



# Constitution & Bylaws

Revision June 2019

**Constitution Revision Team:**

Mary Rich  
Beth Lawing  
Wayne Helms  
Elaine Wells  
Randy Starkey

**MBC CONSTITUTION .....1**

COVENANT ..... 1

Preamble ..... 1

Article 1: Name & Address.....2

Article 2: Purpose & Core Values.....2

Purpose .....2

Core Values.....2

Article 3: Membership .....2

Section 1 - Nature of Membership .....2

Section 2 - Receiving Members .....2

Section 3 - Discipline & Removal .....3

Section 4 - Removal by Transfer of Letter .....3

Article 4: Biblical Offices.....3

A. Pastor(s)/Elder(s) 3

Section 1 - Qualifications .....3

Section 2 - Call .....3

Pastor Search Team (PST) 3

Section 3 - Duties.....4

Section 4 - Departure and/or Removal.....4

B. Deacons 5

Section 1 - Qualifications .....5

Section 2 - Number and Term .....5

Section 3 - Selection Process .....5

Section 4 - Duties.....5

Section 5 - Departure and/or Removal.....5

Article 5: Organizational Offices .....6

Section 1 - Trustees.....6

Section 2 - Clerk.....6

Section 3 - Financial Secretary/Treasurer.....6

Article 6: Church Government .....6

Section 1 - Nature .....6

Section 2 - Member Meetings .....6

Article 7: Affiliations.....7

Section 1 - Autonomy.....7

Section 2 - Partnerships .....7

Section 3 - Cooperation .....	7
Article 8: Adoption & Amendments .....	7
Section 1 - Adoption .....	7
Section 2 - Amendments.....	7
Section 3 - Review & Revisions .....	8
<b>MBC BY-LAWS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Article 1: Ministry Teams.....	1
Section 1 - Nominating Team .....	1
Section 2 - Finance Team.....	1
Section 3 - Pastor Search Team.....	1
Section 4 - Care Team .....	1
Article 2: Additional Ministry Teams .....	2
Article 3: Adoption & Amendments .....	2
Section 1 - Adoption .....	2
Section 2 - Amendments.....	2
Section 3 - Review & Revisions.....	2
<b>STATEMENT OF FAITH.....</b>	<b>1</b>
II. God.....	1
A. God the Father .....	1
B. God the Son.....	1
C. God the Holy Spirit .....	2
III. Man .....	2
IV. Salvation .....	2
V. God's Purpose of Grace.....	3
VI. The Church .....	3
VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper .....	4
VIII. The Lord's Day .....	4
IX. The Kingdom .....	4
X. Last Things.....	4
XI. Evangelism and Missions.....	5
XII. Education .....	5
XIII. Stewardship.....	5
XIV. Cooperation .....	6
XV. The Christian and the Social Order .....	6
XVI. Peace and War.....	6

XVII. Religious Liberty.....	7
XVIII. The Family .....	7

# MBC CONSTITUTION

We use our covenant in two key ways today. We require that all new members read and affirm this covenant before joining the church. We also reaffirm this covenant at all members meetings and before taking communion, reminding us of our commitment to one another. By featuring the covenant in our life together, we strive to protect ourselves from individual and corporate sin. Of equal importance, we spur one another on to live in the light of a greater covenant, one initiated by love, sealed by sacrifice, and kept for eternity by our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## COVENANT

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

- A. We engage, 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 unity; to provide for the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.
- B. We also strive to maintain family and personal devotions; to biblically educate our children; to seek the salvation of our family and friends; to walk with godly purpose in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our daily interactions, and exemplary in our demeanor; to seek to follow the guidance set forth by Jesus in the Gospels for leaders and families; and to be passionate in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.
- C. We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to strive with heartfelt sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the teachings of our Savior to secure it without delay.
- D. We will, when we move from this place, 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.

Now, to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever, Amen (Ephesians 3:20-21).

## Preamble

We, the members of MBC do adopt and establish this constitution in order to:

1. preserve the principles of our faith,
2. guide us in directing the life of the church in a biblical manner,
3. protect each individual member's freedom in Christ.

