This handbook contains the Bethel Baptist Church Constitution, Bylaws, and the Baptist Faith and Message

member handbook



TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE ………………………………………………………………………………….. 6

1. NAME …………………………………………………………………………………….. 6
2. MISSION …………………………………………………………………………........…. 6
3. STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEFS …………………………………………………...…6
4. CORE VALUES …………………………………………………………………………...6
   1. Biblically Faithful ……………………………………………………………………...6
   2. Passionate About Worship ……………………………………………………………..6
   3. Spiritually Growing ……………………………………………………………………7
   4. Discipling the Next Generation ………………………………………………………..7
   5. Committed to the Uncommitted ……………………………………………………….7
   6. Connected through Ministry Teams and Prayer-Bible Study Teams ………………….7
5. CHURCH COVENANT …………………………………………………………………...8
6. POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS ………………………………………………………...8
7. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP ………………………………………………………………...9
   1. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP General …………………………………………………...9
   2. MEMBERSHIP TYPES ……………………………………………………………….9
      1. Covenant Membership Requirements ………………………………………...10
      2. Watchcare Membership Requirements ……………………………………….11
      3. Membership Records System ………………………………………………...11
8. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP ……………………………………………………11
9. DISCIPLINE ……………………………………………………………………………...11
10. LICENSE TO PASTORIAL MINISTRY ………………………………………………..12
11. ORDINATION TO PASTORIAL MINISTRY …………………………………………..12
12. BYLAWS …………………………………………………………………………………12
13. CONSTITUTION CHANGE PROCESS ………………………………………………...12

BYLAWS

PREAMBLE ………………………………………………………………………….………14

BYLAW OVERVIEW ……………………………………………………………….14

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL OVERVIEW …………………………………...14

MINISTRY MANUAL ………………………………………………………….……14

1. Organization ………………………………………………………………………………15
2. Individual Roles and Responsibilities …………………………………………………….15
   1. Bethel Leadership Team Leaders ……………………………………………………..15
      1. Leaders ………………………………………………………………………..15
      2. Qualifications of Leaders ……………………………………………………..15
      3. Election Process for Leaders except the Pastor and the Deacons …………….16
      4. Key Duties of Leaders ………………………………………………………..16
      5. Qualifications of Ministry Team Members except Deacons …………………17
      6. Election Process of Ministry Team Members except Deacons ………………17
      7. Key Duties of Ministry Team Members except Deacons ……………….……17

2.1.1.A. Pastor ………………………………………………………………………….…17

Role of Pastor …………………………………………………………………………17

Selection of the Pastor ………………………………………………………..………17

Pastor Performance Review …………………………………………………..………18

Vacating of the Pastor ………………………………………………………………...18

2.1.1.B. Ministry Team – Early Childhood ………………………………………………18

Purpose of the Team ………………………………………………………………….18

Duties of the Team ……………………………………………………………………18

2.1.1.B.1 Bethel Learning Center ………………………………………………………18

Purpose …………………………………………………………………………….18

Duties ………………………………………………………………………………18

Hiring of the Staff ………………………………………………………………….19

Teaching and other Staff ………………………………………………………..…19

2.1.1.C. Ministry Team – Elementary …………………………………………………….19

Purpose of the Team ………………………………………………………………….19

Duties of the Team ……………………………………………………………………19

2.1.1.D. Ministry Team – Middle School ………………………………………………...19

Purpose of the Team …………………………………………………………………19

Duties of the Team……………………………………………………………………19

2.1.1.E. Ministry Team – High School …………………………………………………..20

Purpose of the Team ……………………………………………………………….…20

Duties of the Team ……………………………………………………………………20

2.1.1.F. Prayer and Bible Study Teams Coordinator……………………………………...20

Duties …………………………………………………………………………………20

2.1.1.F.1 Prayer and Bible Study Group Leaders ………………………………………20

Purpose of the Team ………………………………………………………………20

Duties of the Team ………………………………………………………………...20

2.1.1.G. Ministry Team – First Impressions Team ……………………………………….20

Purpose of the Team ………………………………………………………………….20

Duties of the Team ……………………………………………………………………21

2.1.1.H. Ministry Team – Deacon Team …………………………………………………21

Qualifications …………………………………………………………………………21

Election Process ………………………………………………………………………21

Key Duties ……………………………………………………………………………22

2.1.1.I. Ministry Team – Worship and Media Team ………………….………………….22

Purpose of the Team ………………………………………………………………….22

Duties of the Team ……………………………………………………………………22

* 1. Administrative Assistant(s) …………………………………………………………...23

Responsibilities ……………………………………………………………………….23

Qualifications …………………………………………………………………………23

Hiring Process ………………………………………………………………………...23

* 1. Ministerial Staff ………………………………………………………………………23

Responsibilities ……………………………………………………………………….23

Qualifications …………………………………………………………………………23

Election Process ………………………………………………………………………23

Term of Service ………………………………………………………………………24

* 1. Financial Officer ……………………………………………………………………...24

Purpose ……………………………………………………………………………….24

Duties …………………………………………………………………………………24

1. Financial and Budgeting Process …………………………………………………………24
   1. Budgeting Process ……………………………………………………………………24
   2. Accounting Procedures ………………………………………………………………25
   3. Fiscal Year ……………………………………………………………………………25
   4. Property Holdings …………………………………………………………………….25
   5. Financial Guidelines ………………………………………………………………….25
   6. Special Funds …………………………………………………………………………26
2. Church Conferences ………………………………………………………………………26
   1. Worship Services ……………………………………………………………………..26
   2. Scheduled Church Conferences ………………………………………………………26
   3. Moderator ……………………………………………………………………………..26
   4. Special Called Church Conferences …………………………………………………..26
3. Church Ordinances ………………………………………………………………………..27
   1. Baptism ……………………………………………………………………………….27
   2. The Lord’s Supper ……………………………………………………………………27
4. Amendments ……………………………………………………………………………...27

BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE

1. The Scriptures ………………………………………………………………………...29
2. God ……………………………………………………………………………………29
3. God the Father …………………………………………………………………….29
4. God the Son ……………………………………………………………………….30
5. God the Holy Spirit ……………………………...………………………………..30
6. Man …………………………………………………………………………………...31
7. Salvation ……………………………………………………………………………...31
8. Regeneration ………………………………………………………………….…..31
9. Justification …………………………………………………………………….…31
10. Sanctification ………………………………………………………………….….32
11. Glorification ……………………………………………………………………....32
12. God’s Purpose of Grace ……………………………………………………………....32
13. The Church ……………………………………………………………………………32
14. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper …………………………………………………….…33
15. The Lord’s Day ………………………………………………………….……………33
16. The Kingdom …………………………………………………………………..……..33
17. Last Things ………………………………………………………………………..…..34
18. Evangelism and Missions …………………………………………………………….34
19. Education ……………………………………………………………………………..35
20. Stewardship …………………………………………………………………………...35
21. Cooperation ………………………………………………………………………...…35
22. The Christian and the Social Order …………………………………………………...36
23. Peace and War ………………………………………………………………………...36
24. Religious Liberty ……………………………………………………………………..37
25. The Family ……………………………………………………………………………37

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH

CONSTITUTION

**PREAMBLE**

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

**1. NAME**

This body shall be known as the Bethel Baptist Church of Oakway, located at 160 Bethel Church Road, Westminster, Oconee County, South Carolina, and is so incorporated by the State of South Carolina and recorded in the office of the South Carolina Secretary of State.

**2. MISSION**

The mission of Bethel is to connect with God and build relationships with others, leading ourselves and others to love the Lord our God with all of our hearts, souls and minds, and love our neighbors as ourselves. We become disciples of Christ who make disciples by baptizing them and teaching them to obey all that He has commanded. We prepare others to use their gifts to serve the community and the Lord faithfully in order to be Great Commission Christians in a Great Commission Church.

**3. STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEFS**

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God and the basis for our beliefs. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of The Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper.

We believe the word "marriage" means only a legal union between one naturally born man and one naturally born woman as husband and wife, and the word "spouse" refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or wife. Marriages outside of these parameters will not be performed by church ministers or on church property.

The use of church facilities is not a right of membership but is limited toCovenant Members and shall only be approved by the Pastor or his designee that are in agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

**4. CORE VALUES**

**4.1 Biblically Faithful**

The Bible is our guide, given to us, and written for us by God himself. The Bible is our source of truth and the foundation for everything we do. It explains how life is designed to work including how we should relate to God and to all people.

**4.2 Passionate About Worship**

We believe our weekly worship time should be an overflow of our daily walk and time with the Lord. We worship and honor God with our whole heart, mind, body and spirit. We support our pastor’s allocation of his time to studying the Bible and praying so that he can lead us in Bible centered preaching that comes from an overflow of what God is doing in his life. We lead our weekly worship times to honor and praise God in ways that will bring unity in our church and attract those in our community that are not yet in our church family. We are passionate about worship and passionate about effectively bringing the message to all people. We do this by staying relevant and adaptive within biblical parameters to best reach our community with a special focus on reaching the teens and young adults. Though we have set times to worship as a church family, we also make worship our everyday lifestyle; our daily actions are inspired by our desire to worship the Lord.

**4.3 Spiritually Growing**

We are passionate about growing spiritually in our relationship with God. We are intentional about studying Scripture, praying, and training to prepare ourselves to be effective followers of Christ. We conduct each ministry to grow our relationship with God by following our mission (connect, love, disciple, and serve) and using our discipleship process. To grow spiritually we have ministries, programs and activities that motivate all of us to walk with the Lord all the time.

**4.4 Discipling the Next Generation**

We let God use us to raise up God-centered, Jesus-magnifying, Bible-saturated, culturally-winsome disciples of Jesus Christ in the next generation. Ministry to the next generation will never be pushed to the margins at Bethel. We are not content just to offer “something” to keep our children occupied. We want God to give them hearts full of wonder, awe, and fascination with the bigness and power and beauty of God, with affections that will not be overwhelmed by the pleasures and promises of the world. That is why we are committed to developing an intentional, gospel-infused strategy aimed at winning the heart, mind, and will. Our aim is to partner with parents, who have the primary responsibility to disciple their children, and help them lead their children to connect, love, disciple, and serve God by faith in Jesus Christ.

We believe one of the primary reasons those in the next generation stay in church after their teen years is because they develop meaningful relationships and a sense of community. We also believe they are more likely to be engaged in church if they have a mentor; a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. Therefore, we devote significant resources of time and money to build these mentor relationships.

**4.5 Committed to the Uncommitted**

Because we have a personal relationship with God it motivates us to help others experience that same relationship. God sent His Son to seek and save the lost. We choose to live in such a way that when others see our daily lives, they want to have the same relationship that we have with God also. As we grow more and more in our relationship with God our lives will reflect this conviction. We are passionate about meeting the spiritual needs in our community and sharing the love of Christ with those, both young and old, who may not know Him.

**4.6 Connected through Ministry Teams and Prayer-Bible Study Teams**

We believe spiritual growth and uncommon unity with each other happens best in the context of deep and honest relationships. These kinds of relationships can be developed and maintained best in Ministry Teams and Prayer-Bible Study Teams. In our Prayer-Bible Study Teams (PBS Teams) of caring people, individuals share and encourage one another in their walk with God. By engaging in prayer, Bible study, and fellowship within these teams. We develop these uplifting relationships with other Christians who will pray, support, and mentor however needed. Here, individuals come together, build one another up during the week, sharing life together at a time that best fits their schedule and their communication method. Ministry Teams minister in ways that use their God given gifts, talents, and interest to help move people through the discipleship process.

We grow spiritually when we study God’s word in community and share what God is teaching us. We nurture and care for each other in these PBS Teams. In these teams we share what is going good in our lives and where we need help. In the Ministry Teams we carry out an intentional outwardly focused ministry regularly and consistently.

