

# CHURCH COVENANT

Having received Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, and having been baptized by immersion in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now solemnly and joyfully covenant together as members of the Dayton Center Church to lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him.

We promise by the aid of the Holy Spirit to forsake the ways of sin and to walk together in Christian love in the paths of righteousness. To this end we will strive together for the peace and purity of this church. We will endeavor to sustain its worship; to contribute, as faithful stewards, time, talent, and money in the measure that God has prospered us; that the responsibility for the work of the church be faithfully and effectively discharged.

We will endeavor to maintain family and private devotions; to teach the Bible to our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to be just in our dealings and exemplary in deportment; to avoid unkind words and unrighteous anger; to abstain from both morally destructive behavior and harmful addictions; to combine zeal and knowledge in an effort to advance the cause of our Savior; to make Christ first in all things.

We further pledge to give and receive admonition with meekness and love; to pray one for another; to aid each other in times of sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy; to be courteous in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation; and to encourage one another in the blessed hope of our Lord's return.

If and when we move from this place, we will as soon as possible, unite with another church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of the Word of God.

# **CONSTITUTION**

## Article I

### **NAME AND PURPOSE**

1. The corporate name of this church shall be called: THE DAYTON CENTER CHURCH.
2. The purpose or purposes for which this organization exists are as follows: The salvation of the lost and the perfecting of saints; the assembling of Christian people together for worship, fellowship and teaching the Bible; to extend its outreach to the uttermost parts of this world through the support of missionaries of like precious faith and in accordance with the 34 sacred truths of this constitution; the purchase of buildings and the holding of real estate such as shall be reasonably necessary to carry out the aforementioned purposes.

## Article II

### **SACRED TRUTHS OF HOLY SCRIPTURES WHICH ARE BELIEVED AMONG US**

#### **1. THE MYSTERY OF THE GODHEAD**

There is only one living and true God, eternally existing in three distinct and mutually related persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the same in essence, equally in every divine perfection. (Genesis 1:1; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:1-4; 10:30; 15:26; II Corinthians 13:14; Revelation 1:4-6)

#### **2. THE HOLY SCRIPTURE**

The Holy Bible, 66 books in all, was written by men divinely led to write the inspired Word of God. It is therefore the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man, and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and Christian behavior. We hold the verbal and plenary inspiration of each book of the original scriptures. (Luke 24:44; I Corinthians 2:13; II Timothy 3:15-17; II Peter 1:19-21; 3:15-16; Revelation 22:19)

### **3. THE PERSON AND WORK OF GOD THE FATHER**

God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, is Sovereign Creator and exalted above all. He is Omnipresent, Omniscient, and Omnipotent. He is Father both in the Trinity and over those who have been adopted through salvation in the redemption of His Son, Jesus Christ. God the Father works all things according to His will. He is neither author nor approver of sin, and is impartial in His Judgement of sin. Those that are His children will be chastened according to His Holy and Loving Character. (Genesis 1; 1 Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 103:19; 139:7-10; 147:5; Isaiah 26:4; Habakkuk 1:13; John 1:12; 8:38-47; Romans 8:14-15; 11:36; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:11; 3:9; 4:6; James 1:13; Hebrews 12:5-9; 1 Peter 1:17)

### **4. CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE**

The Book of Genesis gives the account of creation; that the heavens and earth and all therein—visible and invisible, animate and inanimate—were created by God who is the Source and Sustainer of all that is and ever shall be. (Genesis 1; Acts 17:24-29; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-3)

### **5. THE INCARNATION AND DIVINITY OF CHRIST**

The Lord Jesus Christ is the only begotten of the Father, the One who ever was the Son of God; but who, that He might do the will of His Father, condescended to become a man, being miraculously conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary; very God yet truly man, uniting in His Person true and proper Divinity with perfect and sinless humanity. He is the Holy One, who knew no sin, whose life was sinless,

teaching infallible, and words perfect. (Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-35, 52; John 1:14; Romans 9:5; II Corinthians 5:21; I Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 10:5)

