

# Millersville Bible Church

## PART 1: PRE-MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**Instructions:**

- 1. Applications should be completed by *each* applicant; e.g. a husband and wife *both* need to complete their own application.
- 2. Please use a pen to complete this form.
- 3. When finished, please place completed application(s) in the church mailbox slot labeled "Office" or email to: office@MillersvilleBibleChurch.org

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name: (*Mr., Mrs., Miss*) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSONAL TESTIMONY**

1. Have you received Jesus Christ into your life as your Lord and Savior?

Yes \_\_\_\_ If "Yes," when? \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_

2. If you answered "yes" to # 1, what changes in your attitudes, desires or behavior have you noticed since you became a Christian?

3. If you were to die right now where would you go, and why do you believe you would go there?

4. Have you been baptized since your decision to receive Christ? Yes No (circle one)

If not, will you agree to be obedient to the Lord in this ordinance? Yes No (circle one)

**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:**

5. Do you presently hold membership in another Church? Yes No (circle one)

If 'yes,' please provide the following information:

Church name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Pastor's name \_\_\_\_\_

How long you attended \_\_\_\_\_ When were you last in attendance? \_\_\_\_\_

Your reason(s) for leaving \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If 'no,' please provide the following information regarding the church you *most recently* attended:

Church name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Pastor's name \_\_\_\_\_

How long you attended \_\_\_\_\_ When were you last in attendance? \_\_\_\_\_

Your reason(s) for leaving \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. How long have you been attending Millersville Bible Church and for what reason did you first attend?

7. Have you read the Membership Requirements listed in Section 2A of the MBC by-laws (see pages 11 & 12 of attached Constitution & Doctrinal Statement)?

Yes No (circle one)

8. Please describe briefly how you are seeking to fulfill the following requirements in preparation for membership. (You may extend answers to back of sheet if more room is needed.)

A. How do you demonstrate a desire to live a life separated from sinful habits of the flesh and worldliness?

B. What evidence would one find in your life that you have a burden to share the gospel with those who do not know Christ? Please be as specific as possible.

C. Have you read the Statement of Faith and the Constitution and by-laws of MBC?

Yes No (circle one)

D. Having read the Statement of Faith, the Constitution and By-Laws of MBC, are there any area(s) with which you disagree, or need further clarification?

Yes No (circle one)

If 'yes,' please indicate the area(s) in question here:

E. How are you currently demonstrating commitment to God and the other believers assembled at Millersville Bible Church in terms of time, talents, and financial support?

F. What do you consider to be the benefits and responsibilities of local church membership?

# Millersville Bible Church

58 West Frederick Street, Millersville, PA 17551

1940 New Danville Pike, Lancaster, PA 17603

[www.MillersvilleBibleChurch.org](http://www.MillersvilleBibleChurch.org)

## Constitution and Doctrinal Statement

## CONSTITUTION

### PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Millersville Bible Church of Millersville, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in order to establish rules and procedures with which to administer this independent local assembly, do ordain and establish the following Constitution and By-Laws to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

### **ARTICLE I** — NAME —

This Church is incorporated under the name of the “Millersville Bible Church” and hereinafter referred to as “this Church” in this Constitution and By-Laws.

### **ARTICLE II** — PURPOSE —

The purpose of this Church is to proclaim the whole counsel of God as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, God’s Word, which shall be the center of all preaching and study material and the only rule of faith and practice; and to encourage, promote, and effect the following:

#### SECTION 1A — EXALTATION

The obedient and holy worship of God performed corporately and individually by believers both toward God by way of form and to God by way of service.

#### SECTION 2A — EDIFICATION

1B. The edification of Christians, through pastoral calling, classes, fellowship, and formal worship, by means of careful and complete study of words or particular passages of the Bible (the gathering of believers being primarily for the purpose of equipping the saints for personal growth, the work of the ministry, and evangelism).

2B. The commitment of the members of the body of Christ to each other in mutual love, understanding, and honesty to provoke one another to more Christ-like lives and to support one another at all times.

SECTION 3A — EVANGELIZATION

1B. The evangelism of individuals, both by the church as a whole and on a personal basis, by proclaiming the Gospel of the reconciliation of man to God as accomplished in Jesus Christ.

SECTION 4A — EDUCATION

The development of a Christian philosophy of life through the education of our children, both in this Church, the family, and in schools set up for that purpose, at the primary, secondary, and advanced levels.

**ARTICLE III**  
— **AFFILIATION**—

Recognizing the importance of Jesus' prayer for unity among God's people (John 17:20-21), Millersville Bible Church seeks to participate in fulfilling the great commission with all those who hold to the central truths of historic Christian orthodoxy. Where there is disagreement concerning matters not central to orthodoxy, we seek to display a charitable attitude, while endeavoring to work most closely with those in agreement with the doctrinal position of this church as stated in Article IV.

