

CONSTITUTION
OF THE BLAINE BAPTIST CHURCH

With Confession of Faith and Covenant of Fellowship



BLAINE BAPTIST CHURCH

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Blaine, Minnesota

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be Blaine Baptist Church, Inc. of Blaine, Anoka County, Minnesota.

ARTICLE II. OBJECT

Its object shall be to promote the worship of God by the preaching of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ at home and abroad, and by observance of the ordinances of Baptism and Communion, trusting that as a result sinners shall be saved and believers edified.

Its object is further expressed in our Church Covenant. This Covenant shall be read frequently, usually at Communion Services.

ARTICLE III. DOCTRINE

Its doctrine shall be in conformity with those generally accepted by fundamental Baptist Churches and expressed in our Articles of Faith. Its understanding and application of doctrine shall be based on a literal interpretation of Scripture through a normal, grammatical, historical hermeneutic.

ARTICLE IV. ASSOCIATIONS

As a New Testament Church cannot "join" anything outside itself, but only associate therewith on grounds of fellowship, this Church declares itself to be in fellowship with the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, and the Minnesota Association of Regular Baptist Churches.

ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

Paragraph A. Qualifications

Anyone professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, having followed said confession with an observance of believer's baptism, giving evidence of a change of heart, and declaring himself (or herself) in accord with the principles, practices, and doctrines of this Church may become a candidate for Church membership.

Paragraph B. Order

Candidates for Church membership shall appear personally before the Pastor and Deacons who shall pass upon their qualifications and prescribe any restrictions they may deem advisable for the best interests of the Church. Having been recommended by the Deacons, the name shall then be submitted to the Church for acceptance or rejection and each candidate shall give his (or her) personal testimony before the Church. Five dissenting votes constitute refusal of admission, but any member objecting may be required to present the grounds of this objection before the Deacons at their next meeting. A two-thirds vote of the Deacons shall overrule the objection and the name shall once more be submitted to the Church

SECTION 2. CLASSIFICATION

Paragraph A. Members in Good Standing

All whose names appear on the rolls of this Church are members in good standing so long as:

1. They profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior and have a testimony of their observance of believer's baptism,

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2. They commit to regular, personal, Biblical growth, and declare himself (or herself) in accord with the principles, practices, and doctrines of this Church.
3. They faithfully respect the Pastor and officers of the Church and cooperate with them to the best of their ability in every project for the advancement of the work of the church.
4. They abide by the constitution and the by-laws of the Church and agree without mental reservation with its doctrines as presented and defined in the Articles of Faith.
5. They endeavor to live exemplary Christian lives, to abstain from all appearance of evil in speech and conduct, to live a life separate from worldly practices, and to attend the services of the Church.
6. They regularly attend the services of the Church and provide for the financial needs of the church through freewill offerings.
7. Their successful participation in numbers 1-6 listed above can be attested to by other members of the church.

Paragraph B. Voting Members

Members in good standing who are at least 18 years of age are recognized as voting members. Members who turn 18 within the course of their membership will automatically be considered as voting members upon their 18th birthday.

Paragraph C. Non-voting Members:

1. Members under the age of 18.
2. Watch Care Members as defined in Paragraph D of this SECTION
3. Members who are the subject of Church Discipline under SECTION 3. Paragraph B
4. Members whose name appear on the Broken Fellowship List as defined under SECTION 3. Paragraphs C and D

Paragraph D. Watch Care Members

Watch Care membership may be held by students wishing to retain “home Church membership”. The student may teach in Sunday Bible School, or serve in other capacities, upon approval of Pastor and Deacons.

SECTION 3. DISMISSAL OF MEMBERSHIP

Paragraph A. Church Letters

Letters of dismissal may be granted any member in good and regular standing; such a letter must be addressed to some particular Church of the same faith and order as this and sent by the clerk to the Pastor or clerk of the Church to which the member is dismissed. Such a letter shall be valid only for six months from date and the member dismissed shall remain subject to the discipline of this Church until notification has been received of the acceptance by the Church addressed. No letter shall be granted except to a designated Church of like faith and order.

