such missionary projects as are consistent with the doctrinal position of The First Baptist Church.

Section 7. *Board of Christian Education*

Clause (A) The Board of Christian Education shall be seven in number, elected by ballot at the annual business meeting of the Church for a period of three (3) years. Clause (B) Section 3, Article 4, shall apply. The Bible School Superintendent shall be an ex-officio member of this board.

Clause (B) It shall be the duty of the Board of Christian Education to assist the pastor and deacons in organizing, planning, and coordinating the educational arm of the church. This assistance includes appointing all workers in the educational areas with the exception of the Bible School; establishing the duties of various workers; and promoting the teaching of the Word of God in harmony with the church's doctrinal position which includes determining the curriculum and literature to be used. The above areas are subject to approval by the pastor and deacons.

Section 8. *Church Treasurer*

The Church Treasurer shall have charge of the church monies, except as shall be otherwise provided for. He shall pay out the same only upon authority of the ways prescribed by the Board of Trustees. He shall make a quarterly and annual report to the church.

Section 9. *Missionary Treasurer*

The Missionary Treasurer shall receive and disburse, as the church directs, all benevolent funds, excepting the Deacon's Fund, and shall report to the church quarterly and annually.

Section 10. *Financial Secretary*

The Financial Secretary, in company with the Treasurer and Missionary Treasurer, shall count all the collections and turn them over to the proper Treasurer. He or She shall keep all individual accounts; see that new members are supplied with envelopes for offerings, and report quarterly and annually to the church.

Section 11 *Bible School Superintendent*

The Bible School Superintendent shall have general oversight of teachers and school; shall call together teachers and officers of the school from time to time for counsel, and report quarterly and annually to the church upon the condition of the school.

Section 12. *Official Board*

Clause (A) The official Board shall consist of all of the officers of the church as named in Section 1, Article 4.

Clause (B) It shall be the duty of the Official Board to meet at the call of the pastor or at stated times to consider and conduct such business for the church as necessarily arises between the business meetings of the church.

Article 5

Committees

Section 1. *Finance Committee*

Clause (A) The Finance Committee shall consist of the chairman of the Board of Deacons, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Chairman of the Board of Missions, Chairman of the Board of Christian Education, Church Clerk, Financial Secretary, General Treasurer and Missionary Treasurer.

Clause (B) It shall be the duty of the Finance Committee to prepare all budgets for approval of the church at the annual business meeting, and to plan and supervise the finances of the church, and to enlist every member of the church into Scriptural giving.

Section 2. *Nominating Committee*

Clause (A) The Nominating Committee shall consist of three members elected by the church.

Clause (B) It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to prepare a list of nominees of all officers and committees to be elected at the annual business meeting. The Nominating Committee report shall be finalized at an announced meeting at least three weeks in advance of the annual business meeting. At this time, nominations may be made from the floor. Candidates for the office of Deacon shall be submitted to the Nominating Committee by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons. The Nominating Committee report shall be posted on the church bulletin board for two Sundays previous to the election.

Section 3. *Auditing Committee*

The Auditing Committee shall consist of three members elected by ballot at the annual business meeting of the Church. They shall audit all accounts of the Church and certify to same, reporting to the Church at the next quarterly business meeting.

Section 4. *Music Committee*

The Music Committee shall consist of three members elected by the church and shall have general oversight of the church music. Choir members shall be members of the church.

Section 5. *Ushers' Committee*

The Committee of Ushers shall consist of Head Usher, and such other Ushers as may be necessary, appointed by the Board of Deacons. They shall attend all services of the church and perform such duties as belong to the office.

Article 6

Meetings

Section 1. *Public Worship*

The stated meetings of the church for public worship shall be Sunday morning, Sunday evening and Wednesday evening. There shall be maintained a Bible School and such other weekly meetings as the church may authorize.

Section 2. *Business Meetings*

Clause (A) The Annual Business Meeting of the church shall be held on the second Wednesday in January.