**ARTICLE IV**  
— **STATEMENT OF FAITH**—

The following is a statement of the doctrinal beliefs of Millersville Bible Church. We recognize that any doctrinal statement is but a fallible human attempt to summarize and systematize the riches of an infallible divine revelation. Yet this in no way detracts from the importance of such a statement. The affirmations which follow carefully specify our teaching position with regard to the major doctrines of Scripture. They also provide an anchor to protect the church against theological error.

**The Bible**

The sole foundation of our faith is the Bible, composed of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments. We believe that Scripture in its entirety originated with God, and that it was given through the instrumentality of chosen individuals. Scripture thus at one and the same time is the authoritative revelation of God and reflects the backgrounds, vocabularies, and styles of the human authors. We hold that the Scriptures are infallible and inerrant in the original manuscripts. They are the unique and final authority on all matters of faith and practice, and there are no other writings similarly inspired of God. As such, the authority of Scripture cannot be overruled by religious tradition or personal experience.

(2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:20, 21; Matthew 1:22; 1 Thessalonians 2:13)

## **God**

We believe that there is only one true God, eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – each of whom possesses equally all the attributes of deity and the characteristics of personality and is worthy of precisely the same worship. It pleased God in the beginning to create out of nothing the universe and all it contains in order to make the glory of His power, wisdom, and goodness known. By His sovereign power He continues to sustain His creation. Through His providence He is operating throughout history to fulfill His redemptive purposes.

(Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 8:5-6; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 5:22-23; Genesis 1:1; Romans 1:20; Hebrews 11:3; Colossians 1:16, 17; Ephesians 1:7-12)

## **Jesus Christ**

God has fully and finally revealed himself in His Son, Jesus Christ, who is the second person of the Trinity. Through His miraculous conception and virgin birth He was united forever with a true human nature and is thus both fully God and fully man. He lived a sinless life of perfect obedience to the Father and voluntarily offered himself as a sacrifice for the sins of all. Through his death on the cross, Jesus fully paid the penalty for mankind's sin, thus accomplishing salvation for all who place faith in Him alone. After His bodily resurrection from the dead, Jesus ascended into heaven as the exalted Lord of all, taking his seat at the Father's right hand where he intercedes for His own as the advocate and only mediator between God and man. The Lord Jesus Christ will return to remove His Church from the earth prior to the period of God's judgment known as "the great tribulation." Following this tribulation, He will physically return to the earth to judge the wicked, reward the righteous, and establish and rule over His millennial kingdom.

(Hebrews 1:1-2; Matthew 1:18-21; John 1:1,14; Heb. 2:14,15; Philippians 2:6-8; Colossians 2:9; 1 Peter 2:22; Hebrews 4:14; John 10:17-18; Hebrews 9:14, 24-28; Romans 3:21-26; 4:25; 1 John 2:2; 2 Cor. 5:21; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3; 7:25-26; 1 John 2:1; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Acts 1:9-11; John 14:1-3; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; John 5:22-23; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 11:15; Psalm 72:8-14; Isaiah 11:2-9; Zechariah 14:6-21; 11:2-9; Zechariah 14:6-21; Revelation 20:1-9)

## **The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, was sent by the Father and Son to convict the world of sin and enable people to repent and believe in Christ. At the moment of faith, the Holy Spirit permanently indwells each believer, giving him new life, uniting him with the body of Christ, and giving him special abilities with which he can serve the Church. We believe the miraculous gifts were authenticating signs given to the early church to confirm the teaching of the apostles. They were foundational gifts and are not needed today because we have the

complete revelation of God in the Scriptures. In His ongoing ministry in the life of the believer, the Holy Spirit provides inner assurance that he is God's child, power to overcome temptation and sin, and growth in Christ-like character. In everything, the Holy Spirit's primary mission is to glorify Jesus Christ through the worship and witness of the Church.

(Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3,4; John 15:26; John 16:8; Titus 3:5-7; Ephesians 1:13, 14; 1 Corinthians 6:19,20; Romans 8:9; John 6:63; ; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 1 Corinthians 12:11; 1 Peter 4:10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:3,4; Ephesians 2:19,20; Romans 8:15,16; Ephesians 3:14-16; Ephesians 5:18-21; Galatians 5:16-23; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; John 16:14; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Acts 1:8; Revelation 22:17)

## **Salvation**

A central theme of Scripture is God's provision of salvation for sinful human beings. Though originally created in perfect fellowship with God, the first man yielded to the temptation of Satan and disobeyed the command of God, bringing upon himself and all subsequent humanity God's judgment of both physical and spiritual death. All human beings, therefore, enter the world under condemnation and with a disposition which rejects God's authority over their lives, rendering them unable to please God. Because God is holy and just He must punish all sin, yet in His love and grace He chose to allow His Son Jesus Christ to bear the full penalty man's sin deserved. Whoever repents of sin and places faith in Jesus Christ alone as Savior and Lord receives forgiveness of sin and is declared righteous in God's sight. The believer in Christ also receives spiritual life, creating in him the desire and ability to please God. Although good works in no way earn salvation, they are the inevitable result of genuine saving faith. Salvation is based completely on the grace of God, and nothing can change the believer's status as a fully justified member of God's family and kingdom.

(Luke 24:44-47; Acts 10:43; Hebrew 1:1-3; Genesis 1:27; 2:17-3:6; Romans 5:12; 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 3:10-19; 8:5-8; Deuteronomy 32:4; Exodus 34:7; Proverbs 11:21; Romans 5:8; 8:32; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:21-26; 10:9-10; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 16:31; John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:5; Philippians 2:12-13; Ephesians 2:8-10; James 2:14-24; John 6:39-40; 10:27-29; Jude 24; Romans 8:38-39; Galatians 4:4-7; Colossians 1:13-14)

## **The Church**

In the present age, God's primary work is to call out from among all humanity a people to be His very own, who through common faith in Jesus Christ are united in one spiritual body, the Church. Jesus Christ, through His death and resurrection, has been exalted as Head of the Church. It is God's will for each believer to be an active and accountable part of a local expression of Christ's body, which is an assembly of those who have made public profession of faith in Christ through baptism and who unite for the purpose of worship, prayer, ministry of the Word, fellowship, service, observance of the Lord's supper, and discipline. God has entrusted the oversight of the local church to scripturally qualified men called elders, who serve as accountable to the chief shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, and who by their example, instruction,

exhortation, correction, and discipline shepherd the assembly of believers. Functioning under the elders are scripturally qualified deacons who serve the assembly by caring primarily for its physical and material needs. The mission of the Church in the world is to make disciples by winning, building, equipping, and mobilizing people to advance Christ's kingdom and exalt his name.

(Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:39; Titus 2:13,14; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Acts 15:14-18; Ephesians 2:11-22; 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:18-23; 5:23; Acts 20:17,28; 1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Thess. 5:12,13; Hebrews 13:17; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8-13; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

### **Human Destiny**

According to Scripture all people are sinners and therefore destined to die. Upon death, the soul of the believer immediately enters the presence of God and the soul of the unbeliever enters a state of separation from God. For all people there will be a resurrection of the body and a final judgment. For unbelievers, judgment will result in eternal, conscious punishment. Believers will be rewarded for works done in this life and experience eternal joy and communion with God.

(Romans 3:23; 5:12; 6:23; Hebrews 9:27; Philippians 1:21-23; 2 Corinthians 5:8; John 3:36; Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:1-15; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Matthew 25:41-46; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10)

### **Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality**

We believe that all persons have been created as male or female and that these two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27). We recognize that male and female are biologically different but equal in personal dignity as created in the image of God.

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning sanctioned by God: the uniting of one man and one woman in an exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 2:18-25).

We recognize that the relationship and institution of monogamous marriage has been the central, social building block for the common good of human society from the time God instituted it. When a culture fails to honor God’s plan for marriage countless individuals, particularly women, children, and the underprivileged, suffer significant emotional and material hardships.

We affirm the words of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the only preeminent Head of this Church, that, “at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’” (Matthew 19:4-5).

We believe that God intended marriage to be a complimentary relationship of companionship between one man and one woman based on a covenant of love, mutual care, responsibility and permanence (Malachi 2:13-16). Marriage is a person-to-person fusion of male and female, celebrated by physical union in the consummation of a God-formed bond (Genesis 2:24-25; Matthew 19:4-5; John 4:16-18). Marriage is meant to be a model of the unique relationship between Jesus Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:21-33).

We believe the union of marriage is intended by God to be a lifelong commitment between one man and one woman (Genesis 1:27-28, Genesis 2:18, Matthew 19:4-9, Mark 10:5-9, Ephesians 5:31-33). Yet recognizing that humanity does not always live up to God's intention, we accept the allowance for divorce and remarriage on grounds of marital unfaithfulness as taught by our Lord (Matthew 19:9).

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). Sexual activity outside of the marriage relationship, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or otherwise, is immoral and therefore sin (Genesis 2:24-25; Matthew 19:4-6, 9; Romans 1:18-31; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 15-20; 1 Timothy 1:8-11; Jude 7).