Paragraph B. Discipline of Members

The matter of discipline of the membership shall be in the hands of the Pastor and Deacons, but in cases of expulsion from membership, final action must be taken by the Church. No member shall be expelled until every effort has been made, including, if physically possible, personal visits to reclaim him (or her) for Christ and the Church. If a member errs in conduct or doctrine all disciplinary action shall be conducted in accordance with Matt. 18:15-18; Titus 3:10; I Tim. 5:19.

Paragraph C. Inactive Members

Members failing to support the Church by their attendance within a period of 3 months, without a legitimate excuse, (such “excuse” to be defined by the Advisory Committee) will be placed on the “Broken Fellowship” list and so lose their right of franchise. The Broken Fellowship list will be updated at each quarterly business meeting and will be recognized by the

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voting members assembled at each quarterly meeting. Names continuing on the “Broken Fellowship” list for one year will be removed from the Church membership roll subject to paragraph B of this section.

Paragraph D. Broken Fellowship List

Those whose names appear on the “Broken Fellowship List” have no right to vote and may not be granted a letter of “good and regular standing”.

SECTION 4. RESTORATION

Persons whose names appear on the Broken Fellowship List may be restored to full membership by the Church upon recommendation of the Deacons having given clear evidence of restoration to fellowship with the Lord and His people before the Pastor and Board of Deacons. The Deacons are empowered to require the completion of a course of study in doctrine and/or practice for the strengthening of such a member before his name is restored to the list of Members in Good Standing.

ARTICLE VI. ORDINANCES

SECTION 1. BELIEVERS' BAPTISM

Those professing saving faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior shall be baptized by immersion in water in accordance with Scriptural teaching. Baptism shall be prerequisite to Church membership. Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:3-5; I Pet. 3:21; Acts 8:36; Acts 2:38-41

SECTION 2. THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper (Communion) shall be observed by the assembled on a regular basis such as once a month, or at the discretion of the Pastor and Deacons. Since it is the Lord's Table, none who are His shall be barred, but the Pastor shall frequently state the Scriptural order which places Baptism as a prerequisite to communion and shall explain the meaning of the ordinances.

ARTICLE VII. OFFICERS

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW

Paragraph A.

The officers of the Church shall, at a minimum, consist of Pastor and Deacon-Trustees. Deacons shall have been a member of this Church for a period of at least six months before being placed in nomination; their term of office shall begin on the first of February and shall be completed on January 31st at the end of the third year of service. Retiring officers shall hold office until the new term begins. In the event of a mid term resignation, the vacated position will be filled during the next election cycle.

Paragraph B.

The character of each officer shall reflect the requirements as stated in Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-13. No officer of this Church may be a member of any secret order or lodge, nor may use tobacco or alcoholic beverages in any form. No divorced person may be elected to the office of Deacon, or may be called to the Pastorate. Preferably, no officer shall hold more than one additional position at one time.

Paragraph C.

All officers are servants of the Church and subject at all times to its corporate action; it is understood, however, that due to his divine commission, the Pastor shall have extensive liberty of action and ministry and be primarily accountable to God.

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Paragraph D.

Officers will be elected at the annual election of officers.

SECTION 2. PASTOR

Paragraph A.

The Pastor must give wholehearted assent to the doctrines of this Church as presented and defined in the Articles of Faith. He must also be loyal to the principles and standards of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches.

Paragraph B.

The Pastor shall be called for an indeterminate term. Notice of the proposed choice of Pastor shall be given from the pulpit for two regular meetings preceding the voting. Voting shall be by ballot, and two-thirds of the vote cast be required for a call to be extended. The Church shall consider but one candidate for the Pastorate at one time, passing on his acceptability or lack of acceptability, before considering another. In accordance with the express teaching of Scripture, a woman shall not ever be eligible to be considered for the Pastorate of this Church.