Clause (B) The Quarterly Business Meeting shall be held on the second Wednesday evening after the last Sunday of each quarter.

Clause (C) Special business meetings may be called by the pastor with the concurrence of five members or by the written request of ten members in good and regular standing.

Section 3. *Rules and Order of Business*

Clause (A) The ordinary rules of deliberative assemblies shall be observed in the transaction of business.

Clause (B) Order of Business:

1. Devotional
2. Reading of minutes of last meeting
3. Report of Officers and Committees
4. Unfinished Business
5. New Business
6. Devotional

Section 4. General

Clause (A) The presence of at least fifteen members of the church, in good and regular standing, shall be necessary to constitute a quorum at all regular and special business meetings of the church.

Clause (B) Notices of regular and special business meetings shall be read from the pulpit on the Sunday preceding the date of holding such meeting, except as otherwise provided herein.

Clause (C) Only such members as are in good and regular standing, and those not holding letters of dismission from this church shall participate in its government, and in the administration of its affairs.

Clause (D) All members of the church who are eighteen years of age and over and in good and regular standing shall be entitled to vote on all church business, discipline, election of officers, etc. Those voting for the office of Trustee shall have attained a minimum age of twenty-one years.

Article 7

Elections

Clause (A) The elections of officers and committees shall be by ballot.

Clause (B) All officers and committees shall be elected for one year except as otherwise provided herein.

Article 8

Church Organizations

Section 1. Bible School

Clause (A) The Bible School is an integral part of the church. The aim should be to have every member of the school in the church and vice versa.

Clause (B) All officers and teachers in the Bible School, together with the officers of the various classes, shall be members of the church in good and regular standing for at least 6 months immediately prior to appointment.

Clause (C) All officers and teachers in the Bible School [and missionaries supported by the church] shall yearly subscribe to the Articles of Faith of the church and any officer or teacher refusing to do so, or whose conduct or teaching is considered injurious to the class, school or church, upon recommendation of the Board of Deacons in conjunction with the Bible School Superintendent and Board of Christian Education be dismissed from the position held. Missionaries supported by the church shall provide the church with a financial statement at the end of each year.

Clause (D) All questions of an important nature, such as literature, deportment, etc., arising in the School shall be brought before the Bible School Superintendent and in conjunction with the Board of Christian Education make recommendation to the pastor and deacons. They in turn would make recommendation to the church for action. The action of the church shall be final in all questions of Bible doctrine.

Clause (E) It shall be the duty of the Bible School Superintendent and Assistant Bible School Superintendent, in conjunction with the assistance of the Board of Christian Education, to appoint all teachers as well as determine curriculum and literature. Classes shall be consulted and, if possible, such teachers as are suggested by classes named. The above areas are subject to approval by the Pastor and Deacons.

Section 2. *Young Peoples Societies*

There shall be maintained Junior, Intermediate, and Senior Young Peoples Societies for the benefit of the youth of the church, as the need may arise. The rules applying to the Bible School shall also apply to any Young Peoples Societies that may be organized.

Section 3. *Church Visitation*

Regular, systematic visitation shall be given a major part in the church life and program. The Pastor, assisted by a Secretary of Visitation and whomsoever he designates, shall plan and direct all visitation. Definite reports shall be made and definite records kept on all visitation. Unsaved persons shall be given full priority in visitation.

Section 4. *General*

Clause (A) All other societies or subsidiary organizations not heretofore mentioned, now existing or which shall be organized, shall not use the name of the church in any manner to further their objects without first having secured the approval of the Board of Deacons.

Clause (B) All officers of all societies and subsidiary organizations of the church whatsoever shall be members of the church in good and regular standing.

Article 9

General

Section 1. *Interpretation*

Clause (A) The words “Cheerfully and regularly” in connection with the church covenant are hereby construed to mean a systematic giving as the Lord prospers and not in a nominal sense of the word “support.”