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, sexual intercourse between people not married to each other, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, polyamory, polygamy and use of images or media for sexual stimulation) is sinful according to God's word (Matthew 5:27-28; 15:18-20; Romans 1:21-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

We believe that homosexual orientation (like all other deviant sexual behaviors) is a result of the fall of humanity into a sinful condition. Biological, circumstantial or familial roots of homosexuality should deepen our compassion for those who are struggling to be free from sexual temptation, but they do not sanction or excuse homosexual behavior (Romans 1:21-27).

We believe there is hope for a person struggling with homosexual temptation just as there is for a person struggling with heterosexual temptation. All those who freely receive the gift of redemption in Jesus Christ our Savior find power to be free from the control of sin through growth in their new identity in Christ and in the fellowship of His Church.

We believe that God created the human race male and female and that efforts to adopt a gender other than one's biological sex (which is genetically determined and identified at birth by a person's anatomy) is a violation of God's will and purpose and therefore sin (Genesis 1:27). Individuals who struggle with gender identity should receive compassionate care and counsel to help them understand God's will for their lives.

We believe that to preserve the function and integrity of Millersville Bible Church as the local body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Millersville Bible Church in any capacity, all

members of Millersville Bible Church and all who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this statement on marriage, gender, and sexuality (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

We hold these beliefs in humble recognition that God offers redemption and restoration to all who seek His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ by confessing and forsaking their sin (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.)

We hold these beliefs with a commitment to treat all people with compassion and kindness; respect and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). We renounce hateful behavior or attitudes toward individuals who disagree with the doctrines of Millersville Bible Church.

We do not believe that moral disagreements are equivalent to disrespect or hate; in contrast, we believe it is possible to disagree with a person's lifestyle without rejecting his or her person.

#### **ARTICLE V — GOVERNMENT —**

This Church recognizes Jesus Christ, the One revealed in the infallible written Word of God, as the only preeminent Head of His Church. It accepts no civil authority in ecclesiastical matters. The elders, hereinafter referred to as "the Board" shall be recognized by the congregation as the ruling body in matters pertaining to the affairs of this Church.

In the event that this Church does not have men who meet the requirements as stated in the By-Laws to form a Board, the pastor shall select men to function in an advisory capacity.

#### **ARTICLE VI — MEMBERSHIP —**

Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as his/her own personal Savior, giving evidence of regeneration, is in agreement with the Statement of Faith, Constitution, and By-Laws of this Church and having been baptized as a believer shall be eligible for membership.

#### **ARTICLE VII — DISSOLUTION —**

In the event of the dissolution of the corporation, all of its debts shall be fully satisfied. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among the members, but shall be irrevocably dispensed by the Board to other non-profit religious organizations which are in agreement with the letter and the spirit of the constitutional statement of faith, and in conformity with the requirements of the United States Internal Revenue code of 1954 (Section 501 c-3) or any subsequent amendments thereto.

**ARTICLE VII**  
**— AMENDMENTS —**

The Constitution of this Church may be amended in the following manner:

**SECTION 1A — BOARD APPROVAL**

The proposed amendment shall be submitted to the Board. At least thirty (30) days shall elapse between the proposal of an amendment and the vote on the amendment by the Board. The quorum of the Board shall be fifty-one percent (51%) and one hundred percent (100%) of the Board must vote in favor of the proposed amendment before it shall be submitted to the Covenant Members of the congregation for their vote of approval or disapproval.

**SECTION 2A — CONGREGATIONAL APPROVAL**

Upon approval of the proposed amendment by the Board, a written copy of the amendment, along with a ballot, shall be delivered, either in person or through the mail, to every covenant member of the congregation in good standing. Members from the age of eighteen (18) and upward shall be permitted to cast a ballot. Passage of the amendment shall require a ninety percent (90%) majority voting in favor of the amendment.

**BY-LAWS**

**ARTICLE I**  
**— THE CONGREGATION —**

**SECTION 1A — MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATION**

- 1B. **COVENANT MEMBER** — One who has appeared before the Board for examination and approved by the Board for membership.
- 2B. **ASSOCIATE MEMBER** — One who resides at too great a distance from their home church but who wishes to retain their membership there. They shall enjoy all the privileges of fellowship, worship, and service under the supervision of the pastor and spiritual leaders but shall not hold office or vote. They must follow the regular procedure as a Covenant Member to become an Associate Member.
- 3B. No inactive membership shall be established. Every six (6) months the Board shall review the membership roll. If a covenant member is not regularly present in the church services for a period of six (6) months and if after personal consultation with these members they indicate no desire to fulfill their obligations as members, they shall be notified that they have been removed from the Church membership roll. Any who desire reinstatement will be required to follow the usual procedure for obtaining membership.

