

The
CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS
of the
Wornall Road Baptist Church
Kansas City, MO

Adopted by the membership on October 28, 2018

Preamble

Since it pleased Almighty God, by his Holy Spirit, to call some of his servants to unite here in Kansas City, Missouri, under the name Wornall Road Baptist Church to worship God and to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ, we, the members of Wornall Road Baptist Church adopt this Constitution and Bylaws as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of Jesus Christ and bring him glory, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated in the statement of faith and covenant of this church.

Article 1 – Name

1.1. The name of the corporation is Wornall Road Baptist Church. This corporation will be further referred to in the Constitution and Bylaws as “the church.” The church maintains its principal office at 400 W. Meyer Boulevard in Kansas City, MO. The members of the church shall have full power and authority to change the principal office from one location to another.

Article 2 – Purpose

2.1. This church exists for the glory of the triune God, which shall be the ultimate purpose of all its activities.

2.2. This church glorifies God by loving him and obeying his commands through:

2.2.1. worshipping him;

2.2.2. equipping the saints through Bible instruction and study;

2.2.3. proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of the Bible;

- 2.2.4. encouraging, supporting, and participating in local, domestic, and international missions work;
- 2.2.5. administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper;
- 2.2.6. encouraging biblical fellowship among believers; and
- 2.2.7. encouraging fellow churches to biblical faithfulness and purity.

Article 3 – Affiliation

3.1. Wornall Road Baptist Church operates as an independent church with its own governance structure. To further its purposes, however, the church may affiliate with any like-minded churches, associations, or denominations.

Article 4 – Membership

4.1. Qualifications

4.1.1. Members of this church shall be believers in Jesus Christ who:

- 4.1.1.a. give evidence of regeneration;
- 4.1.1.b. have been baptized as believers in obedience to Christ;
- 4.1.1.c. hold the doctrines of our church as expressed in the statement of faith (See Appendix I: Statement of Faith); and
- 4.1.1.d. promise in writing to keep the commitments expressed in the church covenant (See Appendix 2: Church Covenant).

4.2. Admission

4.2.1. An applicant shall be received as a member of the church upon the recommendation of the elders and the subsequent agreement of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

4.2.2. No member of this church shall retain membership in any other church.

4.3. Duties and Privileges

4.3.1. Members shall be expected to participate actively in the life of the church by:

- 4.3.1.a. regularly attending its Lord's Day meetings;

- 4.3.1.b. faithfully observing its ordinances, namely, baptism and the Lord's Supper;
- 4.3.1.c. submitting to its discipline and instruction;
- 4.3.1.d. attending its members' meetings;
- 4.3.1.e. voting on the church's governing documents (Constitution and Bylaws, Statement of Faith, and Church Covenant) and on all other matters submitted to the congregation at a members' meeting; and
- 4.3.1.f. contributing to the ministry of the church consistent with the gifts, time, and resources each has received from God.

4.3.2. No person who is not a member shall lead any ministry or hold any office of the church.

4.4. Members' Meeting Responsibilities

4.4.1. The church, duly assembled in a members' meeting, shall be responsible to:

- 4.4.1.a. elect and remove elders, deacons, and other officers;
- 4.4.1.b. receive people into membership;
- 4.4.1.c. recognize that membership has been terminated by death, apostasy, or voluntary resignation;
- 4.4.1.d. exercise church discipline;
- 4.4.1.e. approve an annual budget;
- 4.4.1.f. hear reports from the elders and, from time to time, the deacons; and
- 4.4.1.g. take any other action it deems necessary or desirable.

4.5. Church Discipline

4.5.1. Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of unrepentant conduct contrary to the principles of Scripture, and so opposing the welfare of the church, may be subject to the admonition and discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17, 1 Corinthians 5, and other Scriptures.

4.5.2. Formal church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed.

4.5.3. Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or church, removal from office, and excommunication (see Matthew 18:15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14–15; 1 Timothy 5:19–20; 1 Corinthians 5:4–5).

