

**CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS**

OF

PARK MEADOWS BAPTIST CHURCH  
800 MEMORIAL PARK ROAD  
LINCOLN, IL

**ARTICLE I – NAME AND PURPOSE**

The name of this church shall be the Park Meadows Baptist Church of Lincoln, Illinois. This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the building of churches, parsonages, schools, chapels, radio stations, television stations, rescue missions, print shops, daycare centers, and camps; the evangelizing of the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture, both in Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education; and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country.

**ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP**

**SECTION 1 | BY BAPTISM** – Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of regeneration, and evidencing no disagreement with the Articles of Faith or the Addendum to the Articles of Faith held by this Church will, upon baptism, be received into its membership.

**SECTION 2 | BY LETTER** – Members from other churches of the same faith and order may be received by letter of recommendation and dismissal from their respective churches.

**SECTION 3 | BY STATEMENT** – Those who have professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and who have been scripturally baptized and who accept the view of faith and practice as adopted by this Church may be received by virtue of their experience on the statement of their faith.

**SECTION 4** | The Congregation shall vote on recommendations for baptism and/or church membership at all regular services of the church.

**SECTION 5** | Excluded or erased members may, by a majority vote, be restored to membership on confession of their error and by giving evidence of their repentance.

**SECTION 6** | Where it is deemed expedient, the candidate shall appear before the Pastor and Deacons for advice and instructions before the name is presented for membership.

**SECTION 7** | Termination of membership in this Church may be by any of the following actions:

- a) By granting letters of dismissal to sister Baptist Churches.
- b) By erasure. Members who are known to be deceased, or known to have united with some other Church, or who request that their names be dropped from the membership may be erased from the

Church Roll. Any member will also cease to be a member of the church the moment he or she refuses to affirm the Articles of Faith or the Addendum to the Articles of Faith.

The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church in the preceding six months. Automatic exceptions to this would be college students, military personnel, shut ins, missionaries, and evangelists who were faithful in attendance before their extended absence. This may also be waived for other exceptions should those exceptions be approved by the pastor and deacons.

- c) By exclusion. The following steps must be taken for a member to be excluded. (The ultimate purpose of these steps is not to exclude but restore. See Matthew 18:15 - 17; Galatians 6:2; I Cor. 5:5; II Cor. 2:3 - 11)
- (1) The offender shall be approached in love and humility by a leader of the Church.
  - (2) If necessary, a second contact shall be made by the same individual taking two or three others with him.
  - (3) The men of the Church shall be notified so that prayer can be made for the offender and so that other contacts can be made.
  - (4) The men of the church shall vote to exclude the offender until such times as he/she can be restored. If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the church membership, all contact with him from that point forward (except by family members) should be primarily for the sake of restoration.

The procedures provided in this section are based on Matt. 18:15-20; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:1-11; Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6, 10-15; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.

### ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP RULES

SECTION 1 | ACTIVE MEMBERS – All those who show interest in the welfare of the church by regular attendance and financial support as well as those who, because of sickness, age, infirmities, service in the Armed Forces, etc. are unable to attend services or contribute financial support shall be classed as active members.

SECTION 2 | INACTIVE MEMBERS – All those who, without reasonable excuse, do not attend the regular services of the Church for a period of three months may be placed on an inactive list. Any members on the inactive list shall automatically become active members upon their resumption of regular attendance and financial support.

Those on the Inactive Membership List may be subject to the steps outlined in ARTICLE TWO, SECTION 7, PARAGRAPH C, at any time.

### ARTICLE IV – DUTIES AND PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS

Each member is expected to take a hearty interest in all Church activities, attend all congregational services as regularly as possible, and cheerfully contribute to the spiritual and material needs of the Church and its work.

In addition, each member further covenants to love, honor, and esteem the pastor; to pray for him; to recognize his authority in spiritual affairs of the church; to cherish a brotherly love for all members of

the church; and in accordance with Biblical commands, to affirm through a lifestyle walk the beliefs and practices of the church.