#### **6. REDEMPTION BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST**

Our redemption has been accomplished solely by the precious blood of Christ, shed for us when He died in our stead; His blood is the only ground of justification, peace with God, and forgiveness of sins. Nothing can add to the value of that precious blood or to the merit of His finished work, which was wrought for us by Him on the cross. (Matthew 26:28; Romans 3:25; 5:1; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:20; Hebrews 9:14-32; I Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 1:7)

#### **7. CHRIST'S DEATH, RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION TO HEAVEN**

The Lord Jesus Christ, by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Himself our likeness, yet as to His nature and life was absolutely without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, was crucified by man, yet according to the council of God; was buried, was raised from the dead on the third day, and after forty days ascended up to Heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of God, sharing the Father's throne. (Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:2-9; 2:32-34; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Hebrews 2:14-18; Revelation 3:21)

#### **8. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST**

The Lord Jesus Christ is coming in person to meet His saints in the air. He will raise the dead saints and change the living saints and take them all to Heaven. After the Tribulation, He will come in power and glory to the earth with His saints and all the Holy Angels, to execute judgment, to reconcile to Himself the Heavens and earth already purchased by His blood, and to reign for 1000 years. (Matthew 24:27-42; 25:13, 46; Acts 1:11; John 14:3; I Corinthians 15; Ephesians 1:9-10; I Thessalonians 4:14-18; II Thessalonians 1:10; Hebrews 9:28; Jude 14; Revelation 19-20)

## **9. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH**

The Lord Jesus Christ is received by faith alone and the moment we so receive Him and trust in Him as our Savior we pass from damnation unto everlasting life. In Him we receive every blessing God has for His children, being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according to the measure of His acceptance, loved as He loved, and having His place and portion as linked to Him, and one with Him forever. (John 5:24; 17:20-26; Acts 13:38-39; Romans 3:24; 5:1; Ephesians 2:4-7; 2:14-18; Colossians 2:9-10; I John 4:15-17; 5:11-12)

## **10. THE FALL OF MAN**

Man was originally created in innocence in the image and likeness of God, but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state. As a consequence of man's disobedience the threatened penalty of death was then and there inflicted, so that he totally lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins and subject to the power of the devil. This total corruption and utter depravity of human nature is universal, and has been transmitted to the entire race, except the man, Christ Jesus, who is the eternal Son of God. All mankind are now sinners not by constraint but by choice, every one being born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of Divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad, being enmity against God, and is incapable of pleasing God by any human effort whatsoever. (Genesis 3:1-6; 3:24; 6:5; Romans 3:10-19; 5:1-19; 8:6-8; Ephesians 2:1-3)

## **11. THE NEW BIRTH**

Owing to man's universal depravity, and death in sin, no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless born again. The new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus by which the one dead in trespasses and sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; it is instantaneous and not a process. No degree of reformation, morality or culture, no submission, to the rules and regulations of any church or of all the churches that ever existed. Also, no baptism or other ordinance however administered can help the sinner to take even one step towards heaven; but a new nature imparted from

above is absolutely essential to salvation. The new birth is brought about not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Word, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel. The evidence of the new birth appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith, and newness of life. (Isaiah 64:6; John 1:12-13; 3; Galatians 6:15; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:23; James 1:18; I John 5:1)

## **12. ETERNAL LIFE OF THE BELIEVER**

Everyone who is born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ, is from that moment saved once and forever, HAS eternal life and shall never perish, is a child of God now and forever, is completely delivered from judgment, now as Christ Himself is. The final perseverance of Christ in saving, and holding, maintaining, and finally in presenting every redeemed one to Himself, faultless before the presence of His glory, is our soul's deep conviction; exciting within His children filial love, gratitude and obedience. Such only are real believers as endure unto the end, their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors. Those truly, who are born again have two natures, and may be victorious over the old nature by yielding to the Holy Spirit who gives instruction through study of the Word of God and prayer. (Luke 10:20; 12:32; John 1:29-30; 5:24; 6:47; 10:28-30; Romans 6; 8:12-17, 33-39; II Corinthians 5:1,6-8; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 1:6; Colossians 1:1-14; 3:1-10; II Timothy 1:12; I Peter 1:14-16; I John 5:13; 3:5-9)