Paragraph C.

The Pastor shall give the Church a notice in writing not to exceed sixty (60) days and not less than thirty (30) days of his intention to discontinue as Pastor. The Church may by a two-thirds vote at a regularly called meeting (see Article XIV, Sections 4 and 6) declare the pulpit vacant, provided a notice of not less than sixty (60) days from the time this action is taken, be given the Pastor occupying the pulpit to vacate the same.

Paragraph D.

The Pastor shall be Moderator of the Church and a member *ex-officio* of all boards and committees. No meeting of these boards or committees shall be legal unless the Pastor has first been notified of such meeting.

Paragraph E.

The Pastor shall be granted annually a vacation with full pay as determined yearly by the Deacons.

Paragraph F.

The Pastor may serve other pulpits without loss of pay at a mutual discretion of the Pastor and Deacon board, who shall arrange for a pulpit supply in his absence.

Paragraph G.

In case of moral or doctrinal defection, the Pastor may be dismissed by majority vote of eligible members present and voting after it has been announced at two (2) regular meetings prior to the meeting. Vote shall be by written ballot. If the Pastor is dismissed, he shall vacate the pulpit immediately but shall receive thirty (30) days pay.

SECTION 3. DEACON-TRUSTEES

Paragraph A. Election and Term Limits

The Church shall elect from its membership at its annual election of officers a board of three (3) men to serve as Deacon-trustees. Their term shall be for three (3) years and arranged to end successively. No Deacon shall be eligible for reelection who has served more than five (5) years without a year out of that office. There shall be one (1) Deacon added for each additional (50) members.

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Paragraph B. Qualifications

The qualifications for Deacon shall be such as are prescribed and set forth in the New Testament (Acts 6:3; I Timothy 3:8-13).

Paragraph C. Duties

It shall be the duties of the Deacons to:

1. Assist the pastor in the administration and ministry of the church as determined by the pastor. Such duties will include but not be limited to:
2. Prepare the elements and table for the Lord's Supper and assist in serving the same;
3. Assist the Pastor in the spiritual supervision of the Church;
4. With the Pastor, carefully examine all candidates for Church membership recommending such as they consider eligible to the Church for membership;
5. Assist in all matters of discipline of members with final action by the Church.
6. Review and assist in the establishment and maintenance of the yearly budget.
7. Meet at least quarterly with the pastor to review all financial transactions, set and discuss all items on the agenda for the quarterly business meetings, and assist the pastor in any necessary administrative or ministerial concerns, discussions, or actions.
8. It shall be the duty of the Deacons to care for the property of the Church, to hold, repair, invest and preserve the same, including hiring and supervising the janitor; to superintend any improvements that are not entrusted to a special committee, and to perform such business concern of the Church as shall from time to time be assigned to them by the Church
9. Determine the appropriateness of all individuals, organizations, and groups affiliated with the Church who wish to use the Church building or any of its rooms. They shall refuse the use of the building for any meetings or activity contrary to Church policy and belief.
10. As Trustees, the Deacons shall have authority to sell, lease, give away, or otherwise dispose of church property only if said property has a value of less than \$100. Any other disposition of church property requires action of the voting members of the church at a meeting held in accordance with the provisions of Article XII.
11. As Trustees, the Deacons shall have authority to authorize the payment of expenditures not included in the church budget and not exceeding \$300. Any proposed expenditures in excess of \$300 not included in the church budget require action of the voting members of the church at a meeting held in accordance with the provisions of Article XII.
12. As Trustees, the Deacons shall have authority to mortgage or encumber church property only after approval of such mortgage or encumbrance by the voting membership at a meeting held in accordance with the provisions of Article XII.