Clause (B) The words “good and regular standing” are hereby interpreted to mean those members of the church who are sound in doctrine, engage actively in the work of the church, who attend the stated services of the church, who contribute to the support of the church and in other ways fulfill their covenant vows.

Section 2 *Hiscox*

Baptist Church policy not treated by these By-Laws shall be governed by the principles set forth in “The New Directory for Baptist Churches” by Rev. Edw. T. Hiscox, D.D., the recognized authority in Baptist Churches.

Article 10

By-Laws and Amendments

Clause (A) These By-Laws may be amended, altered or revised at any regular or special business meeting of the church by a vote of two-thirds of those present favoring such, providing such alteration, revision or amendment shall have been submitted in writing at the regular business meeting preceding the meeting at which such action is taken.

Clause (B) All By-Laws, rules, resolutions or regulations heretofore adopted or in force in this church and not consistent with these By-Laws are hereby repealed.

Adopted: February 27, 1924

**Revised: September 6, 1950
September 23, 1959
April 18, 1973**

The Articles of Faith

I. Of the Scriptures

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

(Explanatory)

1. By “THE HOLY BIBLE” we mean that collection of sixty-six books, from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written, does not only contain and convey the word of God, but IS the very Word of God.
2. By “INSPIRATION” we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.

II Timothy 3:16,17; II Peter 1:19-21; Acts 1:16; Psalms 119:105,130; Luke 24:25-27; John 17:17; Luke 24:44,45; Psalms 119:89; Proverbs 30:5,6; Romans 3:4; I Peter 1:23; Revelation 22:19; John 12:48; Isaiah 8:20; Eph. 6:17; Rom. 15:4; Luke 16:31; Psalms 19:7-11; John 5:45-47; John 5:39.

II. Of The True God

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

Ex. 20:2,3; Gen. 17:1; I Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; John 4:24; Psalms 147:5; Psalms 83:18; Psalms 90:2; Jer. 10:10; Ex. 15:11; Rev. 4:11; I Tim. 1:17; Rom. 11:33; Mark 12:30; Matt. 28:19; John 15:26; I Cor. 12:4-6; I John 5:7; John 10:30; John 17:5; Acts 5:3,4; I Cor. 2:10,11; Phil. 2:5,6; Eph. 2:18; II Cor. 13:14.

III. Of The Holy Spirit

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

Matt. 28:19; John 14:16,17; Heb. 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Gen. 1:1-3; II Thess. 2:7; John 16:8-11; John 15:26,27; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5,6; Eph. 1:13,14; Mark 1:8; Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; John 16:13; John 14:26; Rom. 8:14; Rom. 8:16; II Thes. 2:13; I Peter 1:2; Rom. 8:26,27.

IV. Of The Devil, Or Satan

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

Rev. 12:9; Ezek. 28:14-17; Isaiah 14:12-15; Luke 22:3,4; II Cor. 11:13-15; Mark 13:21,22; I John 4:3; II John 7; I John 2:22; Rev. 13:13,14; II Thess. 2:8-11; Rev. 19:11, 16, 20; Rev. 12:7-9; Rev. 20:1-3; Rev. 20:10; Matt. 25:41; Jude 6; II Peter 2:4; Eph. 2:2.

V. Of The Creation

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

Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11; Acts 4:24; Col. 1:16,17; Heb. 11:3; John 1:3; Rev. 10:6; Rom. 1:20; Acts 17:23-26; Jer. 10:12; Neh. 9:6; Gen. 1:26,27; I Cor. 11:7;

Genesis 2:7; Genesis 1:11; Genesis 1:24.

VI. Of The Fall of Man

We believe (a) that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but (b) by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state, (c) in consequence of which all mankind are now sinful, and are sinners not by constraint, but of choice; and (d) therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse, and (e) that man in his natural state is in a condition of total depravity, by which we mean his natural utter incapacity to receive the things of the Spirit of God apart from the quickening grace of the Holy Spirit.