4.5.4. The purpose of such discipline should be for:

4.5.4.a. the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the person disciplined (see Proverbs 15:5; 29:15; 1 Corinthians 4:14; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:4–5; Hebrews 12:1–11; Psalm 119:115; 141:5; Proverbs 17:10; 25:12; 27:5; Ecclesiastes 7:5; Matthew 7:26–27; 18:15–17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1–5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14–15; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 1:13–14; James 1:22);

4.5.4.b. the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (see Proverbs 13:20; Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 15:33; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 10:24–25);

4.5.4.c. the purity of the church as a whole (see 1 Corinthians 5:6–7; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27; 2 John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21:2);

4.5.4.d. the church's corporate witness to non-Christians (see Proverbs 28:7; Matthew 5:13–16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1–14; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Peter 2:2; 1 John 3:10); and

4.5.4.e. supremely, the glory of God by reflecting his holy character (see Deuteronomy 5:11; 1 Kings 11:2; 2 Chronicles 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 9:2; Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 36:20; Matthew 5:16; John 15:8; Romans 2:24; 15:5–6; 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; 1 Peter 2:12).

4.6. Termination

4.6.1. The church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her death or apostasy.

4.6.2. The church may, upon a majority vote of the members present and voting on the question at any members meeting, recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her voluntary resignation with intent to join another gospel-preaching church.

4.6.3. The church shall have authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with church discipline, or for any other reason the church deems necessary or prudent.

4.6.4. A person's membership may be terminated as a result of church discipline (excommunication). The termination of a person's membership as a result of church discipline shall ordinarily, but not necessarily, be accomplished upon the recommendation of the elders and the later agreement of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

Article 5 – Meetings

5.1. Worship

5.1.1. The church shall meet together for public worship each Lord's Day, and at other times throughout the week as the church may determine.

5.2. Members' Meetings

5.2.1. The church shall hold a regular members' meeting at least four times a year, without displacing the regular gathering of the church on the Lord's Day.

5.2.2. The church shall hold such additional members' meetings as may be determined necessary by the lead pastor or elders, without displacing the regular gathering of the church on the Lord's Day.

5.2.3. No members' meeting shall be held unless the date, time, and place of such meeting has been announced at least one week immediately prior to such members' meeting.

5.2.4. Members' meetings shall proceed in reasonable order, and the members present shall constitute a quorum to do business. Motions shall be adopted by a majority vote of the members present and voting on the question, except on matters otherwise provided for in this Constitution and Bylaws.

Article 6. Government

6.1. Summary

6.1.1. The biblical offices in the church shall be elders and deacons, but final earthly authority is vested in the assembled congregation.

6.2. Elders

6.2.1. Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry, resources, legal affairs, business, and facilities of the church.

6.2.2. The elders shall be composed of at least three men who satisfy the qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 and who shall carry out their duties in accordance with I Peter 5:1-4.

6.2.3. Elders shall be recognized as follows: The elders may present the name of a nominee (or nominees) to the church at any members' meeting. For at least four weeks, the church shall consider whether the nominee is (or nominees are) qualified. Any member intending to vote against a nominee should express his or her objection to at least one elder as early as possible

before the vote. Once at least four weeks have passed, the elders may move the nomination(s) to a vote at a members' meeting. The members shall vote on nominees one at a time. The moderator or his delegates shall count the votes, and any nominee immediately shall become an elder who receives the approval of at least three-quarters of the members present and voting on his nomination. In due haste after the vote, the church shall publicly recognize and set apart all such newly approved elders.

6.2.4. In accordance with I Timothy 2:12 and 3:2, women shall not serve as elders.

6.2.5. With the exception of the preaching elder (also called the lead pastor) and associate pastors, elders shall be reaffirmed by vote of the church triennially, and having served two consecutive three-year terms, shall not be eligible for reelection for one year. Neither a lead pastor nor an associate pastor shall be subject to any term limit.

6.2.6. No elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure.

6.2.7. The elders shall designate one elder to serve as the president of the corporation and one elder to serve as the vice president of the corporation.

6.2.8. The elders shall, in keeping with Scripture (especially Acts 6:1-6; I Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; James 5:14; and I Peter 5:1-5), take responsibility to shepherd God's flock by devoting themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. They shall have particular authority to:

6.2.8.a. plan and oversee worship services;

6.2.8.b. oversee the ordinances, namely baptism and the Lord's Supper;

6.2.8.c. examine and instruct prospective members;

6.2.8.d. oversee the process of church discipline;

6.2.8.e. examine and recommend candidates for all offices and positions;

6.2.8.f. oversee the work of deacons and all other agents of the church;

6.2.8.g. give final oversight, when necessary, to the hiring and termination of non-elder church staff; and

6.2.8.h. take any other action which shall be necessary and proper for faithfully overseeing and shepherding the church.