We use these Ministry Teams to carry out the ministries of our church. The God focused disciplines of prayer, Bible study, fellowship, and ministry are the foundation of our discipleship process. Because of this, our leadership team aligns our ministries, programs, and activities so that personal prayer and Bible study, family prayer and Bible study, and the team prayer and Bible study, and the outwardly focused ministry are maintained. This ensures that the people and financial resources God has entrusted to us are used effectively.

**5. CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been convicted by the Holy Spirit, we receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and 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 Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We commit, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and discipline; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also commit to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate our children in God's truths; to seek the salvation of our family and friends; to walk uprightly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our commitments and exemplary in our lifestyle; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

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

We moreover commit that when we, as Christians, depart from this fellowship 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.

**6. POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS**

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership.

This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. In so far as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Beaverdam Baptist Association, the South Carolina Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

**7.** **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

**7.1 CHURCH MEMBERSHIP General**

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

Membership in the body of Jesus Christ is a sacred duty, involves full commitment to Jesus Christ, and has significant meaning, privileges, and responsibilities. It is the responsibility of Covenant Members of Bethel Baptist Church to ensure that every person accepting Jesus Christ as their savior and deciding to join the body of Christ at Bethel Baptist Church has a clear understanding of the life changing decision they are making.

Any person may offer themselves as a candidate for membership in the body of Christ at Bethel Baptist Church. A person requesting membership in Bethel Baptist Church will be accepted as a “Membership Candidate under watch care” of the church. A “Membership Candidate” may request this membership in following ways:

(1) By profession of faith in Jesus Christ and requesting to be baptized by immersion.

(2) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church of like faith and practice.

(3) By acceptance upon a statement of a prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion.

If baptism by immersion is physically not possible for an individual, the pastor and the deacons will evaluate the situation and reach a conclusion that best meets the needs of that individual to be agreed upon by the church body.

A Membership Candidate will be mentored thorough a New Member Process to ensure they understand and agree with the meaning, privileges, and responsibilities of membership in the body of Christ at Bethel as well as the beliefs, mission, and core values of Bethel Baptist Church.

The Pastor will direct this New Membership process through the appropriate Ministry Teams (See the Bylaws for Ministry Team details).

Upon successful completion of this process, upon committing to the mission, core values, covenant, and beliefs as stated in this Constitution, and after being baptized by immersion (if not done previously) the Membership Candidate will be presented to the church in a church conference. It shall require a majority vote of those Covenant Members present for the person to be accepted as a Covenant Member or Watchcare Member.

**7.2 MEMBERSHIP TYPES:** There are three types of membership in Bethel Baptist Church:

**Covenant Member** – Persons who are 12 years of age or older who qualify as stated in the following section of the Constitution. Only Covenant Members have the privilege and responsibility to vote on all matters brought before the church in church conferences when they are present in the conference.

**Inactive Member** – Persons who are 12 years of age or older, who at one time, were Covenant Members but have not renewed their Covenant Membership as stated in the following section of the Constitution. Inactive Members do not vote on matters brought before the church in church conferences.

**Watchcare Member** – Persons who are less than 12 years of age who qualify as stated in the following section of the Constitution. Watchcare Members do not vote on matters brought before the church in church conferences.

**7.2.1 Covenant Membership Requirements**

It is the desire of Bethel Baptist Church to freely extend its fellowship to all individuals. At the same time, Bethel Baptist Church desires to uphold the principles of commitment to Christ and to His church that Scripture teaches must accompany true membership in the body of Christ.

7.2.1.1 The family of Christians at Bethel Baptist Church serve God through their relationship with God, with each other and strive to let Jesus live through them to reach other people with the gospel. We covenant together to do this by holding each other responsible to live according to God’s word in the life of our church. To this end we will maintain our **Covenant Membership** in Bethel Baptist Church. We will do this by establishing the following responsibilities to be a Covenant Member.

7.2.1.1.1 Must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration

7.2.1.1.2 Must complete the Bethel New Member class for Covenant Membership

7.2.1.1.3 Must have been baptized by immersion in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration

7.2.1.1.4 Must be twelve years of age or older

7.2.1.1.5 Must commit to the mission, core values, covenant, and beliefs as stated in this Constitution

7.2.1.1.6 Must renew their Covenant Membership annually

7.2.1.1.7 Are strongly encouraged to be an active participant in a Prayer and Bible Study Group and to minister through a Ministry Team.

**7.2.2 Watchcare Membership Requirements–** Persons less than 12 years of age but meet all other items under section **7.2.1 Covenant Membership Requirements.** Watchcare Members do not vote.

**7.2.3 Membership Records System** – Covenant Membership renewal and Watchcare Membership renewal is accomplished each year in person in any regular scheduled worship service.

This is done by recommitting to the Bethel Baptist Church mission, core values, covenant, and beliefs as stated in this Constitution. This is accomplished by signing a statement of this and placing it in the designated receptacle or in an offering plate during a regular schedule worship service.

Covenant Membership and Watchcare Membership are effective for the calendar year, January 1 through December 31. During January and February of each year members are encouraged to make this renewal. During the first week in March each year, any member not renewing their Covenant Membership/Watchcare Membership during the period January to February of that year will be removed from the Covenant Membership/Watchcare Membership Role of the church and placed on the Inactive Membership Role of Bethel Baptist Church.

At any regular scheduled worship service during the remaining months in that calendar year an Inactive Member can renew their Covenant Membership/Watchcare Membership for the remaining days of that calendar year.

The Deacon Ministry Team (see the Bylaws) will evaluate situations where it is not reasonably possible for a member of any status to renew their membership due to situations beyond their control (sickness, rest home, etc.). Through appropriate interaction with the individual, a Deacon may complete the renewal on behalf of member.

A list of Covenant Members, Inactive Members, and Watchcare Membership will be available in the church office at any time.