## **13. THE ONE OFFERING AND PERFECT SACRIFICE**

Christ Jesus, the Holy One of God, in obedience to His Father's commandment and the will of God, yet voluntarily, offered Himself without spot to God as the foreordained Lamb, as the One offering, and perfect sacrifice for our sin and guilt. He who knew no sin bore our sins. His atonement was the voluntary substitution of Himself, in the sinner's place, the just one dying for the unjust. (John 10:17-18; I Corinthians 15:3-4; Hebrews 9:14; I Peter 1:15-20; 2:24)

#### **14. THE FREE OFFER OF SALVATION TO ALL**

The blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel. The gospel should be preached to every creature without reserve or qualification; it is the immediate duty of all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for justification and forgiveness of sins. Nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel. (Isaiah 55:1; Matthew 11:28; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 3:16; Acts 13:38-39; Colossians 1:23; Revelation 22:17)

#### **15. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CONVERSION**

No one is born again or saved by a mere act of his own will. The Holy Spirit affects the new birth through the Word and works in the soul and conscience bringing conviction of sin, repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. (John 1:13; 3:5-8; I Corinthians 6:11; I Thessalonians 1:5; James 1:18; I Peter 1:22)

#### **16. GOOD WORKS**

We are saved by God's grace alone through faith, not of works, nor by human effort or merit, nor by the deeds of the law; and Christians are not under the law given by Moses. Yet we are not "lawless" but are under the higher law of love to Christ, and are called to maintain good works, and to a life of separation from all worldly and sinful practices, as evidence of divine life and testimony to the saving grace of God. (Romans 12:1-2; II Corinthians 6:14-18; 7:1; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 3:5-8; James 4:4; I John 2:15-16)

#### **17. CHRIST OUR HIGH PRIEST AND ADVOCATE**

The Lord Jesus Christ, as High Priest, now on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; represents, maintains, and intercedes for all true believers in the presence of God. His ceaseless advocacy with the Father is for the recovery of the fallen and erring children of God – not, a restoration to relationship with God the Father for that can never be terminated, but to the joy and communion which

had been for a time lost or forfeited. (Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:14-16; 8:1, 6; I John 2:1)

#### **18. PERSONALITY AND DIETY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The Holy Spirit is a divine person – equal with the Father and the Son. He came down from Heaven on the day of Pentecost to dwell permanently within and enlightens every true Christian. He is the efficient source and power on earth of all acceptable worship and service. (John 7:38-39; 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:8; Acts 1:8; 5:3-4; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13-14; Philippians 3:3; Hebrews 9:14)

#### **19. THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is that sovereign act of God by which, all believers on the day of Pentecost were baptized by the Holy Spirit, into one body to form the church; and since the day of Pentecost every child of God has been baptized by that One Spirit into that one body upon receiving Christ by faith. It is the Christian's duty and privilege to "be filled with the Spirit" by yielding his life to the Lord. (Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; Rom 6:3-5; 8:9; I Corinthians 12:13)

#### **20. SANCTIFICATION**

Sanctification is the act of God, by which all who are born again are set apart to a holy calling. Sanctification of every child of God, by the Holy Spirit and the blood of Christ, as to **STANDING** is absolute and perfect, and is accomplished when we are born again. **AND** sanctification by the Word of God as to **STATE** or **WALK**, will be only progressive until we are changed into His likeness at His coming. (John 17:17; I Corinthians 1:30-31; II Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 10:10-14; 13:12; I Peter 1:2)

#### **21. THE CHURCH**

The Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, is composed of all true Christians from Pentecost to the second coming of Jesus Christ, irrespective of age, sex, growth, or strength of faith, baptized into one body by the Holy Spirit at conversion to form the Bride of Christ. Christ



in heaven is its head, the Holy Spirit on earth acting variously through the members of the body, who are united by the Holy Spirit to each other and to Christ. (I Corinthians 12:12-27; II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 4:3-16; Colossians 1:18, 24; 2:19)