Paragraph D. Removals and resignations:

A deacon may resign from his office at any point deemed necessary. A written letter of resignation must be hand delivered to the pastor. A deacon may be dismissed from office by a minimum two-thirds majority vote of eligible members present and voting after it has been announced at two (2) regular meetings prior to the meeting. The vote shall be by written ballot.

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ARTICLE VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS

SECTION 1. APPOINTMENTS

Before the January election of Officers, the Pastor and Deacons shall appoint one person to each of the positions of Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Clerk. The appointment of each individual shall be announced two weeks prior to the election of officers. The name of each individual for each position will be included on the ballot for the purpose of ratification. If the appointment of any individual is not ratified by the congregation, another person shall be appointed by the pastor and deacons. That name will be announced for two weeks, and a special ballot for ratification will be presented and collected. The process will continue until each appointment is ratified by the congregation.

SECTION 2. QUALIFICATIONS:

Individuals who serve as administrative assistants shall have been a member in good standing (as outlined in Article V, Section 2, Paragraph A) for at least 6 months prior to service. They shall also agree to abide daily by the Covenant of Fellowship adopted by the church.

SECTION 3. TERM

Administrative assistants shall, at a minimum, consist of Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Clerk. The term for each appointee shall be for 12 months and run from February 1st through January 31st. Retiring assistants shall hold office until the new term begins

SECTION 4. IDENTIFICATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Paragraph A. The Treasurer

The treasurer shall record all moneys of the Church; keep a true and fair record of accounts, participate as a member of the advisory committee when called upon, and make a full report to the Church at each annual meeting and when otherwise directed by the Church. His books shall be audited annually by persons elected for the purpose by the Church. All bills must be paid by check. All moneys received must be counted by two persons from the following: Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and the Deacons. All records are open to the Pastor and Deacon board.

Paragraph B. Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall keep a record of the names and offerings of the individual givers and see that each member is supplied with offering envelopes. He shall furnish each member with an annual statement of his individual giving as soon after the first of January as possible.

He shall further be responsible for counting, recording, and banking all offerings and gifts received into the Church. A copy of the record of receipts for each offering, signed by the two persons counting it shall be kept by him as well as one provided by the Treasurer and one for the Pastor.

Paragraph C. Clerk

The Clerk shall keep a fair and complete record of the proceedings of the Church, have charge of all such records, keep a register of all members of the Church, write letters of dismissal, give notice of Church business meetings, announce the office to be filled at the annual meeting, and perform such other particular duties as may be prescribed by the Church. All records are open to the Pastor and Deacon board.

Paragraph D. Additional Appointments

In the course of the ministry of the church, there may arise the need to establish additional assistant positions. If such additions are deemed necessary, a job description shall be established and presented to the congregation for approval. Once the position is approved by a minimum, major majority of 75% of the recognized quorum, the appointment of an individual to that position will be accomplished in accordance of Article VIII: Section 1.

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ARTICLE IX. COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Paragraph A.

The Pastor and Deacons, shall constitute and form an Advisory Committee which may at also include the Treasurer, Financial Secretary and Clerk. It shall meet when needed at times decided by itself, and be presided over by the Pastor, or one of its members whom it may designate. Its duties shall be to review all major matters of Church business or policy and recommend to the Church for its action such as it deems worthy. It shall also act as the financial committee of the Church.

Paragraph B.

The Advisory Committee shall, when a vacancy occurs in the office of the Pastor, act as a pulpit committee and shall continue to function as such until a new Pastor is on the field. It shall bring before the Church suitable candidates for the Pastorate and care for the entertainment of these candidates while they are on the field. When it deems it wise, it shall present to the Church at a regularly called business meeting, the name of one of these candidates and conduct the voting upon the same. It shall continue this procedure until a Pastor is chosen. The chairman of the Deacons shall be chairman of the pulpit committee and the moderator of the Church while without a Pastor.

SECTION 2. OTHER COMMITTEES

The Church shall elect at its annual meeting, or at such time as it may desire any such committees as deemed necessary.