**8. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

(1) Death of the member

(2) Letter of recommendation to another Baptist church

(3) Exclusion by action as defined in Section **9. Discipline**

(4) Deletion upon request

(5) Deletion upon proof of membership in a church of another denomination

(6) Deletion upon proof of a church member uniting with another church

**9. DISCIPLINE**

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff, and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the matter in accord with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of the members present is required; and the church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

**10. LICENSE TO PASTORIAL MINISTRY**

When a Covenant Member announces to the church that he feels the call to the ministry, the church, by majority vote, may license him as an acknowledgment of his call to the ministry and an encouragement to make preparation for it. The pastor of the church will furnish the Covenant Member with a certificate of license as his credentials. It is understood that the performance of civil duties by the member shall be governed by state law.

**11. ORDINATION TO PASTORIAL MINISTRY**

In the event this church, be requested to ordain a member who has been called as a pastor of a Baptist church, the following procedure shall be followed. The pastor will establish an Ordination Council. Then the church shall invite pastors and deacons from sister Baptist churches to form an Ordination Council to examine the candidate concerning his fitness for the ministry. If the report of the Council is favorable, the church shall proceed with the ordination. The church will express its approval by a vote of three-fourths of the members present at a church conference for this purpose.

**12. BYLAWS**

Additional details of the operation of Bethel Baptist Church are maintained in the Bethel Baptist Church Bylaws.   
  
**13. CONSTITUTION CHANGE PROCESS**  
Changes in the Constitution shall be made at any regular church conference of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous church conference and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting. Amendments to the Constitution shall be by two-thirds vote.

Approved in Conference April 21, 1996  
Amended in Conference October 11, 2015  
Amended in Conference April 14, 2019

**Bethel Baptist Church**

**BYLAWS**

# PREAMBLE

There are three documents that will be used to provide guidance, organization and additional details beyond the Constitution of how Bethel Baptist Church will carry out our Core Values, and our Mission. Each of these documents will be available to all Covenant Members. The approval of each of these documents and changes to them are described below.

Bylaws – this document defines the first level of detail. The Bylaws define:

1. The qualifications, roles, responsibilities, and structure of the Bethel Leadership Team and the membership of the team
2. The process for selecting and approving the Pastor, the leader of the Ministry Teams, and Prayer and Bible Study Group Coordinator, and the Deacons

Bylaws and changes to them require approval of a simple majority (greater than 50%) of the covenant members present in a church conference as defined in **Section 4. Church Conferences** of the Bylaws

Personnel Policy Manual – this document defines:

* 1. The details of the policies associated with the pastor not defined in the bylaws
  2. The qualifications of paid staff positions
  3. The job descriptions
  4. The policies on vacation, holidays, and sick leave
  5. The polices on hiring, resignations, and terminations of paid staff individuals

The Personnel Policy Manual and changes to it require approval of a simple majority (greater than 50%) of the covenant members present in a church conference as defined in **Section 4. Church Conferences** of the Bylaws

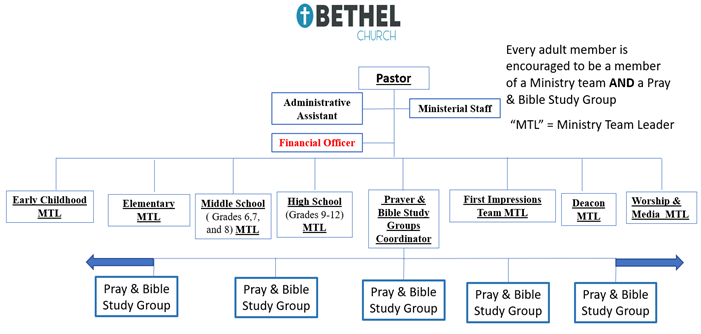
Ministry Manual – this document describes the details about church policies, procedures and organization charts depicting lines of responsibility in the administration of the church and how the various Ministry Teams as well as Prayer and Bible Study Groups function.

* 1. The level of detail of this manual will be determined by the Bethel Leadership Team.
  2. It should have sufficient detail to ensure the teams understand their roles and responsibilities.
  3. It should document the annual plan of ministries, activities, and events
  4. It should establish the measures, goals, and the process to track and report progress
  5. It should define the measures that will be regularly evaluated to ensure goals are being met.

The Pastor has the main responsibility to ensure the Ministry Manual is maintained. The Ministry Manual and changes to it require the approval of a minimum of 2/3rd ‘s vote of the Bethel Leadership Team Leaders.

# 1. Organization

The following organization chart is a basic structure of the church. All positions of leadership will be Covenant Members who have been so for a minimum of six months except the Pastor who assumes leadership of the BLT upon being elected pastor as defined in these bylaws.



# 2. Individual Roles and Responsibilities

## 2.1 Bethel Leadership Team Leaders

The Bethel Leadership Team shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.

### 2.1.1 Leaders

* + 1. Pastor
    2. Early Childhood Ministry Team Leader
    3. Elementary Ministry Team Leader
    4. Middle School Ministry Team Leader
    5. High School Ministry Team Leader
    6. Prayer & Bible Study Groups Coordinator
    7. First Impressions Team Ministry Team Leader
    8. Deacon Ministry Team Leader
    9. Worship & Media Ministry Team Leader

### 2.1.2 Qualifications of Leaders

* + 1. Be Covenant Member for a minimum of 6 continuous months and able to serve at least two years in the position
    2. Leaders will serve no more than three years and will have at least one year off before they can serve again. Beginning in the year 2023 the BLT will have established this rotation process.
    3. Be a regular attender to a weekly worship service
    4. Be an active/regular participant in a Prayer and Bible Study Group
    5. Be willing to develop a replacement leader for the area of ministry to ensure the ministry plans are continued
    6. Have effective communication skills in person and with appropriate digital applications (i.e. email, phone and text)
    7. Learn and use effective skills to efficiently and effectively lead meetings
    8. Be skilled and willing to present the plans of the team in Church Conferences
    9. Be willing to work closely with other Bethel Leadership Team leaders to reach consensus on the best use of people and financial resources as a team player and servant leader
    10. Bethel Leadership Team leaders will be non- paid covenant members of the church
    11. Be committed to attend regularly scheduled Bethel Leadership Team meetings

### 2.1.3 Election Process for Leaders except the Pastor and the Deacons

* + 1. Nominated by the current Bethel Leadership Team and approved by the church.
    2. Needs greater than 50% approval of covenant members present in a church conference as defined in **Section 4. Church Conferences** of the Bylaws.