## **Article 1: Name & Address**

The name of this organization shall be **Mariposa Baptist Church**, located at 1251 Mariposa Road, Stanley, NC 28164.

## **Article 2: Purpose & Core Values**

### **Purpose**

Christ is our existence. We share His love and take His plan of rescue to the community, growing together as a family of believers.

### **Core Values**

**Excellence:** We recognize that we are imperfect humans, but we strive for excellence in everything we do, as a church and as individuals; for we represent the excellent and perfect God.

**Encouragement:** Biblical encouragement, through the Spirit, overwhelms and captivates our hearts by giving us the strength to face the struggles of this life. We seek to encourage one another through expositional preaching, prayer, conversations, worship, witnessing, and Bible study.

**Learning:** Our goal is to be more like Jesus every day. Learning God's word, through Bible study and discipleship, compels us to grow towards a Christ-like mind.

**Relationships:** We believe that we are uniquely woven together in a tapestry of grace; therefore, we intentionally cultivate meaningful relationships. We develop these bonds through serving together, bearing each other's burdens, discipleship, and fellowship.

**Together:** We pursue every opportunity to worship together. We gather as a corporate body in various weekly worship services, ministry and mission opportunities, and events of fellowship and fun.

## **Article 3: Membership**

### **Section 1 - Nature of Membership**

The membership of this church shall be composed of persons who:

1. Have given evidence of regeneration by the Spirit of God,
2. Have been baptized as a believer by **immersion\***,
3. Have affirmed the Church Covenant, Statement of Faith, & Constitution of this church,
4. Have been received into membership by a vote of the church,
5. Continually walk in repentance,
6. Participate regularly in the life of the church (The phrase "life of the church" is defined at a minimum by attendance at the main worship gatherings on Sunday mornings.)

\*Exceptions may be made concerning baptism in some circumstances if recommended by the appropriate ministry team and approved by the church. However, only believer's baptism by immersion will be practiced.

### **Section 2 - Receiving Members**

Anyone desiring to pursue membership in MBC must complete a new members class prior to being considered for membership. Upon completion of the class, new members shall be received in the following ways:

1. New believers shall be received by profession of faith & baptism.
2. Persons holding membership in another like-minded church may be received by letter of transfer from their current church.
3. Persons who have formerly made a profession of faith, and have been baptized as a believer by **immersion\***, but are unable to obtain a letter of transfer; may request membership based upon a credible profession of faith.

\*Exceptions may be made concerning baptism in some circumstances if recommended by the appropriate ministry team and approved by the church. However, only believer's baptism by immersion will be practiced.

### **Section 3 - Discipline & Removal**

All members of MBC are subject to the Church Covenant, Statement of Faith, Constitution, and the Congregation. Any member walking in a manner inconsistent with this church and/or the gospel is subject to the discipline of the church consistent with biblical principle and the congregational decision of the church. While the purpose of discipline is restoration, in some irreconcilable circumstances it may result in removal of membership.

A member **may** be under discipline if:

1. The member continues in a sinful manner of life without repentance.
2. The member ceases from regular participation in the life of the church for a consecutive period of 1 year. (If restoration to participation is not attained, the absent member will be removed from membership by vote of the church after sufficient effort is made by the church to renew participation.)

All discipline shall be handled in accordance with the process laid out in Matthew 18:15–20, with guidance from the church leadership. The final authority in matters of discipline does not rest in any individual person or group, but in the hands of the entire congregation.

The goal of discipline is the restoration of a fellow believer to a lifestyle consistent with the gospel. If, however, a member under discipline cannot be reconciled to the church after multiple and sufficient effort(s) has been made in accordance with Scripture and in a manner

full of grace and love; in order to preserve the integrity of the witness of the church, the disciplined member may be removed from membership by a vote of the church.

### **Section 4 - Removal by Transfer of Letter**

If in the case that the possibility of regular participation in the life of MBC changes, a member may be issued a letter of transfer to another like-minded church upon the request of transfer from another church and the vote of the congregation. No letters will be issued to the individual member. (*Church letters are not a concrete reality. They are an expression of the voice of the congregation in regards to membership.*)

## **Article 4: Biblical Offices**

### **A. Pastor(s)/Elder(s)**

#### **Section 1 - Qualifications**

The qualifications for the role of pastor/elder are set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1–7, Titus 1:7–9, & further addressed in the Baptist Faith & Message 2000 Article VI.