6.2.9. Annually, after consulting with the deacons and members of the church, the elders shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for discussion at a specially called meeting and moved to a vote on the budget as a whole at the following

members' meeting. In order to be above reproach, no money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.

6.2.10. An elder shall be removed from office upon the vote of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions in Matthew 18:15-17 and I Timothy 5:17-21.

6.3. The Lead Pastor

6.3.1. Primary responsibility for preaching and teaching the Scriptures in public meetings of the church will be vested in the lead pastor. If the lead pastor is absent or incapacitated, the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which may be delegated to someone biblically qualified to perform such duties.

6.3.2. The lead pastor shall be selected as follows: The elders shall present the name of one nominee to the position of preaching elder at a members' meeting. For at least four weeks, the church shall consider the nominee's gifts in preaching and teaching, his commitment to minister personally to the members of this church, and his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. Any member intending to vote against a nominee should express his or her objection to at least one elder as early as possible before the vote. Once at least four weeks have passed, the elders may move the nomination to a vote at a members' meeting. The moderator or his delegates shall count the votes, and if the nominee receives the approval of at least three-quarters of the members present and voting on his nomination, he shall immediately be the preaching elder (and, if he is not yet an elder and member, also an elder and member). In a reasonable time after the vote, the church shall publicly recognize and set apart the lead pastor.

6.3.3. The lead pastor shall meet all the qualifications and hold all the rights and responsibilities of a church member. He shall meet all the qualifications and hold all the duties and responsibilities of an elder. In terms of formal authority, there shall be no distinction between an elder and a preaching elder.

6.3.4. The lead pastor shall not be subject to any term limit.

6.3.5. The lead pastor shall be removed from office upon the vote of at least three-quarters of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions in Matthew 18:15-17 and I Timothy 5:17-21.

6.4. Associate Pastors

6.4.1. The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the preaching elder (or lead pastor) is that of associate. Other pastoral responsibilities may be vested in one or more associate pastors.

6.4.2. An associate pastor shall be selected in the same manner as the lead pastor. *See Art. 6, Sec. 6.3.2.*

6.4.3. An associate pastor shall meet all the qualifications and hold all the rights and responsibilities of a church member. He shall meet all the qualifications and hold all the duties and responsibilities of an elder. In terms of formal authority, there shall be no distinction between an elder and an associate pastor.

6.4.4. An associate pastor shall not be subject to any term limit.

6.4.5. An associate pastor shall be removed from office upon the vote of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions in Matthew 18:15-17 and I Timothy 5:17-21.

6.5. Deacons

6.5.1. Particular service to the church shall be provided by deacons who will vary in number depending on the needs of the church, and who shall satisfy the qualifications in I Timothy 3:8-13.

6.5.2. The deacons shall not meet together regularly as a body. Each diaconate position shall serve a particular need of the church and shall be created or dissolved upon the recommendation of the elders and the later agreement of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

6.5.3. Deacons shall be recognized as follows: The elders may present the name of a nominee (or nominees) to the church at any members' meeting. For at least four weeks, the church shall consider whether the nominee is (or nominees are) qualified. Any member intending to vote against a nominee should express his or her objection to at least one elder as early as possible before the vote. Once at least four weeks have passed, the elders may move the nomination(s) to a vote at a members' meeting. The members shall vote on nominees one at a time. The moderator or his delegates shall count the votes, and any nominee immediately shall become a deacon who receives the approval of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting on his (or her) nomination. In due haste after the vote, the church shall publicly recognize and set apart all such newly approved deacons.

6.5.4. Deacons shall be elected to one term lasting two years; however, based on the discretion of the elders and willingness of the deacon, the term may be extended one more year. After the term is completed, he or she shall not be eligible for reelection for one year.

6.5.5. In keeping with the principles in Acts 6:1-6, deacons shall enable the elders to devote themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word, work to maintain the unity of the church, and care for the physical needs of the church.

6.5.6. The church may recognize deacons to take responsibility to:

6.5.6.a. care for the temporal needs of members;

6.5.6.b. attend to the accommodations for public worship; and

6.5.6.c. encourage, support, and mobilize those able to help others and those with gifts of administration.

6.5.7. The deacons, with the agreement of the elders, may establish unpaid administrative positions or teams of members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the church.