### 2.1.4 Key Duties of Leaders

* + 1. Provide strategic leadership to the church
    2. Align the ministries, activities and events with the discipleship process (connect, love, disciple, and serve) to ensure that clear priorities are maintained for all people and financial resources
    3. Each Ministry Team Leader will work together with the Bethel Leadership Team to enlist the members of the ministry teams based on the needs of the team, the available people, and the priorities of the BLT as stated in **Section 2.1.5 Qualifications of Ministry Team Members**
    4. Establish an annual plan at the team level of ministries, activities, and events in alignment with the church mission
    5. Prepare the annual budget in alignment with the plans established for ministries, activities, and events. This budget is at a Team level (i.e. for each of the 9 areas) and submitted to the church for approval
    6. Team leaders working with the team members use the budgeted money in the best way to achieve the objectives of the team’s ministry
    7. Maintain a process of leadership development
    8. The legal representatives of the church will be the Deacon Ministry Team Leader, the First Impression Team Leader, and the Church Financial Officer
    9. The Bethel Leadership Team will appoint covenant members to represent the church along with the Pastor at Beaverdam Baptist Associational meetings. The Bethel Leadership Team can also appoint the pastor and other Covenant Members to represent the church at state and national meetings.
    10. The Deacon Ministry Team Leader, working with the Pastor, will develop, no less frequent than annually, a performance plan for the pastor
    11. The Bethel Leadership Team, led by the Deacon Ministry Team Leader, with appropriate input from the Pastor, will assess the performance of the Pastor and set the compensation package for the pastor
    12. When selection of a pastor is needed, the Bethel Leadership Team, led by the Deacon Ministry Team Leader, will establish the process and lead the church in selecting a new pastor. (see section 2.1.A.b for details)
    13. The Bethel Leadership Team, led by the Pastor, will develop, no less frequent than annually, a performance plan for each paid staff member
    14. Provide input, review and approval of the Pastor led performance assessment of all paid staff members and set the compensation package for each paid staff member
    15. Establish Key Objectives within their team and ensure the following guidelines are upheld:
        - 1. Teams plan and conduct their ministry
          2. Teams do not plan activities and events for other teams
          3. Events and activities that involve more than one ministry team must be coordinated by a leader from one of those teams, but all teams involved should be in agreement and work together

### 2.1.5 Qualifications of Ministry Team Members except Deacons

1. Be a regular attender to a weekly worship service
2. Be an active/regular participant in a Prayer and Bible Study Group
3. Shall be a Covenant Member of Bethel Baptist Church
4. Persons regularly attending, including those who are under the Watchcare of the church, may participate with Covenant Members conducting the Ministry for a limited time generally less than the time period between two church conferences

### 2.1.6 Election Process of Ministry Team Members except Deacons

1. The Ministry Team Leader identifies the individuals to serve on the team
2. These team members will then be submitted to the BLT for approval

### 2.1.7 Key Duties of Ministry Team Members except Deacons

1. Support the objectives of the team under the leadership of the Ministry Team Leader

## 2.1.1.A. Pastor

### Role of Pastor

* + - 1. Study the Bible and pray so that he can lead the church in Bible centered preaching that comes from an overflow of what God is doing in his life
      2. Shepherd the church through pastoral care
      3. With the help of the Worship and Media Team, leads the church in worship
      4. Gives direction and oversight to the work of the Bethel Leadership Team and other paid ministerial staff members
      5. Ensures an intentional leadership development process is in place for both current and future leaders

### Selection of the Pastor

* + - * 1. The Bethel Leadership Team, led by the Deacon Ministry Team Leader, as (defined in Section 2.1.4) has lead responsibility of establishing the process of selecting the Pastor
        2. The process will meet the following requirements:

The Bethel Leadership Team shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time.

Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths (75%) of Covenant Members in attendance at the church conference for this choice.

The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request.

### Pastor Performance Review - See section 2.1.4.J

### Vacating of the Pastor

* + - * 1. The pastor may relinquish the office as pastor by giving proper notice as outlined in the Personnel Policy Manual at the time of resignation.

1. The church may declare the office of pastor to be vacant. This process is initiated by the Bethel Leadership Team or by a written petition signed by no less than one-fourth of the Covenant Members. (Covenant Members is defined in the Constitution). Such action shall take place at a special called church conference as defined in **Section 4. Church Conferences** called for that purpose. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Covenant Members present being necessary to declare the office vacant. The termination shall be immediate and compensation shall be rendered according to Personnel Policy Manual.

## 2.1.1.B. Ministry Team - Early Childhood

### Purpose of the Team

* + - * 1. Conduct and lead all ministry and discipleship activities done by Bethel for the Early Childhood age group (birth – Pre-K5)

### Duties of the Team

* + - * 1. Establish a standard of “spiritual maturity/Bible knowledge” desired for children in that age group to reach prior to moving to the next age group
        2. Have a process to lead the children into an age appropriate level of spiritual maturity
        3. Have age appropriate worship and discipleship activities during the worship service(s)

## 2.1.1.B.1. Bethel Learning Center

### Purpose

* + - * 1. The Bethel Learning Center is a nonprofit week day ministry of Bethel Baptist Church that seeks to provide a safe and loving Christian environment where children two, three and four years of age can receive educational instruction and care appropriate for their developmental levels

### Duties

* + - * 1. Provide a safe and loving environment where children can grow:

Spiritually

Mentally

Physically

Emotionally

* + - * 1. Provide children with opportunities for success which will promote the development of independence and a positive self-concept
        2. Maintain a Handbook that is available to any Covenant Member of the church