## **22. THE LOCAL CHURCH**

A local church of God is an expression of what the whole church in any given locality should or would be if all believers carried out the Word of God. We seek to be a testimony to, or by an expression of the divine pattern. Being members one of another, Christians are responsible to keep the Spirit of unity in the bond of peace; rising above all sectarian prejudices and denominational bigotry, owning no name but that which is common to all Christians. The local church or assembly has entire and final responsibility in matters of self-government, reception, discipline, etc., free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals, parties, or organizations; and the one and only superintendent or head is Christ, through the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 18:20; Acts 2:42-47; 14:27; 20:7, 17; Romans 12:5; I Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:19-23; 4:3-10; Colossians 3:14-15; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11)

## **23. PRIESTHOOD AND SERVICE OF ALL BELIEVERS**

All true Christians are priests to God and have equal and divine right to draw near to God in the Holiest, and offer up spiritual sacrifices, apart altogether from human authorization, ordination or appointment. (Romans 6:18-22; 12:1; Galatians 6:9-10; Hebrews 10:2, 19-22; 13:15-16; I Peter 2:5; Revelation 1:6)

## **24. THE TWO CHRISTIAN ORDINANCES**

(A) **BAPTISM:** Christian baptism is the immersion in water of believers only, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Spirit. Being an ordinance of the Lord, it should be observed once by ALL Christians after they are born again. It is however a personal act, and is not set forth in Scripture as a condition of fellowship any more than it is a condition of salvation. (Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:26-39; 10:47-48; I Peter 3:21)

- (B) **THE LORD'S SUPPER:** The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the Lord, to be observed, and partaken of by Christians only. The bread and wine are symbols of Christ's body broken and blood shed for us. We are to commemorate the substitutionary death of Christ, preceded always by solemn self-examination. (Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:42-46; I Corinthians 11:17-34)

## **25. THE GIFTS**

The gifts of Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers are sufficient for the perfecting of the Church today. The Apostolic age of sign gifts, including tongues, ceased with the Apostles chosen by Christ, in person. (Romans 12:4-8; I Corinthians 12:7-11; 13:8; II Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12)

While healing is not included in the atonement, (Matthew 8:17) yet God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, for the sick and afflicted as for other needs, according to His own will and our eternal good. (II Corinthians 12:8; I Timothy 5:23; II Timothy 4:20; James 5:14)

## **26. FREE-WILL OFFERINGS**

The Lord's work should be supported by the voluntary free-will offerings of His people. Our offerings should be regular and systematic, and not spasmodic and indefinite. The measure of our gifts to be determined by the measure of our love for Christ, and except in special circumstances should not be less than the tithe, or one-tenth of our income, as required by God and practiced from the beginning. (Genesis 4:4; 8:20; 14:20; 28:22; Leviticus 27:30; Proverbs 3:9; Malachi 3:8; Matthew 23:23; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 8-9; Philippians 4:17-18)

## **27. PERSONALITY OF SATAN**

Satan was created a sinless being, and enjoyed heavenly honors; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell and drew him a host of the angels. He is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world. He is the open and declared arch enemy of God and man's great tempter, the accuser of the saints, and author of all false religion and of all moral evil. He is destined, however, to final defeat at the hands of God's Son and his appointed doom is the "Lake of Fire". (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:14-17; Job 2:2; Matthew 4:1-11; Ephesians 2:2; I Peter 5:8; Jude 6; Revelation 12:9-10; 20:2-3; 20:10)

## **28. RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD**

All the physically dead will be raised by the power of Christ; the saved to everlasting blessedness when He comes in the air for His saints, and the unsaved a thousand years later to stand before God in the great white throne judgment, hence to endure the horrors of the second death, the lake of fire. In either case the souls of the departed, during the interval between death and resurrection, are not "asleep" but fully conscious, whether in bliss or woe. (Luke 16:20-31; John 5:28-29; I Corinthians 15; II Corinthians 5:1-4; Philippians 1:21-23; Hebrews 6:2; Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15)