6.5.8. A deacon may be removed from office upon the recommendation of the elders and the later vote of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

Article 7. Administration

7.1. President

7.1.1. The elders' designee, whether the lead pastor or another elder, shall serve as president of the corporation, assuming all the responsibilities delegated by the elders. The president or chairman of the elders shall execute any necessary documents on behalf of the church, except where that responsibility is expressly delegated by the elders to some other officer or agent of the church.

7.2. Vice President

7.2.1. The elders' designee, whether the lead pastor or another elder, shall serve as vice president of the corporation, assuming all the responsibilities delegated by the elders. The vice president shall support the president's general supervision and direction of the business and affairs of the church .

7.3. Secretary

7.3.1. The secretary shall record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church.

7.3.2. The secretary shall be a member of the church.

7.3.3. The secretary shall be selected to a renewable term of one year upon the recommendation of the elders and the later agreement of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

7.3.4. The secretary may be removed from office by a majority vote of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

7.4. Treasurer

7.4.1. The treasurer shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in the banks, financial institutions, or depositories utilized by the church. The treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are carefully recorded, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The treasurer shall provide to the elders at least once a year, or whenever the elders may request it, an account of all financial transactions since the last complete account and of the financial condition of the church. The treasurer shall also ensure that a report of the account balances, revenues, and expenses of the church are shared at regular members' meetings.

7.4.2. The treasurer shall be selected to a renewable term of one year upon the recommendation of the elders and the later agreement of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

7.4.3. No person shall serve more than three consecutive terms as treasurer.

7.4.4. The treasurer shall be a member of the church. No paid staff member of the church may serve as treasurer.

7.4.5. The treasurer shall be removed from office upon the recommendation of the elders and the later vote of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

Article 8. Amendments

8.1. The Statement of Faith or Church Covenant shall be amended upon the recommendation of the elders and the agreement of at least three-quarters of the members voting on the question at any members' meeting, provided the amendment was presented by the elders in writing at a previous members' meeting and was announced at least two weeks before the vote.

8.2. This Constitution and Bylaws shall be amended upon the recommendation of the elders and the agreement of at least two-thirds of the members voting on the question at any members' meeting, provided the amendment was presented by the elders in writing at a previous members' meeting and was announced at least two weeks before the vote.

Article 9. Dispute Resolution

9.1. Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian church (see, e.g., Matt.

18:15-20; 1 Cor. 6:1-8), the church shall urge its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without resorting to the civil courts.

9.2. In the case of alleged criminal behavior, it may be appropriate to resolve conflict in the criminal courts, not least because such alleged criminal behavior may in some cases legally be required to be reported to the government authorities.

9.3. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage members to use biblical principles and avoid lawsuits to resolve disputes among themselves. The elders may adopt policies and procedures to encourage the church to live up to these aspirations.

Article 10. Statement on Marriage

10.1. Consistent with the beliefs expressed in the Statement of Faith, the church believes that marriage is a biblical institution established by God as clearly described in the Scriptures; that it consists of the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime; and that it models the way God relates to his people. Accordingly, the church, including its pastors, staff, and members, will not participate in same sex marriages or same sex unions, including ceremonies or other similar events related thereto, nor shall the church's property or resources be used for such purposes.

Appendix 1: Statement of Faith

Adapted from the 1853 New Hampshire Declaration of Faith

I. The Scriptures. We believe the Holy Bible was written by people who were divinely inspired, and that it is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction.¹ God is its author; salvation is its purpose; and truth, without any mixture of error, is its content.² Scripture reveals the principles by which God will judge us.³ Therefore, it is now, and will be to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard for evaluating all human conduct, creeds, and opinions.⁴

¹ 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21; 2 Samuel 23:2; Acts 1:16, 3:21; John 10:35; Luke 16:29-31; Psalm 119:111; Romans 3:1-2.

² 2 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 1:10-12; Acts 11:14; Romans 1:16, 3:4; Mark 16:16; John 5:38-39, 17:17; Proverbs 30:5-6; Revelation 22:18-19.

³ Romans 2:12; John 12:47-48; 1 Corinthians 4:3-4; Luke 10:10-16, 12:47-48.

⁴ Philippians 1:9-11, 2:1-2, 3:16; Ephesians 4:3-6, 6:17; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Peter 4:11; 1 John 4:1, 4:6; Isaiah 8:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Acts 17:11; Jude 3; Psalm 119:59-60.