Genesis 3:1-6, 24; Rom. 5:12; Rom. 5:19; Rom. 3:10-19; Eph. 2:1-3;
Rom. 1:18; Ezek. 18:19, 20; Rom. 1:32, 20, 28; Gal. 3:22.

VII. Of The Virgin Birth

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

Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; Mark 1:1; John 1:14;
Psalms 2:7; Gal. 4:4; I John 5:20; I Cor. 15:47.

VIII. Of The Atonement For Sin

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

Eph. 2:8; Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:24; John 3:16; Matt. 18:11; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:14;
Isa. 53:4-7; Rom. 3:25; I John 4:10; I Cor. 15:3; II Cor. 5:21; John 10:18; Phil.
2:8; I Peter 2:24; Gal. 1:4; I Peter 3:18; Isa. 53:11; Heb. 12:2; I Cor. 15:20;
Isa. 53:12; Heb. 9:12-15; Heb. 7:25; I John 2:2.

IX. Of Grace In the New Creation

We believe (a) that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; (b) that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; (c) that it is instantaneous and not a process; (d) that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives

eternal life, the free gift of God; (e) that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; (f) that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.

John 3:3; II Cor. 5:17; Luke 5:27; John 3:6,7; Acts 2:41; Acts 16:30-33;
II Peter 1:4; Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:1; II Cor. 5:19; Col. 2:13; John 3:8; John 1:12,13;
Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9.

X. Of The Freeness Of Salvation

We believe (a) in God's electing grace; (b) that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel; (c) that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith; (d) that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel; (e) which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

I Thess. 1:4; Col. 3:12; Rom. 8:28,30; Titus 1:1; Matt. 11:28; Isaiah 55:1;
Rev. 22:17; Rom. 10:13; John 6:37; Isaiah 55:6; Acts 2:38; Isaiah 55:7; John
3:15,16; I Timothy 1:15; I Cor. 15:10; Eph. 2:4,5; John 5:40; John 3:36.

XI. Of Justification

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification:

- (a) That justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness.
- (b) That justification is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done; but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed to us.

Acts 13:39; Isaiah 53:11; Zech. 13:1; Romans 8:1; Romans 5:9; Romans 5:1;
Titus 3:5-7; Romans 1:17; Hab. 2:4; Gal. 3:11; Romans 4:1-8; Heb. 10:38.

XII. Of Repentance And Faith

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

Acts 20:20; Mark 1:15; Acts 2:27-38; Luke 18:13; Rom. 10:13; Psalms 51:1-4; Psalms 51:7; Isaiah 55:6,7; Luke 12:8; Romans 10:9-11.

XIII. Of The Church

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

Acts 2:41; Acts 2:42; I Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22,33; Eph. 4:11; I Cor. 12:4,8:11; Acts 14:23; Acts 6:5,6; Acts 15:23; Acts 20:17-28; I Tim. 3:1-7; I Tim. 3:8-13; Matt. 28:19,20; Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23,24; I Peter 5:1-4; Acts 15:22; Jude 3,4; II Cor. 8:23,24; I Cor. 16:1; Mal. 3:10; Lev. 27-32; I Cor. 16:2; I Cor. 6:1-3; I Cor. 5:11-13.

XIV. Of Baptism And The Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is (a) the immersion in water of a believer; (b) into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; (c) to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; (d) that it is a pre-requisite to the privileges of a church relation and to the Lord's supper; (e) in which the members of the church, by the sacred use of bread and wine are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; (f) proceeded always by solemn self-examination.

Acts 8:36-39; Matt. 3:6; John 3:23; Romans 6:4,5; Matt. 3:16; Matt. 28:19; Romans 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; Acts 2:41,42; Matt 28:19,20; I Cor. 11:23-28.

XV. Of The Perseverance Of The Saints

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

John 8:31,32; Col. 1:21-23; I John 2:19; Matt. 13:19,20; Rom. 8:28; Matt. 6:30;

Psalms 121:3; Heb. 1:14; I Peter 1:5; Phil. 1:6; John 10:28, 29.