## **29. ETERNAL PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED**

The condemnation of sinful unbelievers who reject Christ, is final, irrevocable and eternal, without cessation of suffering, mitigation of punishment or limitation of duration, but as fully and absolutely eternal as the life of God, and of His redeemed in glory. Degrees of punishment are proportioned to the guilt of each. (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:44-48; Luke 16:23; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Hebrews 6:2; Jude 7; Revelation 20:11-15)

## **30. HUMAN SEXUALITY**

- (1) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one naturally-

born man and one naturally-born woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, 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. (Genesis 2:24; 19:5,13; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; I Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)

- (2) We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman. (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; I Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 5:22-23)

### **31. 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 be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:18; I Timothy 2:8-15; 3:4-5,12)
- (2) We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Genesis 1:26-28; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 127:3-5; Proverbs 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mark 10:6-12; I Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; Hebrews 13:4; I Peter 3:1-7)

### **32. 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 due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well-being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Psalm 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1,5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

### **33. EUTHANASIA**

We believe that the direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from the conception until natural death. Thus we believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment. (Exodus 20:13; 23:7; Matthew 5:21; Acts 17:28)

### **34. 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. (I Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32; Matthew 18:15-17)

## **Article III**

1. This organization is a body of Christian believers forming a local church, or assembly, and recognizing the Bible as the final word of authority in all matters of faith and practice.

2. It is the wish and earnest desire of this church that Article II, the “Sacred Truths”, shall always be held and taught, and that anyone who is holding and/or teaching anything contrary thereto shall not be allowed to have any place as a teacher or leader in this church, nor in any of its services, or auxiliary activities, or organizations.
3. It is the further wish and desire of this church that the thirty-four articles of “Sacred Truths” above referred to, may never be altered or changed, and the same may be added to only as new additional truths revealed by the Holy Spirit from the scripture conform to, and are consistent with, the above “Sacred Truths”.
4. Such additional truths shall be added only by the approval of a 75% majority vote of the members of voting age at a regular business meeting, providing that due notice is given of such proposed addition at a regular business meeting held three months earlier, and providing also, that such proposed addition has first been brought before at least two of the most recent meetings of the deacons of the church, and, has been approved by a majority vote the last time brought before such a meeting.

## **Article IV**

### **Officers**

1. The regular officers of this church shall be a pastor, secretary, and/or church clerk, and treasurer. The Secretary and treasurer shall be chosen by the deacons of the church the first of each year and as vacancies occur.
2. In case of the resignation of the pastor, it shall be the duty of the deacons of the church to arrange for a suitable and godly minister to perform the functions of a pastor until permanent ministry can be provided. And after much prayer and due consideration and waiting upon God, they shall invite to the church one to whom they believe

the Lord has led them, after which the deacons and voting members shall meet together, and after prayer and consideration, they may extend to the aforesaid minister a call to the pastorate of the church, provided that such a call is approved by an 85% majority vote of the members voting.

3. A pastor may be dismissed from his office upon a 30 day notice and a majority vote of the voting members at any official business meeting of the church; provided said meeting is announced at least two weeks in advance from the pulpit and/or official church bulletin.
4. The pastor of this church shall have authority to solemnize marriages, provided the formalities of civil law have been complied with. The pastor shall be the chief executive officer of the church, and shall preside at all meetings of the church and deacons. The Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall serve in his absence. He shall have general and active management of the business of the church, and shall see that the decisions of the church and deacons in their duly called meeting are carried into effect. The pastor shall have authority and be responsible for the general conduct and leadership of the church services, and shall choose substitutes to act for him in his absence. In case the pastor desires to resign he shall be expected to give the church 30 days notice of his intentions.
5. The secretary shall see that minutes are taken of all meetings of the church and keep the same in a book, and shall perform any and all other duties that may be directed by the deacons or pastor.
6. The treasurer shall have custody of the regular funds and other securities of the church, and shall keep full and accurate account of the same as prescribed by the deacons depositing all monies in the name of and in the place designated by the deacons. The treasurer shall not disburse the funds of the church, except for regularly recurring expenses or contract payments, unless ordered to do so by the

deacons. The Treasurer shall render to the church an account of all transactions when required to do so by the deacons.