#### **Section 2 - Call**

It shall be the responsibility of the congregation to call a pastor or pastor(s) to serve the church. When the need arises to seek a pastor, the congregation shall invest this responsibility to the Pastor Search Team.

#### **Pastor Search Team (PST)**

The Pastor Search Team shall be selected from within the membership of the church by the congregation.

1. The PST shall be filled by a minimum of three men and two women.
2. The church will have the opportunity to present nominations to the Nominating Team

who will then present the final selection to the congregation.

3. The church will affirm the PST by a 75% ballot vote.
4. The PST shall seek a suitable person qualified to serve in the role of pastor.
5. The PST shall bring only one candidate at a time to the congregation to be voted on.
6. The call of a pastoral candidate requires a minimum of 75% vote of the congregation in a meeting called for this purpose. Notice of this meeting must be given at least one week in advance.

If a 75% vote is not achieved, the PST will proceed to search out another candidate. When the congregation chooses a candidate with a 75% (or more) vote, the PST will then be dissolved.

### **Section 3 - Duties**

The pastor's primary responsibility is to provide biblical insight to the life and decisions of the church. It is not the pastor's role to "run" the church. The pastor, together with other leadership and the congregation, shall support the church in striving for and maintaining biblical purpose. The pastor's authority begins and ends with the Word of God.

The pastor shall:

1. Give general oversight to the life and direction of the church in participation with the congregation.
2. Serve as the primary teacher/preacher in all gatherings.
3. Shepherd the individual members in times of need including (but not limited to) pastoral care of the sick, biblical counsel, funerals, and weddings.
4. Lead in the administration of the ordinances.

5. Lead the church in ministering the gospel to one another and to the community.
6. Serve as ex-officio member of all ministry teams and organizations. (*ex-officio members do not get a vote except in the case of a tie-breaker*)
7. Seek to equip the saints for the work of ministry.
8. Seek to enable the church to pursue and carry out biblical vision, ministry, and mission.
9. Seek to set an example in life and godliness.

### **Section 4 - Departure and/or Removal**

The pastor is a member of the church and as such is subject to the congregation as any other member.

In the occurrence of an issue of sin or biblical qualification, the church should follow the same process set out in Article 3 Section 3. In the case that such circumstance requires removal, the church should determine the adequate time for dissolution of employment.

In a circumstance arising other than a biblical issue of sin or qualifications, a 30 day notice should be provided by either the church or the pastor.

If a special circumstance arises, the church or pastor can request an extended notice with the final decision to be approved or denied by the congregation.

In such cases the best interest of both the pastor (and his family) and the church, in keeping with biblical goodness and grace, should be considered.

## **B. Deacons**

### **Section 1 - Qualifications**

The qualifications for the office of Deacon are set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8–13.

### **Section 2 - Number and Term**

MBC will hold in office no less than three deacons at any time. Additional deacons may be selected as the congregations deems necessary.

MBC may install as many deacons who are qualified and willing.

Each deacon will serve a term of three (3) years. At the end of the three years, each deacon must rotate off the active deacon board and will not be eligible for re-election for at least one (1) year.

### **Section 3 - Selection Process**

Before the beginning of each church year, the Nominating Team will have the responsibility of recommending candidates to be considered for election.

The congregation will be given the opportunity to individually recommend a potential candidate to the Nominating Team for consideration prior to the Nominating Team's recommendations.

The Nominating Team will recommend as many deacons they deem necessary, but no less than the number required to maintain the three deacon minimum.

The Nominating Team will submit their recommendation(s) to the current Deacon Board.

The Deacon Board will then carefully consider both the qualifications and willingness of each candidate.

The final candidates will then be presented to the congregation, as a recommendation from both the Nominating Team and Deacon Board, two (2) weeks in advance to be affirmed or denied by a ballot vote in a meeting scheduled for this specific purpose. A 75% vote is required.

Only the number of deacons qualified, willing, and desired to serve will be presented to the congregation.