XVI. Of The Righteous And The Wicked

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

Mal. 3:18; Gen. 18:23; Rom. 6:17,18; Prov. 11:31; I Peter 4:18; Rom. 1:17; I Cor. 15:22; Acts 10:34, 35; I John 2:29; I John 3:7; Rom. 6:16; I John 5:19; Gal. 3:10; Rom. 7:6; Rom. 6:23; Prov. 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matt. 24:34-41; John 8:21; Luke 9:26; John 12:25; Matt. 7:13,14.

XVII. Of Civil Government

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

Rom. 13:17; II Sam. 23:3; Ex. 18:21,22; Acts 23:5; Matt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13,14, 17; Acts 5:29; Acts 4:19, 20; Dan. 3:17, 18; Matt. 10:28; Rev. 10:16; Phil. 2:10, 11; Psalms 72:11.

XVIII. Of The Resurrection, Personal, Visible, Imminent, Pre-Tribulational, Pre-Millennial Return of Christ, And Related Events

(a) We believe in the Bodily Resurrection.

Matt. 28:6-7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; I Cor. 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6

(b) The Ascension.

Acts 1:9-11; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19; Rev. 3:21; Heb. 8:1; Heb. 12:2

(c) The High Priesthood

Heb. 8:6; I Tim. 2:5; I John 2:1; Heb. 2:17; Heb. 5:9-10

(d) The Second Coming

John 14:3; Acts 1:11; I Thess. 4:16; Matt. 24:27; 25:13; James 5:8; Heb. 9:28

(e) The Resurrection of the Righteous Dead

I Thess. 4:13-18; I Cor. 15:42-44; I Cor. 15:52

(f) The Change of the Living Christ

I Cor. 15:51-53; I Thess. 4:13-18; Phil. 3:20-21

(g) The Pre-tribulation Rapture

I Thess. 5:9,10; Rev. 3:10; 4:1

(h) The Throne of David

Luke 1:32; Isaiah 9:6-7; Acts 2:29-30

(i) The Millennial Reign

I Cor. 15:25; Isaiah 32:1; Isaiah 11:4-5; Psalms 72:8; Rev. 20:1-4; Rev. 20:6

XIX. Apostolic Gifts

We believe that since the completion of the New Testament canon, the apostolic gifts of the early church, such as prophecies, tongues, knowledge (I Corinthians 13), miracles and healing (I Corinthians 12) have served their purpose (Ephesians 2:20); that the present emphasis of the church is not the phenomena involved in supernatural endowments but the enhancement of God-Creator-bestowed natural endowments and the manifestation of fruit (Proverbs 11:30; Galatians 5:22,23) through study (II Timothy 2:15) and the control of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

Article XX Financial Support

It shall be the policy of this Church and all Departments thereof to refrain from all means of raising money, whether for local or benevolent work, or for missionary enterprises at home or abroad, other than the free-will offering.

This does not mean that we are opposed to social functions which may be held from time to time for Christian fellowship, where an offering may be taken to defray expenses, but it does mean that we are unalterably opposed to any form of commercialization as a means of raising money for the support of the Church or Church projects.

Scriptural giving is one of the fundamentals of the faith (2 Cor. 8:7). We are commanded to bring our gifts into the storehouse (the common treasury of the Church), (Malachi 3:10; I Cor. 9:13,14) upon the first day of the week (I Cor. 16:2). Under grace we give, and do not pay the

tithe, (Heb. 7:2,4) and this was four hundred years before the law, and is confirmed in the New Testament; Jesus said concerning the tithe, “These ye ought to have done” (Matt. 23:23). We are commanded to bring the tithe into the common treasury (Lev. 27:30, Mal.3:10). In the New Testament it was the common treasury of the local Church (Acts 4:34; 35,37).