II. The True God. We believe there is one and only one living and true God—an infinite, intelligent Spirit. His name is the LORD, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth.¹ He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness and is worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love.² In the unity of the Godhead there are three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Spirit.³ They are equal in every divine perfection, and they carry out distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.⁴

¹ John 4:24; Psalm 83:18, 147:5; Hebrews 3:4; Romans 1:20; Jeremiah 10:10.

² Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 6:3; I Peter 1:15-16; Revelation 4:6-8, 4:11; Mark 12:30; Matthew 10:37; Jeremiah 2:12-13.

³ Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; I Corinthians 12:4-6; I John 5:7.

⁴ John 5:17, 10:30, 14:23, 17:5, 17:10; Acts 5:3-4; I Corinthians 2:10-11; Philippians 2:5-6; Ephesians 2:18; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Revelation 1:4-5.

III. Humanity and the Fall. We believe humanity is the special creation of God, made in his own image.¹ God created them male and female as the crowning work of his creation.² God created the human race in holiness under his law.³ By voluntary transgression, however, humanity fell from that holy and happy state.⁴ As a result, all people are now sinners, not by external compulsion but by choice.⁵ They by nature entirely lack the holiness that is required by the law of God and are actively inclined to evil; therefore, they are under just condemnation to a sentence of eternal ruin, without defense or excuse.⁶

¹ Genesis 1:27.

² Genesis 1:27, 1:31; Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6.

³ Ecclesiastes 7:29; Acts 17:26-29; Genesis 2:16-17.

⁴ Genesis 3:6-24; Romans 5:12.

⁵ Romans 3:9-18, 5:15-19, 8:7; John 3:6; Psalm 51:5; Isaiah 53:6; Genesis 6:12.

⁶ Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 1:18, 1:20, 1:32, 2:1-16, 3:19; Galatians 3:10, 3:22; Matthew 20:15; Ezekiel 18:19-20.

IV. The Way of Salvation. We believe the salvation of sinners is completely by grace, through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God.¹ By the appointment of the Father, he freely took to himself our nature, but without sin.² He honored the divine law by his personal obedience and made a full atonement for our sins by his substitutionary death, satisfying God's wrath.³ He rose from the dead and is now enthroned in heaven.⁴ Jesus, the Son, unites in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections and, as such, is qualified in every way to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.⁵

¹ Ephesians 2:8; Matthew 18:11; I John 4:10; I Corinthians 3:5-7; Acts 15:11; John 1:1-14, 3:16; Hebrews 4:14, 12:24.

² Philippians 2:6-7; Hebrews 2:9, 2:14; 2 Corinthians 5:21.

³ Isaiah 42:21, 53:4-5; Philippians 2:8; Galatians 4:4-5; Romans 3:21-26, 4:25; Matthew 20:28; I John 2:2, 4:10; I Corinthians 15:1-3; Hebrews 9:13-15.

⁴ Hebrews 1:3, 1:8, 8:1; Colossians 3:1-4.

⁵ Hebrews 2:18, 7:25-26; Colossians 2:9; Psalm 34.

V. Justification. We believe the great gospel blessing that Christ¹ secures to those who believe in him is justification.² Justification includes the pardon of sin,³ righteous standing before God, and the promise of eternal life founded on principles of righteousness.⁴ It is not given because of any works of righteousness we have done but only through faith in the Redeemer's blood.⁵ By virtue of this faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us by God.⁶ Justification immediately brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God and secures every other blessing we need for time and eternity.⁷

¹ John 1:16; Ephesians 3:8.

² Acts 13:39; Isaiah 53:11-12; Romans 8:1.

³ Romans 5:9; Zechariah 13:1; Matthew 9:6; Acts 10:43.

⁴ Romans 5:17; Titus 3:5-7; I Peter 3:7; I John 2:25; Romans 5:21.

⁵ Romans 4:4-5; Romans 5:21; Romans 6:23; Philippians 3:7-9.

⁶ Romans 5:19; Romans 3:24-26; Romans 4:23-25; 1 John 2:12.

⁷ Romans 5:1-3, 11; 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; Matthew 6:33; 1 Timothy 4:8.

VI. The Freeness of Salvation. We believe the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel.¹ It is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a heartfelt, penitent, and obedient faith.² Nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and rejection of God.³

¹ Isaiah 55:1; Revelation 22:17; Luke 14:17.