### **Section 4 - Duties**

Deacons are servants of the church and subject to the congregation.

The Deacons are responsible to:

1. Support the various ministries of the church together with the Pastor(s),
2. Share in the pastoral care to the membership,
3. Assist the Pastor(s) in the planning, implementing, and execution of the ministry and organization of the church,
4. Set an example of godliness before the congregation,
5. Actively participate in the life of the church.
6. Provide for pulpit supply and/or interim pastor when the church is without a pastor.

### **Section 5 - Departure and/or Removal**

Deacons are members of the church and as such is subject to the congregation as any other member.

In the occurrence of an issue of sin or biblical qualification, the church should follow the same process set out in Article 3 Section 3, and

requires that the deacon be removed from the Deacon Board for a time to be determined by the congregation and to allow enough time for repentance and restoration.

If a deacon is unable to fulfill the three (3) year term due to some other circumstance, the congregation may immediately elect a deacon to fulfill the term following the process set forth in Article 4 B. Section 3. If elected, this deacon would inherit the term of the departing deacon.

Replacement of a departing deacon is only required if necessary to meet the three (3) deacon minimum.

## **Article 5: Organizational Offices**

### **Section 1 - Trustees**

MBC will hold three (3) standing trustees at all times. The trustees will be elected by the church in a meeting for that purpose upon the recommendation of the Nominating Team. The trustees term is indefinite. New trustees will be approved by the church when a vacancy occurs due to departure, resignation, or death.

The trustees will execute all contracts, deeds, mortgages and other legal agreements when authorized by the church to do so in conference.

### **Section 2 - Clerk**

The clerk will be elected annually, prior to the beginning of the church ministry year upon the recommendation of the Nominating Team.

The clerk is responsible to keep a record of all church business, assist in maintaining a current record of the church membership, assist in preparing any and all reporting necessary to the association or other denominational entities. The clerk will also be responsible for letters of transfer when necessary.

## **Section 3 - Financial Secretary/ Treasurer**

The Financial Secretary/Treasurer will be elected annually, prior to the beginning of the church year upon the recommendation of the Nominating Team.

The Financial Secretary/Treasurer is responsible to maintain an accurate and timely record of the church's financial receipts/disbursements and adequately report these matters to the church. The Financial Secretary/Treasurer will also maintain a record of all membership giving and provide a report to each member at the end of the year.

These duties are to be fulfilled in cooperation with the church's administrative assistant.

## **Article 6: Church Government**

### **Section 1 - Nature**

The final authority on all matters is invested in the congregation of this church.

The church may in conference approve particular authorities to individuals and/or ministry teams, but the congregation maintains the final authority. The pastor(s), deacons, and/or any other ministry teams (appointed or elected) are responsible to provide leadership but are subject to the will of the congregation.

### **Section 2 - Member Meetings**

Member meetings will be held quarterly in order to address the needs of the church.

In such meetings, all financial and ministry needs will be addressed and voted upon.

In order to pass any motion, a quorum must be met. A quorum requires at least 25% of the membership of the church present and voting.

All financial needs beyond budget approved funds must be voted on by the church. If special need arises, the deacons are permitted to approve special funds not to exceed \$300 on a particular matter without congregational approval.

A moderator shall preside over all member meetings. The pastor will serve as moderator. When the pastor is not available, the chairman of deacons or any other member appointed will stand in his place.

During such meetings, any member may make a motion concerning the needs of the church. If a second is provided, discussion will follow. The matter will then be concluded with a congregational vote. A motion requires a 75% vote in order to pass.

Any motion brought by a ministry team does not require a second and will proceed directly to discussion followed by a vote.

Only members of the church can make a motion, second a motion, or speak to the matter in conference unless invited by the moderator or ministry team to participate.

Special meetings may be called by any ministry team of the church with at least a one week notice.

## **Article 7: Affiliations**

### **Section 1 - Autonomy**

MBC is free to determine its ministries and practices without any outside interference. MBC is not subject to the authority of any outside control beyond the membership. We believe, however, that the spirit of the gospel

compels us to seek cooperation with outside entities in order to more effectively fulfill our mission.