## **PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP**

- (A) Only active members at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. The eligible membership of the church has certain limited areas to exercise a vote. Members may not vote to initiate any church action, rather the vote of a member is to confirm and ratify the direction of the church as determined by the pastor and the board of deacons.
- (B) This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the undershepherd with the counsel of the board of deacons and others. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The pastor shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this church. The board of deacons shall give counsel and assistance to the pastor as requested by him.
- (C) Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board of deacons) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of the pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board of deacons), be treated as a trespasser.

No member of this church may hold membership in another church. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member unites in membership with another church.

- (D) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member states that he or she is actively involved in any conduct described in the Addendum to the Articles of Faith Sections (E) or (H) or files a lawsuit in violation of Section (K).

## ARTICLE V – OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

SECTION 1 | The officers of this Church shall be as follows:

1. The Pastor (and Associate Pastor[s] and/or Assistant Pastor[s])
2. The Board of Deacons
3. The Board of Trustees
4. Church Treasurer (and Assistant Treasurer)
5. Church Clerk

All officers of the Church and all officers, teachers, and leaders in any Church Position shall be: (1) Faithful to all public services of the Church; (2) Loyal to the pastor and the program of the church; (3) Separate from

worldliness.

School staff shall be viewed as Church Staff and thus subject to the same conditions, obligations, and responsibilities as all other Church Staff. (The only exception to this shall be School Staff who would meet the above qualifications in their own Church and have the Deacons' approval to work in the school.)

## ARTICLE VI – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1 | The Pastor shall be the moderator of the Church. He may call the Deacons of the Church together for special meetings to transact the business of the Church. He shall have charge of all services of the congregation, and shall devote his time and energies to the welfare of the Church. He shall visit members of the congregation and assist them spiritually; admonish and correct the indifferent and sinners; and administer Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He shall also be counselor and overseer of all organizations of the church.

SECTION 2 | The Deacons shall meet once each month. They shall select a chairman and a secretary from among their own number. The Secretary shall keep a record of the minutes and proceedings of all meetings. The Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall act as Moderator of the Church in the absence of the Pastor or Associate Pastor. The Pastor and the Board of Deacons shall constitute a standing committee for the purpose of examining questionable applications for membership and to which all matters of discipline shall be referred. They shall have general supervision of all the departments. It shall be the duty of the Deacons to seek out such members of the Church who need pecuniary assistance and to use the alms of the Church for their relief, to visit the sick, to prepare and distribute the elements of the Lord's Supper, to have general supervision of the spiritual interest of the Church, to provide for the Service of Worship, and cooperate with and assist the Pastor in the performance of his duties. The Board of Deacons shall act in an advisory capacity concerning all matters of Church Business, and in the employing and dismissing of Staff Members.

SECTION 3 | The Trustees shall compose a board of five men whose primary responsibility shall be the oversight of all Church properties. They shall act in an advisory capacity to the Church concerning legal transactions and shall be given power by the Church to act on its behalf concerning the purchase of properties and all other legal matters.

SECTION 4 | The Church Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all moneys received and disburse them by the direction of the church. He shall give a report of the treasury to the Church. Records indicating the financial condition of the Church shall be available to any active Church Member. An attempt shall be made to use designated funds for their designated purposes, but a guarantee is not made that this shall always be the case. Offerings may not be designated for purposes not approved by the pastor and/or the deacons.

SECTION 5 | The Church Clerk shall keep a complete record of all the official acts of the Church. He/she shall keep a complete record of the Active, Inactive, and Erased Membership.

SECTION 6 | All officers shall surrender all records in their possession at the close of their term of office to be filed as a permanent record of the work of the church. All records are the property of the church and must be returned to the church office at any time so requested by church staff or deacons.

## ARTICLE VII – ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1 | The Pastor and Associate Pastor and Assistant Pastor shall be elected for an indefinite term which shall

terminate upon thirty days written notice by either the Pastor, Associate Pastor, Assistant Pastor or the Church. The Pastorate shall terminate for either Pastor or Associate Pastor or Assistant Pastor immediately upon his refusal to affirm the church's Articles of Faith or the Addendum to the Articles of Faith. He will also cease to be a member of the church the moment he refuses to affirm the Articles of Faith or the Addendum to the Articles of Faith.