² Romans 16:26; Mark 1:15; Romans 1:15-17.

³ John 5:40; Matthew 23:37; Romans 9:32; Proverbs 1:24; Acts 13:46.

VII. Grace in Regeneration. We believe sinners must be regenerated, or born again, to be saved.¹ Regeneration consists of God's gift of a holy inclination to the mind.² It is accomplished in a way that is beyond our comprehension. It is carried out by the power of the Holy Spirit using divine truth³ to obtain our voluntary obedience to the gospel.⁴ The proper evidence of regeneration appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith, and newness of life.⁵

¹ John 3:3, 6-7; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Revelation 14:3; Revelation 21:27.

² Corinthians 5:17; Ezekiel 36:26; Deuteronomy 30:6; Romans 2:28-29; Romans 5:5; 1 John 4:7.

³ John 3:8; John 1:13; James 1:16-18; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Philippians 2:13.

⁴ 1 Peter 1:22-25; 1 John 5:1; Ephesians 4:20-24; Colossians 3:9-11.

⁵ Ephesians 5:9; Romans 8:9; Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 2:14-21; Matthew 3:8-10; Matthew 7:20; 1 John 5:4, 18.

VIII. Repentance and Faith. We believe repentance and faith are sacred duties as well as inseparable graces. They are produced in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God,¹ who convinces us of our guilt, danger, helplessness, and the way of salvation by Christ.² And they consist of turning to God with genuine sorrow, confession, and a petition for mercy;³ receiving heartily the Lord Jesus Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King; and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior.⁴

¹ Mark 1:15; Acts 11:18; Ephesians 2:8; 1 John 5:1.

² John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38; Acts 16:30-31.

³ Luke 18:13; Luke 15:18-21; James 4:7-10; 2 Corinthians 7:11; Romans 10:12-13; Psalm 51.

⁴ Romans 10:9-11; Acts 3:22-23; Hebrews 4:14; Psalm 2:6; Hebrews 1:8; Hebrews 7:25; 2 Timothy 1:12.

IX. God's Purpose of Grace. We believe election is the eternal purpose of God according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners.¹ Election is perfectly consistent with human free agency and includes all the means necessary to achieve God's purpose[1].² It is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, which is infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable.³ Election completely rules out boasting and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and the active imitation of his free mercy.⁴ It encourages the greatest possible exercise of human responsibility[2].⁵ The election of individuals may be confirmed by its effects in everyone who truly believes the gospel.⁶ Election is the foundation of Christian assurance,⁷ and confirming our election deserves our greatest diligence.⁸

¹ 2 Timothy 1:8-9; Ephesians 1:3-14; 1 Peter 1:1-2; Romans 11:5-6; John 15:16; 1 John 4:19.

² 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; Acts 13:48; John 10:16; Matthew 20:16; Acts 15:14.

³ Exodus 33:18-19; Matthew 20:15; Ephesians 1:11; Romans 9:23-24; Jeremiah 31:3; Romans 11:28-29; James 1:17-18; 2 Timothy 1:9; Romans 11:32-36.

⁴ 1 Corinthians 4:7; 1 Corinthians 1:26-31; Romans 3:27; Romans 4:16; Colossians 3:12; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 1 Peter 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:12-13; 1 Peter 2:9; Luke 18:7.

⁵ 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Corinthians 9:22; John 6:37-40; 2 Peter 1:10.

⁶ *1 Thessalonians 1:4-10.*

⁷ *Romans 8:28-30; Isaiah 42:16; Romans 11:29.*

⁸ *2 Peter 1:10-11; Philippians 3:12; Hebrews 6:11.*

X. Sanctification. We believe sanctification is the process by which we are made partakers of God's holiness, according to his purpose.¹ Sanctification is a progressive work.² It begins in regeneration³ and continues in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and by God's appointed means. These means include the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, prayer, and the oversight and fellowship of the visible church.⁴

¹ *1 Thessalonians 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Corinthians 7:1; 2 Corinthians 13:9; Ephesians 1:4.*

² *Proverbs 4:18; Hebrews 6:1; 2 Peter 1:5-8; Philippians 3:12-16.*

³ *1 John 2:29; Romans 8:5; John 3:6; Philippians 1:9-11.*

⁴ *Philippians 2:12-13; Ephesians 4:11-12, 30; Ephesians 6:18; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Luke 9:23; Luke 11:35; Matthew 26:41; Ephesians 6:18.*