### Hiring of the Staff

* + - * 1. Director

Will be a Covenant Member of Bethel Baptist Church

Nominated by the Early Childhood Ministry Team Leader and elected by the Bethel Leadership Team

### Teachers and other Staff

1. Selected by the Director and Early Childhood Ministry Team Leader
2. Church Facilities and administrative support will be provided at a cost established by the Bethel Learning Center and the Bethel Leadership Team

## 2.1.1.C. Ministry Team - Elementary

### Purpose of the Team

* + - * 1. Conduct and lead all ministry and discipleship activities done by Bethel for the Elementary age group (Kindergarten – Grade 5)

### Duties of the Team

* + - * 1. Establish a standard of “spiritual maturity/Bible knowledge” desired for children in that age group to reach prior to moving to the next age group
        2. Have a process to lead the children into an age appropriate level of spiritual maturity
        3. Have age appropriate worship and discipleship activities during the worship service(s)

## 2.1.1.D. Ministry Team - Middle School

### Purpose of the Team

* + - * 1. Conduct and lead all ministry and discipleship activities done by Bethel for the Middle School age group (Grades 6, 7 and 8)

### Duties of the Team

* + - * 1. Establish a standard of “spiritual maturity/Bible knowledge” desired for pre-teens in that age group to reach prior to moving to the next age group
        2. Conduct discipleship training at a time that best works for those in the age group
        3. Have a shadowing process to encourage students to team with the adults to get them involved in serving so that after high school they join a ministry team
        4. Have a process to lead the pre-teens into an age appropriate level of spiritual maturity

## 2.1.1.E. Ministry Team – High School

### Purpose of the Team

* + - * 1. Conduct and lead all ministry and discipleship activities done by Bethel for the High School age group (Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12)

### Duties of the Team

* + - * 1. Establish a standard of “spiritual maturity/Bible knowledge” desired for teens in that age group to reach prior to moving to the next age group
        2. Conduct discipleship training at a time that best works for those in the age group
        3. Have a mentoring process to encourage students to team with adults to get them involved in serving so that after high school they join a ministry team
        4. Have a process to lead the teens into an age appropriate level of spiritual maturity

## 2.1.1.F. Prayer and Bible Study Teams Coordinator

### Duties

* + - * 1. Develop a process to train the Prayer and Bible Study Group Leaders how to lead the small groups
        2. Promote the establishment of Prayer and Bible Study groups ensuring that they are in alignment with the mission, core values and discipleship process
        3. Ensure a new member class is conducted
        4. Encourage groups to multiply disciples and participate in Ministry Teams
        5. Coordinates the Prayer and Bible Study Groups
        6. Maintains a list of places and times Prayer and Bible Study Groups meet and ensures that it is readily available to all guests, members and the FIT Ministry Team
        7. Help visitors and new members find the right Prayer and Bible Study Group

### F.1 Prayer and Bible Study Group Leaders

#### Purpose of the Team

* + - * 1. Purpose of the Team will be defined in the Ministry Manual

#### Duties of the Team

* + - * 1. Duties of the Team will be defined in the Ministry Manual

## 2.1.1.G. Ministry Team - First Impressions Team

### Purpose of the Team

* + - * 1. Ensure all grounds and facilities are in proper condition and functioning to create a positive impression for all members and guests
        2. Leader will serve as the legal representative of the church along with the Financial Officer and the Deacon Ministry Team Leader

### Duties of the Team

* + - * 1. Conduct all activities to enable all members and guests to have a positive experience for regular and special worship services

Welcoming, Security, Ushering

* + - * 1. Greeting and leading guests with children to the proper childhood ministry
        2. All signage throughout all facilities are placed before each worship service
        3. Opening and closing of all facilities after regular scheduled services
        4. Develop a longer-term plan to maintain and upgrade facilities as needed to accomplish the long-range plans of the Bethel Leadership Team
        5. Members of the FIT Team will assist the administrative assistant with counting and documenting all contributions
        6. Work closely with the Worship and Media Ministry Team as defined under the duties of the Ministry Team - Worship and Media (Section 2.1.1.I)
        7. Maintain the church library

## 2.1.1.H. Ministry Team - Deacon Team

### Qualifications

* 1. Be a regular attender to a weekly worship service
  2. Be an active/regular participant in a Prayer and Bible Study Group
  3. Shall be at least 21 years of age and have been a Covenant Member of Bethel Baptist Church for one year as of prior to beginning serving
  4. Shall have proven themselves to have the scriptural qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3
  5. Must have completed the Ordination process consisting of a pre-ordination interview with the pastor and the deacons
  6. Be committed to attend regularly scheduled Deacon Ministry Team Meetings

### Election Process

* 1. Any Covenant Member can recommend another Covenant Member to be considered to be a deacon by completing a recommendation form provided by the deacon chairman and submitting it to the deacons
  2. Then the selection committee consisting of current deacon chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and the pastor reviews the recommendation forms and determines if the person meets the qualifications as stated in section 2.1.1.H.a
  3. Those selected will be submitted to the church for approval by the deacon chairman in a church conference
  4. Term of Office. Deacons shall be elected for a term of three (3) years with one third of the active group rotating off annually. After the completion of a full three-year term, no deacon shall be eligible to serve a new term until the lapse of one year. If a deacon has served more than one year of an unexpired term, he shall be ineligible to serve until one year has lapsed. An unexpired term may be filled by recalling the previous election results and selecting the nominees in order by votes.