ARTICLE X. OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Other organizations may be appointed as the most efficient prosecution of our object shall demand, but none of these shall start without the consent of the Church Advisory Committee. These organizations shall be self-governing, but always amenable to the Church through its regularly elected officers. An Audit Committee of two adults shall be elected by the Church in April to review all the financial records of the organization and report in writing the following January.

All major officers of the auxiliary organizations must be members of the Church in good and regular standing.

ARTICLE XI. MISSIONS

SECTION 1. CHURCH PLANTING

It shall be the policy of this Church to support only such missions engaged principally in Church planting who are known to be in hearty agreement with our Confession of Faith, both in doctrine and practice, and be Baptist in name as well as policy.

SECTION 2. SOCIAL AGENCIES

It shall be the policy of this Church to support only such social agencies who are known to be in hearty agreement with our Confession of Faith, both in doctrine and practice.

SECTION 3. SCHOOLS

It shall be the policy of the Church to support only such Christian Colleges as those who are known to be in hearty agreement with our Confession of Faith, both in doctrine and practice.

ARTICLE XII. FINANCES

SECTION 1. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end on the following December 31.

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SECTION 2. FINANCIAL POLICY

No moneys shall be raised by the Church or an auxiliary organization except by free-will giving.

SECTION 3. INDEBTEDNESS

No financial obligation shall be placed upon the Church either as a mortgage, note, or outstanding bill, or in any other form unless money is in hand to meet the same, except by corporate act of the Church executed by the Deacons.

ARTICLE XIII. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

SECTION 1. PERSONNEL

The nominating committee shall consist of the Pastor, Deacons, and two adult members of the Church. The Deacons shall present a list of nominees from the Church membership at large from which the Church shall elect two members to serve on the nominating committee. These two committee members shall be elected at the October quarterly business meeting.

SECTION 2. RESPONSIBILITIES

Paragraph A.

The nominating committee shall select the candidates from the Church membership at large it believes are best qualified for each elective office.

Paragraph B.

Two weeks after the third quarterly business meeting in October opportunity shall be given to all voting members of the Church to submit names to the committee that they would like to see put in nomination. These names shall be carefully considered by the committee so that those persons best qualified and willing to serve shall be put in nomination.

Paragraph C.

The nominating committee shall prepare an election ballot with all candidates selected by it listed under their respective office.

Paragraph D.

Additional nominations may not be received from the floor at the election of officers unless the nominating committee first considers such in closed session in another room by order of a majority vote of the Church then present. If approved by the committee, they shall be accepted as nominees.

ARTICLE XIV. ANNUAL MEETINGS

SECTION 1. ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS

There shall be an election of officers on or near the date of the annual meeting of each year. Those elected shall take office as of February 1 of the same year. Reports of all officers shall be due at the January annual meeting

SECTION 2. ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERSHIP

There shall be an annual meeting of the Church on a date set near the third week of January to transact Church business. Annual reports of the officers and boards of the Church shall be presented in writing at that time including a complete financial statement of the work of the Church for the preceding year and a report from the audit committee.

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SECTION 3. QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING

Regular quarterly business meetings shall be held on a date set near the third week of April, July, and October to consider business at hand and reports shall be given as requested by the Pastor or Board of Deacons.

SECTION 4. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

Special business meetings may be called at any time, provided public notice is given of the same on the Lord's Day preceding, except that for calling or dismissing a Pastor shall be given public announcement for two (2) preceding Sundays. Routine business may be done when necessary, at any stated meeting of the Church without regard to the above requirements.

SECTION 5. ORDER OF MEETINGS

In the conducting of business (secondary to Scriptural principles) rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall act as a guideline in all cases to which they apply. In exceptions a majority vote shall establish the rule.