## SECTION 2A — MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

The requirements to become a member are as follows:

- 1B. Submit an application and written testimony of one's personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior to the Board or the senior pastor.
- 2B. Desire to live a life separated from sinful habits of the flesh and worldliness. (2 Corinthians 7:1; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 3:1; James 3:13-16; 1 John 2:15-17; Romans 12:1-2)
- 3B. Evidence a burden for those without Jesus Christ as Savior and desire to be used to share the Gospel. (Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 9:1-3; Romans 10:1)
- 4B. Be in agreement with the Statement of Faith and the Constitution and By-Laws of this Church.
- 5B. Be baptized as a believer. The mode practiced by this church shall be immersion. (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:38-41; Acts 16:31-33; Romans 6:1-4)
- 6B. Demonstrate commitment to each other and to God by giving one's time, talents and financial support to the ministry of the Church. (1 Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-12; Galatians 6:6-10)
- 7B. Appear before the Board or representatives thereof to be examined in the above areas and upon unanimous approval of the Board to be received into membership.

## SECTION 3A — LETTERS OF TRANSFER

- 1B. No candidate for membership shall be received on the basis of a letter of transfer of membership from another church. The candidate in question must follow the regular procedure to become a member.
- 2B. Letters of transfer shall be recognized only as a release of membership from a church. A letter of transfer may be granted by this Church at the request of a member and upon the approval of the Board.

## SECTION 4A — CHURCH COVENANT (MEMBERSHIP DUTIES)

Having been born-again by the Word of God and the Spirit of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ according to the provisions of the abounding grace of God, and being justified on the grounds of the shed blood of Jesus Christ, and acknowledging our willingness to confess Him as our Savior before men as demonstrated in our baptism, we do now in the presence of God, the

Holy Angels, and this Assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into Covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this local assembly, within the body of Christ, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, disciplines and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully, scripturally and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of this Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations by means of our missionaries and fundamental faith missions.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotion; to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and to seek the salvation of our kindred, and our acquaintances, our enemies, and all children and adults within the area of this assembly.

Through the provision that God has made for victorious Christian living it shall be our desire to abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul, and to live a life of separation from sinful and worldly practices, with a desire to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Through the love of Christ we will put away from us all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, and be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us.

We recognize that one of the outstanding evidences of Christianity is love, according to the words of our blessed Lord when He said: "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another."

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love, remember each other in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay. And this we do depending entirely upon the aid of our Heavenly Father, who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son for our salvation, and of Jesus Christ our Savior, who hath redeemed us with His own precious blood, and the indwelling Holy Spirit, our Comforter, Teacher, and Guide.

#### SECTION 5A — MEMBERSHIP TERMINATION

- 1B. Membership shall terminate in the event of any of the following: (1) Death of the members, (2) Letter of transfer according to Section 3A-2B of this Article, (3) Board action according to Section 1A-3B of this Article, (4) Church discipline according to Section 6A of this Article and/or, (5) Becoming a member of another church.
- 2B. All privileges of membership, including any right, title and/or interest in or to the church corporation or its property, shall immediately cease on the termination of his/her membership.

**SECTION 6A — CHURCH DISCIPLINE**

- 1B. Since it is vital to the testimony of this Church and the glory of our Lord that the purity of the church be preserved and its peace protected, the discipline of this Church shall be entrusted to the Pastor and the Board. It shall be their duty to seek diligently to reclaim any member known to be living in disregard of his biblical and covenant obligations.
- 2B. The object of discipline is to: (1) demonstrate obedience to the Word of God, (2) restore the erring brother (Galatians 6:1), and (3) restrain sin (1 Corinthians 11: 31,32).
- 3B. The basic reasons for discipline are: (1) immorality (1 Corinthians 5) (including homosexual behavior (Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9,10), (2) false doctrine (1 Timothy 6:1-5), (3) disorderly conduct (2 Thessalonians 3:7,14), and (4) an unrepentant attitude or unresolved conflict between members (Matthew 18:17).
- 4B. The accused shall be given the opportunity to appear before the Pastor and the Board in his own defense to meet the charges preferred against him/her by the Pastor, the Board, or any other person. No accusation shall be brought against any covenant member except upon the written testimony of two (2) or three (3) witnesses (Matthew 18:16, 2 Corinthians 13:1, 1 Timothy 5:19). Any disciplinary action that is deemed necessary shall be in the spirit of love and meekness. If the accused is found guilty by the Board, he/she shall remain under discipline until there is a demonstration of repentance, godly behavior and submission to those in spiritual leadership.
- 5B. Disciplinary action can be any one or more of the following: (1) a private admonishment, (2) personal separation, (3) public censure and (4) excommunication.