XI. The Perseverance of Saints. We believe all genuine believers endure to the end.¹ Their persevering obedience to Christ is the primary mark distinguishing them from superficial professors.² A special providence watches over their welfare,³ and they are kept by the power of God through faith to salvation.⁴

¹ *John 8:31; 1 John 2:27-28; 1 John 3:9; 1 John 5:18.*

² *1 John 2:19; John 13:18; Matthew 13:20-21; John 6:66-69.*

³ *Romans 8:28; Matthew 6:30-33; Jeremiah 32:40; Psalm 121:3; Psalm 91:11-12.*

⁴ *Philippians 1:6; Philippians 2:12-13; Jude 24-25; Hebrews 1:14; Hebrews 13:5; 1 John 4:4.*

XII. The Harmony of the Law and the Gospel. We believe the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral governance.¹ It is holy, just, and good.² Fallen human beings are unable to fulfill the precepts of the law, which the Scriptures attribute entirely to their love of sin.³ A chief purpose of the gospel is to deliver people from this love of sin and to restore them through a mediator to a sincere obedience to the holy law. The visible church's means of grace also serve this great purpose.⁴

¹ *Romans 3:31; Matthew 5:17; Luke 16:17; Romans 3:20; Romans 4:15.*

² *Romans 7:12; Romans 7:7, 14, 22; Galatians 3:21; Psalm 119.*

³ *Romans 8:7-8; Joshua 24:19; Jeremiah 13:23; John 6:44; John 5:44.*

⁴ *Romans 8:2-4; Romans 10:4; Hebrews 8:10; Hebrews 12:14; Jude 20-21.*

XIII. A Gospel Church. We believe a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers,¹ joined by commitment to one another in the faith and fellowship of the gospel.² A visible church observes the ordinances of Christ,³ submits to his laws,⁴ and exercises the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word.⁵ The only scriptural officers of the church are elders (also called overseers or pastors) and deacons,⁶ whose qualifications and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and to Titus.

¹ *1 Corinthians 1:1-13; Matthew 18:17; Acts 5:11; Acts 8:1; Acts 11:21-23; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 14:23; 3 John 9.*

² *Acts 2:41-42; 2 Corinthians 8:5; Acts 2:47; 1 Corinthians 5:12-13.*

³ *1 Corinthians 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; Romans 16:17-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Matthew 18:15-20; 2 Corinthians 2:17; 1 Corinthians 4:17.*

⁴ *Matthew 28:20; John 14:15; John 15:12; 1 John 4:21; John 14:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:2; 2 John 6; Galatians 6:2; All the Epistles.*

⁵ *Ephesians 4:7; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Philippians 1:27.*

⁶ *Philippians 1:1; Acts 14:23; Acts 15:22; 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1.*

XIV. Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water¹ into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.² It is a solemn and beautiful emblem that declares our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, as well as our union with him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life.³ Baptism is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and the Lord's Supper.⁴ We likewise believe that the Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby the members of the church, following earnest self-examination, use bread and the cup in a sacred manner to commemorate together the dying love of Christ.⁵ The ordinances belong to the gathered church, distinguishing believers from unbelievers and making the church visible on earth.⁶

¹ Acts 8:36-39; Matthew 3:5-6; John 3:22-23; John 4:1-2; Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:12; Acts 16:32-34; Acts 18:8.

² Matthew 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; Galatians 3:27-28.

³ Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12; I Peter 3:20-21; Acts 22:16.

⁴ Acts 2:41-42; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts, and Epistles.

⁵ I Corinthians 11:26; Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20.

⁶ I Corinthians 11:28; I Corinthians 5:1, 8; I Corinthians 10:3-32; I Corinthians 11:17-32; John 6:26-71.

XV. The Lord's Day. We believe one day of the week is to be kept holy and set apart to God as a sabbath for regular observance.¹ This day commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead on the first day of the week and points to the eternal rest that awaits the people of God.² It is a day when, after preparing our hearts and ordering our affairs beforehand, we devote ourselves to both public³ and private exercises of worship,⁴ and it includes carrying out duties of necessity and mercy commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

¹ Exodus 20:8; Revelation 1:10; Psalm 118:24; Hebrews 10:24-25.

² Hebrews 4:3-11.

³ Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 11:26; Isaiah 58:13-14.