## **Article V**

### **The Deacons**

1. Government of the church shall rest in the hands of the voting members of the church; and the spiritual oversight in the hands of the deacons and pastor, who shall meet the qualifications of Acts 6, I Timothy 3, Titus 1 and I Peter 5. The deacons and pastor(s) shall be members of this church and in full and practical doctrinal accord.
2. The deacons shall assist and cooperate with the pastor in the spiritual oversight and practical direction of the church, and their decisions as to matters of discipline shall be final and binding on the church, except in cases specifically covered by these by-laws.
3. The deacons shall have the authority to appoint such other officers or committees as they deem necessary and they shall have authority to remove such officers by a majority vote of the deacons.
4. They shall meet regularly each month at a time designated by themselves. A majority of the deacons shall be necessary and sufficient at all meetings to constitute a quorum for the transaction of the affairs of the church.
5. Special meetings of the deacons may be called by any of their number or the pastor providing notice of such meeting shall be given to each of the deacons at least 24 hours before such meeting; or providing notice is given by public announcement at any regular service.
6. The Board of Deacons shall consist of one Deacon for every 12 families who have been attending the church during the past year.



The size of the Deacon Board is to be determined by the size of the congregation over the past year. Each Deacon elected at the annual meeting will serve for a term of three years, at which time they will retire for at least a year before serving again. If in the event not enough candidates are available to fill the office of Deacon – the waiting period between terms will be temporarily suspended – until men are available to fill the vacancies. If the size of the congregation increases by twelve families or a portion thereof, then an additional Deacon will be elected to the Board. If the size of the congregation decreases by 12 families during a year, one of the Deacons whose term expires will not be filled at the annual meeting. A review of the attendance records, membership additions and deletions, births, deaths, and letters of transfer will be prayerfully considered during the regularly scheduled December board meeting to determine whether an increase or decrease of the board will be necessary. All candidates running for the office of Deacon will be nominated by the nominating committee and then will be voted upon by a congregational vote at the annual meeting. The amount of nominations given for positions on the Deacon Board or Committees should equal the amount of positions to be filled. No nominations may be given during a regular business meeting. The nominating committee will consist of any retiring Deacons, the Pastor, and 3 members from the congregation at large, selected by the present Deacon Board. Any vacancies occurring in the board of deacons because of death, resignation, or moral unfitness shall be filled immediately by a special meeting of the voting members and the elected deacon shall complete the term of office which was vacated. The deacons shall elect a Chairman and a Secretary at their first meeting after the annual meeting.

7. The deacons shall have authority to lease, purchase, or hold such real estate as shall be reasonably necessary to carry out the purposes of the church.

8. If any one of the deacons is absent from the meetings of the deacons for a period of four months without satisfactory explanation, he will automatically be relieved of his responsibilities as a deacon of the church.
9. Meetings of the deacons and the church shall proceed according to commonly accepted rules of parliamentary law.

## **Article VI**

### **Membership**

1. Any person professing faith in, and yielding obedience to, the Lord Jesus Christ, and walking orderly, and having been baptized by immersion in water, and upon subscribing to the church covenant is eligible for membership in the church.
2. No person shall be received for membership until his name has been approved as to doctrinal and moral fitness by a 66% vote of the deacons of the church, at a duly called meeting.
3. All members shall be received into the church publicly at a regular Sunday morning service, after a 66% vote of a majority of voting members present at a previous business meeting at the church.
4. The Deacons at any meeting duly called for scriptural reasons sufficient to them, suspend from the membership of the church any offending member, and any member so removed shall be stricken from the roster of the church and public announcement of the removal shall be made.
  - a. Church Discipline should be carried out in the church for the following Biblical Reasons:
    - i. Immorality – I Corinthians 5 makes it imperative that anyone who is guilty of sexual impurity or of keeping

company with another person's mate, regardless of sexual contact or not, is required to be disciplined. I