**ARTICLE II**  
**— THE SENIOR PASTOR —**

**SECTION 1A — DEFINITION**

The senior pastor functions as a member of the board of elders, but has specific responsibilities and areas of leadership consistent with his gifts (1 Timothy 5:17). In addition to his pastoring role as an elder, the senior pastor is primarily to be a preacher and teacher of the Word of God — the Bible. He is to teach and exhort by precept and example. His goal is to help believers mature through insightful and accurate presentation and proclamation of the Word, equipping them to be the true “ministers” in the body. As a proclaimer of God’s truth, he must stress both the understanding and application of Scripture.

As shepherds of the church, it is one of the roles of the elders to appoint other leaders with complementary gifts to undertake areas and aspects of the ministry that cannot be filled by the senior pastor.

## SECTION 2A — QUALIFICATIONS

The senior pastor is to be a man of God. He is to demonstrate a life of godliness and faithfulness as characterized in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-4 and out of conviction uphold the Statement of Faith, Constitution and By-Laws of this Church.

## SECTION 3A — PULPIT COMMITTEES

The Board shall act as a pulpit committee or appoint a pulpit committee to investigate possible candidates.

The responsibilities of the pulpit committee are as follows:

- 1B. Prepare a list of possible candidates. Send an identical church resume to each one including the Constitution, By-Laws, brief history of this Church, current number of members, families, and attendance; the date the pulpit became vacant and other information considered pertinent. The possible candidate is required to respond with a biographical and professional resume, a personal theological statement, and a list of at least six (6) references. Each possible candidate is to be informed of the committee's ultimate decision regarding his candidacy.
- 2B. The references shall be contacted and requested to provide information regarding the individual's preaching, pastoral and administrative abilities and basic Christian character. The information will be used to construct a list of potential candidates. Only one (1) candidate shall be contacted and considered at a time.
- 3B. The committee shall either invite the potential candidate to the church to preach as a pulpit supply speaker and be interviewed in private, or go to his church to hear him preach and be interviewed.
- 4B. If the vote is affirmative the candidate shall be formally notified within five (5) days by letter including exact salary, housing provisions, automobile allowance, hospitalization, moving allotment, retirement benefits, vacations, other benefits and the percentage of the votes.
- 5B. If the vote is negative the candidate shall be formally notified within five (5) days by letter. The pulpit committee should repeat the procedure in Section 3A and may elect to start at subparagraph 3B.

## SECTION 5A — TERMINATION

- 1B. The senior pastor of this Church shall serve until his services are terminated by resignation or by request of the covenant membership. The senior pastor shall give a minimum of thirty (30) days notice before termination of his services.

- 2B. The Board by a majority vote of those present may grant a severance pay not to exceed the amount of a thirty (30) day pay period.
- 3B. The Board must remind the congregation that in order to avoid malicious and provocative accusations against the senior pastor, the accuser must realize that he/she stands to be judged with the same severity with which he/she judges, if the accusation proves false (Matthew 7:1,2).
- 4B. The same procedure as described in Article I, Section 5A shall be used to “win” the brother, even if he is a senior pastor. The exception being if the Board votes to bring the case before the Church.
- 5B. In the case of an admitted act of immorality or heresy, the Board may act without congregational authority to demand the resignation of the senior pastor if a resignation has not been received by the Board within a reasonable time; and in such case, the senior pastor shall not fill the pulpit from the time such evidence is received by the Board until the matter is resolved.
- 6B. In circumstances having nothing to do with immorality or heresy, such as extended illness or incompetence in the performance of pastoral or ministerial duties, the senior pastor should be advised of the problem and specific efforts should be made to remedy the situation.
- 7B. In order for members to remove the senior pastor from office, the Board must call a special congregational meeting giving a two (2) week notice. The Board shall state the charges during the congregational meeting. A quorum for this meeting shall consist of a sixty percent (60%) of the voting covenant members. Votes are to be written, secret ballots. A seventy-five percent (75%) majority vote shall be required on the first ballot in order to dismiss the senior pastor. If the congregation votes not to dismiss the senior pastor and finds no wrong, the matter will be dropped, unless the Board believes that disciplinary action should be taken against the accusers.

**ARTICLE III**  
**— THE BOARD —**

**SECTION 1A — TRUSTEES**

The Board of Elders shall be recognized by the congregation as the ruling body of this Church. They shall also serve in the capacity of trustees.

## SECTION 2A — QUALIFICATIONS

Candidates for the Board must be men of twenty-one (21) years of age or over, who have been saved for at least three (3) years, and have been a Covenant Member of this Church for at least two (2) years. He must meet the qualifications of this office as outlined in the Scriptures, especially in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9.