### **Section 2 - Partnerships**

MBC is free to partner with any outside ministries so determined by the congregation in order to carry out the mission of MBC and the gospel of Jesus Christ. All partnerships are subject to the approval of the membership.

### **Section 3 - Cooperation**

MBC will maintain an ongoing cooperation with the ***Southern Baptist Convention***, the ***North Carolina Baptist State Convention***, and the ***South Fork Baptist Association***.

Any departure from these established relationships must be approved by a 75% vote of the church. This process requires both a public and written notice of consideration to the entire membership at least two (2) weeks in advance.

## **Article 8: Adoption & Amendments**

### **Section 1 - Adoption**

This Constitution will be considered adopted upon a 75% vote of the church and will immediately take effect upon approval.

### **Section 2 - Amendments**

This constitution may be amended, altered, or repealed by a 75% vote of the membership present at a meeting called for this purpose. Any proposed change must be given to the membership in writing 30 days prior to the vote.

### **Section 3 - Review & Revisions**

MBC will review this Constitution and recommend any necessary revisions every ten (10) years.

# MBC BY-LAWS

## **Article 1: Ministry Teams**

### **Section 1 - Nominating Team**

The Nominating Team shall consist of a minimum of five (5) members elected by the congregation. Additional team members may be elected as the church deems necessary. Upon election, each member will serve a three (3) year term. A member rotating off the Nominating Team is immediately eligible for re-election.

The Nominating Team is responsible for filling all leadership roles, ministry teams, offices, and teachers in the church. The Nominating Team will make their recommendations to the congregation to be voted upon. All votes require a 75% majority to pass.

### **Section 2 - Finance Team**

The Finance Team will consist of the church Financial Secretary/Treasurer and a minimum of five (5) additional members to be elected by the congregation. Each additional member will serve a 3 year term upon election. A member rotating off of the Finance Team is immediately eligible for re-election.

The Finance Team is responsible to solicit budget proposals from the various ministries of the church and prepare an annual budget to be presented to the congregation in a members meeting prior to the start of the church financial year.

The Finance Team is responsible to evaluate the church budget during the course of the budget year when necessary and make recommendations to the church for any necessary amendments.

### **Section 3 - Pastor Search Team**

The Pastor Search Team shall be selected from within the membership of the church by the congregation.

1. The PST shall be filled by a minimum of three men and two women.
2. The church will have the opportunity to present nominations to the Nominating Team who will then present the final selection to the congregation.
3. The church will affirm the PST by a 75% ballot vote.
4. The PST shall seek a suitable person qualified to serve in the role of pastor.
5. The PST shall bring only one candidate at a time to the congregation to be voted on.
6. The call of a pastoral candidate requires a minimum of 75% vote of the congregation in a meeting called for this purpose. Notice of this meeting must be given at least one week in advance.

### **Section 4 - Care Team**

The Care Team will consist of a minimum of five (5) members elected by the church. Additional members may be elected as the church deems necessary. Each Care Team member will serve a three (3) year term. A member rotating off of the Care Team is immediately eligible for re-election.

The Care Team will be responsible for attending to the relationship of the membership to the church. This will include recommendations for receiving and dismissing members according to the processes set forth in the Constitution Article 3. The Care Team will also assist in pastoral care to the membership.

## **Article 2: Additional Ministry Teams**

MBC may establish any ministry teams necessary to effectively carry out the mission and ministry of the church. All additional ministry teams beyond those listed will be elected as a part of the annual nominating process.

## **Article 3: Adoption & Amendments**

### **Section 1 - Adoption**

These By-Laws will be considered adopted upon a 75% vote of the church and will immediately take effect upon approval.

### **Section 2 - Amendments**

These By-Laws may be amended, altered, or repealed by a 75% vote of the membership present at a meeting called for this purpose. Any proposed change must be given to the membership in writing 30 days prior to the vote.

### **Section 3 - Review & Revisions**

MBC will review these By-laws and recommend any necessary revisions every ten (10) years.

# STATEMENT OF FAITH

## Baptist Faith & Message 2000

### 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.*

### B. 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; Hebrews 1:1-3; 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.*

### **C. 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.

A. 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.

B. 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.

C. 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.

D. 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; 1 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; 1 Corinthians 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.