A suggested order of business for the annual meeting follows:

1. Roll call and recognition of quorum
2. Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting
3. Clerk's report – Update of membership rolls.
4. Treasurer's report
5. Financial Secretary's report
6. Report of Advisory Committee (if any)
7. Report of standing committees
8. Unfinished Business
9. New Business
10. Adjournment

SECTION 6. QUORUM

A quorum at any regular or special business meeting shall be 25% of the membership (voting members). An exception to this shall be in matters of added indebtedness or pertaining to the Pastor. A quorum of 50% of the voting membership shall be required for such meetings.

ARTICLE XV. DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH

In the event of dissolution, the property of this Church, real, personal and other assets shall be disposed of by majority vote of remaining voting members to one or more non-profit Baptist organizations of like faith and practice

ARTICLE XVI. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by two-thirds vote of the voting membership gathered at any annual meeting, or at a called business meeting, provided that notice of the proposed amendment shall be posted on the bulletin board for thirty (30) days and shall have been given from the pulpit for two (2) Sundays prior to the meeting at which action is desired.

Revised April 2nd, 2006

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Paragraph I - Of the Scriptures –

We believe that the Holy Bible as originally written was verbally inspired and the product of spirit controlled men, and therefore has truth without admixture of error for its matter. We believe that it is the true center of Christian union and the only infallible rule for all human conduct, creeds and opinions. II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:19-21

Paragraph II - Of the True God –

We believe that there is only one living and true God, infinite in every excellence; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three personal distinctions, - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, - one in substance and equal in every divine perfection. Exodus 20:2, 3; I Cor. 8:6; I John 5:7

We believe in the absolute Deity of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ; that He was divine as no other man can be, being very God of very God, existing from all eternity coequal with the Father and the Spirit; that He never ceased to be God for one instant and that His humiliation did not consist in laying aside His deity; that as a man He was miraculously begotten of the Holy Ghost and born of the virgin Mary. John 1:1, 2; I John 5:20; Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:26-38

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, equal with the Father and Son and of the same substance and nature; that He convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment, bears witness to the truth, is the Agent of the New Birth and He seals, empowers, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies and fills for power and service those guided to him, indwells them permanently unto the day of redemption, baptizes them into the church the body of Christ, and bestows spiritual gifts. We believe certain sign gifts of the Holy Spirit to the church such as tongues were temporary and are not to be expected today. II Cor. 13:14; John 14:16, 17; Romans 8:14-17

Paragraph III - Of the Devil, or Satan –

We believe that Satan is a distinct personality, that he is the god of this age, author of all the powers of darkness and sin, and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire. Matt. 4:1-3; II Cor. 4:4; Revelations 20:10

Paragraph IV - Of the Creation –

We believe that God created the heavens and the earth, including all life, “each after its own kind”, by direct act and not by the process of evolution. Genesis 1, 2; Colossians 1:16, 17; John 1:3

Paragraph V - Of the Fall of Man –

We believe that man, in the person of the first Adam, was created in innocence but by voluntary transgression fell into sin thus plunging the whole race into condemnation and death, so that now all mankind is born in a state of sin and shapen in iniquity and become practical sinners with the first expression of personal choice and so are without excuse before God. Gen. 3; Romans 5:10-19

Paragraph VI - Of the Atonement for Sin –

We believe that the only escape from the condemnation of sin is through the atonement wrought by Jesus Christ, when He voluntarily took upon Him a human body and nature, yet without sin, and by His suffering, death and resurrection made full satisfaction to the justice of God for the sin of man; that the blessings of this salvation are given on the ground of grace to all who believe and confess and that it is the immediate duty of all to accept these offers of mercy. John 1:1-3, 14; 3:17; Heb. 10:4-14; Acts 16:30-33

Paragraph VII - Of Salvation by Grace –

We believe that faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation from sin and that this salvation is wholly by grace; that no works, however good, make that salvation more secure. Acts 16:31; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5-7; Romans 10:9-13

CONFESSION OF FAITH

We believe that all who take Christ as their Savior are born from above and are eternally secure in Christ. John 10:28, 29; Romans 8:35-39; Philippians 1:6