⁴ Psalm 118:15

XVI. Civil Government

We believe civil government exists by divine appointment for the benefit and good order of human society.¹ Government officials are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed.² The exception is for matters contrary to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ,³ who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.⁴

¹ Romans 13:1-7; Deuteronomy 16:18; 2 Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21-23; Jeremiah 30:21.

² Matthew 22:21; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13; I Timothy 2:1-3.

³ Acts 5:29; Matthew 10:28; Daniel 3:15-18; Daniel 6:7-10; Acts 4:18-20.

⁴ Matthew 23:10; Romans 14:4; Revelation 19:16; Psalm 72:11; Psalm 2; Romans 14:9-13.

XVII. The Righteous and the Wicked

We believe there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked.¹ Only those who are justified by faith in the name of the Lord Jesus and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in his judgment.² In contrast, all those who continue in impenitence and unbelief are wicked in his sight and under the curse.³ This distinction among people holds both at death and afterward.⁴

¹ Malachi 3:18; Proverbs 12:26; Isaiah 5:20; Genesis 18:23; Acts 10:34-35; Romans 6:16.

² Romans 1:17; Romans 7:6; I John 2:29; I John 3:7; Romans 6:18, 22; I Corinthians 11:32; Proverbs 11:31; I Peter 4:17-18.

³ I John 5:19; Galatians 3:10; John 3:36; Isaiah 57:21; Psalm 10:4; Isaiah 55:6-7.

⁴ Proverbs 14:32; Luke 16:25; John 8:21-24; Proverbs 10:24; Luke 12:4-5; Luke 9:23-26; John 12:25-26; Ecclesiastes 3:17; Matthew 7:13-14.

XVIII. The World to Come

We believe the end of the world is approaching.¹ At the last day Christ will descend from heaven² and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution.³ A public separation will then take place,⁴ in which the wicked will be justly assigned to endless punishment and the righteous to endless joy.⁵ This judgment will determine forever on principles of righteousness the final state of people in heaven or hell.⁶

¹ 1 Peter 4:7; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Hebrews 1:10-12; Matthew 25:31; Matthew 28:20; Matthew 13:39-43; 1 John 2:17; 2 Peter 3:3-13.

² Acts 1:11; Revelation 1:7; Hebrews 9:28; Acts 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11.

³ Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:12-59; Luke 14:14; Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; John 6:40; John 11:25-26; Acts 10:42.

⁴ Matthew 13:49; Matthew 13:37-43; Matthew 24:30-31; Matthew 25:31-33.

⁵ Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 22:11; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Mark 9:43-48; 2 Peter 2:9; Jude 7; Philippians 3:19; Romans 6:32; 2 Corinthians 5:10-11; John 4:36; 2 Corinthians 4:18.

⁶ Romans 3:5-6; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-12; Hebrews 6:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Acts 17:31; Romans 2:2-16; Revelation 20:11-12; 1 John 2:28; 1 John 4:17; 2 Peter 3:11-12.

Appendix 2: Church Covenant

By God's grace, we are gathered as those who have repented and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. We have given ourselves to him and affirmed one another as citizens of his kingdom through baptism and the Lord's Supper. Relying on his gracious aid, we do now solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with each other.

We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.¹

We will walk together in love as Christ commands, caring for one another, watching over one another, and encouraging and admonishing one another as occasion requires.²

We will regularly attend the church's gatherings and faithfully pray for one another.³

We will endeavor to lead those in our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, as well as to seek the salvation of our family and friends.⁴

We will rejoice at each other's happiness and bear each other's burdens and sorrows.⁵

With God's help, we will live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly desires. Our symbolic burial and resurrection in baptism testifies to this special obligation to live a new and holy life.⁶

We will work together to maintain a faithful gospel witness in our worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the spread of the gospel to all nations.⁷

If we leave this congregation, we will join another gospel-preaching church as soon as possible where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.⁸

¹ Eph. 4:1-3

² John 13:35; Rom. 12:10; I Thes. 4:9; Heb. 13:1; I Pet. 1:22, 3:8

³ Heb. 10:24-25; Jas. 5:16

⁴ Ps. 105:1; Mt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-47; John 20:21

⁵ Rom. 12:15; Gal. 6:2

⁶ Rom. 6:1-14; I Cor. 3; Eph. 5:4; Col. 3:8-11

⁷ 2 Cor. 9:7, 11:8

⁸ 2 Cor. 13:14