## SECTION 3A — OVERSIGHT

The Board shall be responsible to maintain the spiritual welfare of this Church; to supervise the affairs and activities of the Church; to hold title to property in its role as corporate board of trustees, and to maintain and supervise all properties of this Church; and to receive reports from and review the activities of all organizations of this Church. Certain powers and responsibilities included as duties of the Board may be delegated to other organizations or to individuals within this Church, but such powers and responsibilities shall always be subject to the discretion and review of the Board.

## SECTION 4A — COMMITTEES

The Board may establish standing and special committees and determine their composition, functions, and term of service.

## SECTION 5A — REGULAR MEETINGS

The Board shall hold regular meetings monthly, with exceptions as the Board may approve. Special meetings may be called at any time by the senior pastor, or upon request of at least three (3) Board Members. A quorum shall consist of fifty-one percent (51%) of the Board. Any decisions of the Board must be predicated upon a seventy-five percent (75%) vote of those present and voting unless otherwise stipulated in the Constitution and By-Laws of this Church.

## SECTION 6A — COMMUNICATIONS

At least one (1) week before the Board convenes, the senior pastor shall announce the meeting and certain items to be discussed that may require congregational suggestions and comments by the members which would assist the Board in making decisions. The senior pastor and the Board shall communicate decisions that are apropos to the congregation for prayer and information at least one (1) week following a meeting.

## SECTION 7A — OFFICERS

The officers of the Board/Trustees are as follows:

- 1B. CHAIRMAN/PRESIDENT — The senior pastor by virtue of his office, shall be recognized as the Chairman of the Board and President of the Trustees. The senior pastor is an officer having full rights of voting, proposal and discussion. The senior pastor may temporarily waive his chair to another Board Member if he desires.
- 2B. VICE-CHAIRMAN/VICE-PRESIDENT — The Board shall elect, annually from among its own members a Vice-Chairman who shall by virtue of his office be also the Vice-President of the Trustees. He shall moderate all meetings in the absence of the senior pastor.
- 3B. SECRETARY — The Board shall elect, annually, from among its members a Secretary who shall by virtue of his office be also the Secretary of the Trustees and shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of all meetings.
- 4B. TREASURER — The Board shall elect, annually, from among its members a Treasurer who shall by virtue of his office be also the Treasurer of the Trustees and shall keep accurate records of the finances of this Church and disburse such funds as the Board shall authorize. If necessary, a Financial Secretary may be appointed by the Board to assist the Treasurer.

#### SECTION 8A — SELECTION & TERMS

- 1B. There shall be three (3) classes of Board Members, with an equal number in each class, providing there are qualified men, one class only of which shall expire each year. Terms shall be for three (3) years, except when it is necessary to select some for shorter terms in order to equalize the numbers in the classes or to fill vacancies. The minimum number on the Board serving at any one time shall be three (3), providing there are qualified men.
- 2B. No member shall serve on the Board for consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating for more than six (6) years. A member having served for consecutive terms aggregating six (6) years shall be ineligible to serve on the Board until at least one (1) year has elapsed from the expiration of his service of the last term for which he served providing there are qualified men to fill his vacancy.
- 3B. The regular expiration of office shall occur on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December of each year, and the successors shall be chosen at the December meeting of the Board.
- 4B. Whenever a vacancy occurs on the Board, for whatever reason, the following procedure shall govern the choice of the successor or successors:
  - 1C. A nominating committee of the Board shall consider men who meet the qualifications of Article III, Section 2A. It shall present a list of potential

candidates to the Board for ratification. Each potential candidate must receive a unanimous vote of the actual Board Members present in order to become an actual candidate for the office. The candidate will then be approached to determine his desire to become a Board Member.

- 2C. Before the final choice is determined, there shall be a period of at least one (1) month during which time the names of the actual candidates will be made known to the congregation for prayer.
- 3C. The final choice of the men whom are to serve as Board Members shall be by lot or by vote. Actual candidates replacing members whose terms normally expire, shall be determined at the November meeting of the Board.

#### SECTION 9A — FINANCIAL INDEBTEDNESS

The Board shall not incur itself or the congregation into a loan or purchase indebtedness in excess of an amount equivalent to two (2) months annual average income of the church's general fund without approval of the congregation.

#### SECTION 10A — EXTRA MEMBERS

The Board may permit pastoral staff to attend its meetings to express their opinions. However, they shall not have the authority to cast a vote, move, or second a motion. Interns may attend as observers only.