Paragraph VIII - Of the Church –

We believe that the church, the Body of Christ, is a New Testament institution, established by Jesus Christ, Who is its sole Head; revealed through the Holy Apostles; empowered and perpetuated by the Holy Spirit; composed of believers in Jesus Christ as Savior, both Jew and Gentile, called out from the world and indwelt by the Holy Spirit; His “body” for service and His “bride” for glory. It began with the New Testament saints and will be consummated at the coming of Christ in the Rapture. Matt. 16:18; Acts 1:8; 2:1-13, 41-47; Romans 16:26; I Cor. 12:12-28; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 3:21; 5:23-33; I Thess. 4:13-18

We believe that the Church is manifest through the local church which is a congregation of immersed believers, associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His Laws; exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in it by His work; that its officers are bishops (pastors) and deacons; that it has the absolute right of self government directed by the Holy Spirit and it is answerable only to Christ, and that in all matters of membership, policy, government, discipline and benevolence the will of the local church is final. Matt. 18:15-17; I Cor. 1:2; 5:4, 5; 7:17; 11:16; I Tim. 3:1-15

Paragraph IX - Of the Ordinances –

We believe that there are two church ordinances: Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Baptism is the immersion of the believer in water and is properly called “Believers’ Baptism”. It sets forth in a beautiful and solemn way our faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effect in our lives of death to sin and resurrection to a new life. Baptism is a prerequisite to the privileges of church relation. The Lord’s Supper is the commemoration of our Lord’s death until He comes, and our continual fellowship with Him; should be preceded by baptism and always by careful self-examination. Acts 8:36-39; Romans 6:3-5; I Cor. 11:23-32

Paragraph X - Of the Righteous and Wicked –

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and sanctified by the Spirit of God, are truly righteous in God’s esteem; while all such who continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse; and that 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. Malachi 3:18; Romans 6:17-23; Matt. 25:34-41; Luke 6:25; John 8:21; Rev. 20:10-15; I John 5:13; John 3:36

Paragraph XI - Of the Return of Christ –

We believe in the bodily, personal, premillennial return of Jesus Christ; that He will come before the seven year tribulation period to catch away His church; coming only into the air, and that He will come with His church at the close of the tribulation to judge the living nations and to set up His Kingdom. I Thess. 4:13-18; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 19:11-21

Paragraph XII - Of the Resurrection –

We believe in the resurrection of the bodies of the dead; that believers who sleep in Jesus will be raised at the coming of Christ for His church and caught up with transformed living saints to meet the Lord in the air, and that the wicked dead will be raised at the close of the Millennial Kingdom and stand in their bodies at the Great White Throne of judgment to receive their final doom. John 5:21-30; I Thess. 4:16; Rev. 7:9-17; 20:11-15

Paragraph XIII - Separation –

We believe in the Biblical doctrine of Separation which encompasses three (3) things: (1) Separation of the local church from all affiliation and fellowship with those who deny the verities of the “Faith once and for all delivered to the Saints”. (2) The separation of the individual believer from all worldly practices which may dishonor the Savior. (3) The separation of the church and state. II Tim. 3:1-5; Rom. 12:1, 2; 14:13; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11; II Cor. 6:11-17; Col. 3:17

COVENANT OF FELLOWSHIP

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

We engage, therefore, by the aide of the Holy Spirit,

To walk together in Christian love,

To strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort,

To promote its prosperity and spirituality,

To sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines,

To contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage,

To maintain family and secret devotions,

To religiously educate our children,

To promote, participate in and support all Biblical role relationships,

To seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances,

To walk circumspectly in the world,

To be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment,

To avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger,

To abstain from drunkenness, from the use of all illegal drugs, and from the inappropriate use of all drugs or medications,

To be zealous in our efforts in the advancement of the cause of our Savior.

We further engage,

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 in speech,

To be slow to take offense, always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure reconciliation without delay.

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