Thessalonians 5:22

- ii. False Doctrine – I Timothy 6:1-5; This concerns a denial of God's Word and the Doctrinal Statement of the local church.
- iii. A Disorderly Walk – 2 Thessalonians 3:6,14
- iv. Divisions Contrary to Biblical Doctrine – Romans 16:17, 18; Titus 3:10 – People who are divisive, contentious and promote divisions and discontent within a church are to be disciplined. This does not mean that legitimate controversy or difference of opinion are not welcome. But it does mean that those holding different opinions are not to become trouble makers disrupting the unity of the local church.

b. Biblical Attitudes in Discipline:

Discipline must be free of bitterness or the reproof itself is wrong. It is not ever intended to simply "throw the person out of the church". Discipline is not to be used for trivial reasons. We are taught in some instances to suffer wrong for the sake of Christ. There are indicators, however, which serve as guidelines as to how Christians should approach discipline.

- i. Spirituality, humility and meekness must be a characteristic of those who deal with a fallen Christian.  
Galatians 6:1
- ii. A firm uncompromising stand against sin is essential. Titus 1:13
- iii. There still must be love for the person who is living in sin. 2 Thessalonians 3:15 Observing the attitude of Christ toward Peter and even his treatment of Judas shows the way of love. If the facts are still verified by evidence, and the offending party refuses to repent before the church and specifically refuses to seek forgiveness, the church has no

other choice but to excommunicate the person from the membership. However, if the offending party who attends the meeting does finally repent and confesses guilt to the charge presented, and asks forgiveness from the church, forgiveness is to be granted. This, however, does not mean that the person is at liberty to resume previous service in the church. Depending on the seriousness of the case, a probationary time of as long as a year should be put in force, so that time may be given to the church to observe the genuine quality of repentance on the part of the offender. At no time during these steps, should the church be influenced by personalities, friendships, relationships, or positions held within the church. It should be done without partiality.

5. Any member giving evidence of repentance and restoration may be reinstated by the same procedure used for reception of new members.
6. Only those persons who are members of the church in good standing and above 18 years of age shall have the right to vote in business meetings of the church.
7. Anyone who is absent from the Lord's Supper for a period of six months without just cause shall be automatically suspended from active voting membership, and shall be placed on an inactive membership list. After endeavoring in a spirit of Christian love to bring back this one who has been absent from our fellowship without just cause in the ensuing 6 months, their names shall be brought forth at the next regular business meeting, with a recommendation to strike their name from the church membership roll.
8. Only those persons who are members of the church and in full and practical accord with its doctrines and practice may be permitted to hold office and teach in this church, or any of its adult auxiliary activities. Exceptions, such as, special speakers, missionaries,

temporary interim workers; shall be approved by the Board of Deacons, on an individual basis.

## **Article VII**

### **Miscellaneous**

1. Business meetings of the church shall be held quarterly at a convenient time during the months of January, April, July and October, except that whenever in the judgment of the deacons such meetings may be canceled or postponed by a 66% vote of the deacons. Only those persons who are members of this church in good standing may take part in the business meetings.
2. Special business meetings of the church may be called by the pastor, by the board of deacons, or by 5 voting members by posting notice on the bulletin board, or public announcement one week prior to the time of such meeting.
3. A Superintendent of the Sunday School shall be appointed by the deacons of the church the first of each year. The Superintendent may attend the deacons meetings, but may not vote unless he is also a duly recognized deacon.
4. It is understood that this constitution supersedes any and all previous rules not consistent therewith.
5. This constitution may be amended or altered by a vote of 66% majority of the voting members of the church at a regular business meeting, provided that due notice of such change is given at the last quarterly business meeting of the church.

## **Article VIII**

### **Dissolution Clause**

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, member, director or officer of the corporation or any private individual and no donor, member, director, officer of the corporation or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporation assets. Upon dissolution, any assets of the corporation must be distributed to the Independent Fundamental Churches of America (IFCA) or the Independent Bible Mission if it then exists and is exempt from Federal Income Tax, otherwise to one or more organizations recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as one organized exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes.

As revised May 24, 2015