### Key Duties

* 1. Leader will serve as the legal representative of the church along with the Financial Officer and the First Impressions Team Leader
  2. Leader will cosign checks when the Financial Officer is not available and perform other duties as necessary during the Financial Officers absence
  3. Support the objectives of the team under the leadership of the Ministry Team Leader
  4. Nurture church members who are not in Prayer and Bible Study Groups striving to get them connected to one of the groups
  5. Pray for and support the Pastor and the Bethel Leadership Team
  6. Pay special attention to the sick, the widows, the widowers, the needy, the distressed, and the inactive members
  7. Preparing for and conducting the Lord’s Supper and Baptism ordinances
  8. Responsible for all aspects of bereavement and benevolence ministry for all church members
  9. The deacon ministry is not to be responsible for caring for people who are in a Prayer and Bible Study Group. Each Prayer and Bible Study Group is responsible for nurturing and caring for their members
  10. Deacons will be available for counseling and guidance as stated in Section 9. Discipline in the Constitution
  11. Evaluate and take appropriate actions where it is not reasonable possible for a member of any status to renew their membership due to situation beyond their control as stated in section 7.2.3 in the Constitution
  12. Evaluate with the pastor when baptism by immersion is not possible and assist the pastor in taking appropriate action as stated in section 7.1 Church Membership General in the Constitution

2.1.1.I. Ministry Team – Worship and Media Team

### Purpose of the Team

* + - * 1. Lead worship services to honor and praise God in ways that will bring unity in the church and attract those in the community that are not yet in the church family
        2. Lead the church to be passionate about worship and passionate about effectively bringing the message to all people
        3. Prepare the congregation to be open and receptive to hear the message

### Duties of the Team

* + - * 1. Assisting the pastor in leading all worship services
        2. Plan and lead all social media activities including the website, Facebook and all other media platforms
        3. Ensure the church networks and information technology equipment, software, including infrastructure, is maintained throughout the church
        4. Work closely with the First Impressions Team to keep a cohesive graphic design/brand among brochures, booklets, and any other documents related to the First Impressions Team
        5. Work closely with the First Impressions Team to create a worshipful and safe experience for all worshipers from arrival to departure
        6. Stay relevant and adaptive within biblical parameters to best reach the community with a special focus on reaching the teens and young adults

## 2.2 Administrative Assistant(s)

### Responsibilities

* + 1. Support the pastor and other ministerial staff as defined in the Personnel Manual
    2. Perform the day to day operations of the church as defined in the Personnel Manual
    3. Attend and document the minutes of all scheduled Bethel Leadership Meetings (except personnel meetings) and church conferences keep track of all action items
    4. Maintains all official records and communications of the church

### Qualifications

* + 1. Qualifications of Administrative Assistant(s) will be defined in the Personnel Policy Manual

### Hiring Process

* + 1. The Bethel Leadership Team as (defined in Section 2.1) has lead responsibility of establishing the process of selecting the Administrative Assistant(s) and the number of assistants that are needed as defined in the Personnel Policy Manual

## 2.3 Ministerial Staff

### Responsibilities

* + 1. The paid ministerial staff member will support and assist leading the activities in the Ministry Team area/areas as set forth in the “Job Description” as defined in the appropriate section forth in the Personnel Policy Manual

1. Other Responsibilities of Ministerial Staff will be defined in the Ministry Manual as each staff member will require different responsibilities for the job requirements

### Qualifications

* + 1. Qualifications of Ministerial Staff will be defined in the Personnel Policy Manual as each staff member will require different qualifications for the job requirements

### Election Process

* + 1. The Bethel Leadership Team as (defined in Section 2.1) has lead responsibility of establishing the process of selecting the Ministerial Staff
    2. The process will meet the following requirements:
       1. The Bethel Leadership Team shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time.
       2. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths (75%) of those present being necessary for a choice.
       3. The staff member, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his/her request or the church's request.

### Term of Service

* + 1. Holds the position until the staff member vacates the position.
       1. The staff member may relinquish the office by giving proper notice as outlined in the Personnel Policy Manual at the time of resignation.
       2. The church may declare the office to be vacant. This process is initiated by the Bethel Leadership Team or by a written petition signed by no less than one-fourth of the Covenant Members (Covenant Members is defined in the Constitution). Such action shall take place at a special called business meeting as defined in **Section 4. Church Conferences** called for that purpose. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present being necessary to declare the office vacant. The termination shall be immediate and compensation shall be rendered according to Personnel Policy Manual

## 2.4 Financial Officer

### Purpose

* + - * 1. Ensure the financial resources are expended in accordance with the approved budget
        2. Ensures all appropriate tax laws are adhered to and legal obligations are met
        3. Will be the lead legal representative of the church and serve along with the First Impressions Team Leader and the Deacon Ministry Team Leader

### Duties

* + - * 1. Establish a purchase order system and ensure that purchase is in accordance with the approved church budget
        2. Cosign checks along with the administrative assistant

The Deacon Ministry Team Leader will perform the duties of the Financial Officer when he/she is not available

* + - * 1. Work with the other members of the BLT to assemble the annual budget

# 3. Financial and Budgeting Process

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular and proportionate gifts.

## 3.1 Budgeting Process

By October of each year, the BLT, led by the pastor, will develop a plan along with appropriate goals for the upcoming year. This includes a list of recurring as well as special focused ministries, events, etc.

Each Ministry Team leader will prepare a proposed budget for their area in alignment with the BLT established plan. The Financial Officer will assemble the budget with the above input and submit it to the BLT for approval. Then, once approved by the BLT, the BLT will submit it to the church for approval during the scheduled church conference in November of each year.

This budget will consist of the following categories:

1. Paid staff compensation Total
   1. A Total of all compensation packages for all paid staff members. Individual compensation packages for each staff member is set by the BLT as defined is Personnel Manual.
2. Individual total planned budget for each of the Ministry Teams
   1. The Team leaders, working with the team members will operate within their area of ministry to use these funds in the most efficient and effective way to achieve the objectives of the ministry area

## 3.2 Accounting Procedures

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church Financial Officer or Deacon Chairman in their absence and the Church Administrative Assistant(s) and be properly recorded on the books of the church. Those who have responsibility that involves actual handling of funds shall be bonded through the church’s insurance policy.

## 3.3 Fiscal Year

The church fiscal year shall run from January 1 to December 31.

## 3.4 Property Holdings

Property shall always belong to and remain in a fee simple to Bethel Baptist Church of Oakway, 160 Bethel Church Road, Westminster, South Carolina.