### **ARTICLE IV — CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS —**

#### SECTION 1A — FREQUENCY

An Annual Meeting of the congregation shall convene during the first quarter of each year at a date determined by the Board. Special meetings of the congregation may be held at any time upon call of the pastor and the Board. The congregation may request a meeting in writing to the Board by twenty-five percent (25%) of the Covenant Members. All meetings and their purpose must be announced at all regularly scheduled services on two (2) consecutive Sundays preceding the date of the meeting.

#### SECTION 2A — QUALIFICATIONS

A quorum of all congregational meetings shall be fifty-one percent (51%) of the Covenant Members in good standing. Covenant members from the age of eighteen (18) years of age and

upward shall be permitted to vote. Passage of any decisions must be predicated upon a seventy-five percent (75%) vote of those present and voting unless otherwise stipulated in the Constitution and By-Laws of this Church.

#### SECTION 3A — CHAIRMAN

The senior pastor shall preside at all congregational meetings. In the event of the absence of the senior pastor, the Chairman of these meetings shall be the Vice-Chairman.

#### SECTION 4A — AGENDA

The agenda of all meetings shall be prepared at least two (2) weeks in advance by the Board and only what is on the agenda shall be discussed and voted on at these meetings. The agenda of the Annual Meeting should include the presentation of annual reports, evaluation, and such other matters are deemed necessary.

### **ARTICLE V — FINANCES —**

#### SECTION 1A — METHODS

The program of this Church shall be supported primarily by the freewill offerings of those who are led by the Holy Spirit to contribute to its support. At no time may this Church be permitted to use any unscriptural method of raising funds. All methods must be approved by the Board as being in harmony with Biblical principles.

#### SECTION 2A — FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of this church shall be the same as the Calendar Year.

#### SECTION 3A — BUDGET

An annual budget shall be prepared and approved by the Board during the last quarter of the fiscal year for the next fiscal year. This Church shall operate under a unified budget system.

#### SECTION 4A — AUDIT

An audit committee shall be appointed by the pastor and the Board who will present the final audit at the Annual Meeting.

**ARTICLE VI**  
**— MISSIONS —**

**SECTION 1A — MISSIONS COMMITTEE**

The Board may appoint a Missionary Committee which would be responsible to communicate with all missions and missionaries in which this Church has an interest, and to investigate and report to the Board on any matters requiring action.

**SECTION 2A — COMMITMENTS**

All new commitments shall be approved by the Board. A stated missionary policy shall be adopted by the Board and this Church, and published, with revisions, from time to time. Every missionary and missionary organization supported by this church shall be approved by the Board of Elders in a manner consistent with the principles set forth in the Affiliation statement found in Article II of the Constitution.

**ARTICLE VII**  
**— ORDINATION —**

**SECTION 1A — STATEMENT**

When, in the judgment of the Board, a man who is a Covenant Member of this Church, or in very special cases a non-member, is called to the Christian ministry, it shall be within the power of the Board to call and conduct a Council of Ordination.

**SECTION 2A — COUNCIL**

The Council of Ordination may consist of the Board and appointed Covenant Members of this Church; and/or be composed of ordained ministers approved by the senior pastor and the Board as representative of this Church. The council shall thoroughly examine all applicants for ordination as to their call to the Christian ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation, character, doctrinal belief, and demonstrated ability in Christian service.

**SECTION 3A — PUBLIC SERVICE**

Upon completion of the examination of the applicant, a unanimous vote shall be required by the council to recommend his ordination to this Church. When so recommended, a public ordination service shall be arranged by the senior pastor of this Church in consultation with the council.

**SECTION 4A — MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council of Ordination and of the public service shall be incorporated into the records of the Board meetings and a Certificate of Ordination shall be presented to the newly ordained minister.

**SECTION 5A — RESTRICTIONS**

The following shall not be ordained to the ministry by this Church:

- 1B. One who has not served twelve (12) months as a pastor, assistant pastor, or in a definite Christian work in such a manner to convey reasonable evidence of God's call to the ministry.
- 2B. One who cannot meet the requirements of Article II, Section 2A of these By-Laws.
- 3B. No woman shall ever be ordained by this Church.

**SECTION 6A — DISCIPLINE**

The Board shall have the power to discipline, even to the revoking of the ordination credentials of any minister ordained under this Constitution and By-Laws if said minister is found guilty of doctrinal or moral defection or brings disrepute upon his Christian life and ministry, after an impartial trial conducted by the Board whose decision cannot be overruled by the congregation of this Church.

**SECTION 7A — APPEAL**

The minister under discipline shall have the privilege of appealing his case within six (6) months if he can establish his innocence to the senior pastor and Board.

**ARTICLE VIII  
— AMENDMENTS—**

The By-Laws of this Church may be amended in the same manner as presented in Article VIII of the Constitution except that the passage of the amendment shall require a seventy-five percent (75%) majority voting in favor of the Amendment.