## 3.5 Financial Guidelines

* + 1. The Ministry Team Leaders shall, with the consent of the majority of the Ministry Team and in agreement with the approved budget, be the only one who can authorize the Financial Officer to spend funds from that Ministry Teams budget.
    2. Any items not budgeted shall require approval by the Bethel Leadership team and the church prior to the expense being incurred.
    3. At no time can monies budgeted for a specific Ministry Team be spent for other Ministry Teams unless approved by the Bethel Leadership Team and the church as a change in the budget.
    4. No Ministry Team can spend any money above that set in the budget without consent of the Bethel Leadership Team and the church.
    5. The Bethel Leadership Team, led by the Financial Officer, will limit their Budget Proposal each year to the amount of income from donations, endowments, and collections which the church can expect for the current year and should be taken into consideration how well the budget was met for preceding years, what new expenditures are anticipated, and what revenues and balances are left to meet unexpected expenditures
    6. The money allocated to a budgeted account is for use in that calendar year only and does not carry over to the next year.
    7. Any Ministry Team making purchase that exceeds five hundred dollars ($500.00) must secure a minimum of two (2) bids and have the Bethel Leadership Team approval with the exceptions of fixed budgeted items (such as utilities, insurance premiums, etc.) and/or in the event an emergency situation arises that would hamper church ministries if not taken care of promptly (such as a damaged roof, ruptured water pipe, etc.)
    8. No budget expenditures exceeding 10% of the allocated amount will be paid out in any one month without approval from the Bethel Leadership Team, except utilities, insurance, or VBS expenditures
    9. The Financial Officer is authorized to accept contributions to church approved Funds only. Approved Funds are those established by the Bethel Leadership Team and approved by the church. When contributions are designated for other than church approved Funds, the Financial Officer will present the information to the Bethel Leadership Team. The Bethel Leadership Team will evaluate whether the designated contribution is in alignment with the Constitution, Bylaws and the plans short and long term that the church has. If the Bethel Leadership Team determines that a special fund should be established for it, they will propose to the church the establishment of a special fund to accept and use those funds.

## 3.6 Special Funds

Special Funds are those recommended by the Bethel Leadership Team and approved by the church. Each Fund will have a defined purpose and a guideline for the use of the monies in the fund. This purpose and guideline for use will be documented in the Ministry Manual. The Bethel Leadership will determine which Ministry Team Leader is responsible for approving the use of Special Funds monies.

# 4. Church Conferences

Unless specifically stated otherwise in these bylaws, all motions presented to the church body for approval will require a majority approval of Covenant Church Members present in the Church conference

4.1 Worship Services

Shall be conducted on Sundays and on other times as determined by the Bethel Leadership Team under the leadership and direction of the pastor. Addition details may be documented in the Ministry Manual.

4.2 Scheduled church conferences will normally be as follows:

February – BLT presents a review of the past year’s activities

May – BLT presents and update on the year’s activities

September – review and approve the Bethel Leadership Team Leaders for the next calendar year

November – review and approval of annual plan and budget for the next calendar year

These meetings must be communicated in such a manner that all Covenant Members will know about the meeting with at least a two-week notice.

4.3 Moderator

1. Will be selected by the BLT and shall be a Covenant Member of Bethel Baptist Church and be skilled in the conduct of meetings in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order
2. The Moderator will appoint a Covenant Member in attendance to document the actions taken in each Church conference

4.4 Special Called Church Conferences

* 1. The BLT may call for a special church conference when needed
  2. This call for a meeting will be provided to all Covenant Members in a regularly scheduled worship service at least seven days before the church conference
  3. Church conferences called for without a seven-day notice to handle urgent items may be conducted following a regularly scheduled worship service. However, if any one Covenant Member present objects to the conducting of the conference then it will be delayed seven days

# 5. Church Ordinances

5.1 Baptism

* 1. This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord
     1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water unless immersion is not physically capable as stated in the Constitution in section 7.1 Church Membership General
     2. The pastor, or his designee shall administer the baptism
        1. In the event of there not being a pastor, the Deacon Chairman will assume responsibility for appointing the person for conducting the Baptism Ordinance
     3. The Deacon Ministry Team, with assistance with individuals the deacons enlist for support, shall assist in the preparation and observance of baptism
     4. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church

5.2 The Lord’s Supper

* 1. The church shall observe the Lord’s Supper at least once a quarter at a time chosen by the pastor and the deacons
  2. The Deacon Ministry Team will oversee the Lord’s Supper physical preparations
  3. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord’s Supper

# 6. Amendments

Changes in the Bylaws may be made at any regular church conference of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing to all Covenant Members by all means possible at 14 days prior to the conference and copies of the proposed amendment/s shall have been furnished to each Covenant Member. Amendments to the Bylaws shall have a concurrence of a simple majority of those present at the church conference.

Approved in Conference May 5, 2019



Southern Baptist Convention

The Baptist Faith and Message

THE 2000 BAPTIST FAITH & MESSAGE

I. The Scriptures

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

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah

34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39;

16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1

Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

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

A. God the Father

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

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

1. God the Son

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

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27;14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29;10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8, 24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

1. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

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

III. Man

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

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5;

Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1

Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

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

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

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

1. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.
2. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.
3. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-

32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-

31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1

Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15;

Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-

24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1

Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God’s Purpose of Grace

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

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end.

Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew

16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16;

5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15;

11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2

Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39–12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13;

2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28;

Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21;

5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter

5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23;

Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians

2:12.

VIII. The Lord’s Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24;

20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

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

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46;

26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7;

17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1

Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-

48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1

Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1

Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13;

Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11;

20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

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

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19;

22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2;

8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5;

Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge.

Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

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

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11;

Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke

2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7;

2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

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

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21;

19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans

6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19;

1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one

another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew

10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3;

15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16;

Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah

8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37;

20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12–14; 1Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians

3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19;

Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7;

Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

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

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

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

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

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel

1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1;

17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16;

Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians

5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1

Peter 3:1-7