In calling a Pastor, the Deacons shall appoint a pulpit committee, the number of which shall be decided by the Deacons. This pulpit committee shall consist of the most spiritual and experienced members of the Church. Duties of the Pulpit Committee shall be to seek out and recommend to the Church qualified Ministers as candidates. Before presenting any candidate to the congregation for their consideration as God's Man, the Pulpit Committee shall examine said candidate as to his beliefs, practices, and calling. After the candidate has been presented to the congregation, the active members of the church will then have an opportunity to vote for or against the candidate. Seventy-five percent of the votes cast shall be necessary in order to constitute a call.

SECTION 2 | Members of the Board of Deacons shall be elected for an indefinite term which shall terminate upon written notice by either a Deacon or the Church. The office of Deacon shall be terminated immediately upon any Deacon's refusal to affirm the Articles of Faith or the Addendum to the Articles of Faith of the Church.

The number of Deacons shall be at least seven (if possible). However, seven shall not be considered a necessary maximum number should the responsibilities of the Office require more men.

Should a need for Deacons arise, the present Pastor, and Associate Pastor, along with all active Deacons, shall meet privately, with each man bringing a list of men he considers Biblically qualified to serve as a Deacon. The men shall be presented to the Board, and a 100% vote of those present shall be necessary before any man may be considered further.

Upon the selection of a man (or men), representatives from the Deacon Board shall contact said individuals and question them in relation to:

- (1) Their qualifications for the office; and
- (2) Their sense of God's Call to the office.

The candidate shall then be presented to the congregation, and active members of the Church given an opportunity to vote for or against the Candidate. Seventy-five Percent of the votes cast shall be necessary in order to constitute a call.

SECTION 3 | Members of the Board of Trustees shall serve a regular term of three years and shall be permitted to succeed themselves in office.

SECTION 4 | All other officers shall serve a regular term of one year commencing January 1.

SECTION 5 | Staff Members, besides the Pastor and Associate Pastor, (including Christian School Staff) shall be approved by the Pastor and Deacons.

SECTION 6 | ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE

- (A) The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Articles of Faith and the Addendum to the Articles of Faith. All church officers, upon request of the pastor, shall affirm their agreement with the Articles of Faith and the Addendum to

the Articles of Faith.

- (B) All church officers must be approved initially by the church and thereafter annually by the pastor in order for them to commence or continue in their offices.
- (C) Only church members are eligible for election or appointment to any church office or position.

#### SECTION 7 | TERMS OF OFFICE

- (A) The relationship between the pastor and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of a month's notice, or less by mutual consent. The calling of a pastor or severance of the relationship between the pastor and the church may be considered at any regular church business meeting, provided notice to that effect shall have been given from the pulpit to the church two Sundays prior to said regular church business meeting. A three-fourths majority of the eligible members present and voting shall be required to call a pastor or to sever the relationship between the pastor and the church.  
Disciplinary removal of the pastor from office automatically terminates his membership. A restoration to membership after disciplinary removal will be subject to the requirements of Article II, Section 5.  
Members of the board of deacons may be removed from office for unbiblical conduct, as determined by the other board members, upon a majority vote of the remaining members of the board of deacons.
- (B) A vacancy occurring in any office or board, except in the case of the pastor, may be filled at any regular church business meeting.
- (C) All elected and appointed officers shall serve in their respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed.

### ARTICLE VIII- BUSINESS PROCEDURE

SECTION 1 | A regular business meeting shall be held by the Church each quarter. If possible, this meeting shall be held the second Wednesday of the last month in the quarter. Special business meetings may be held at any time with a one week notice to the church. This notice may be given by announcement from the pulpit in regular church services.

SECTION 2 | Each business session shall open and close with prayer.

SECTION 3 | A quorum must be present to conduct a business meeting. A quorum shall be defined as those active members present at a regular business meeting or a special business meeting.

SECTION 4 | No member shall be allowed to speak more than twice on the same subject, unless by permission of the chair.

SECTION 5 | No unfavorable personal remarks concerning any member shall be made; anyone judged guilty of such remarks shall be required by the Moderator to be seated.

## ARTICLE IX – INDEMNIFICATION

### SECTION 1 | ACTIONS SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

The church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church, against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding; and if that person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

### SECTION 2 | EXPENSES SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

To the extent that a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in this Article, or in defense of any claim, issue, or matter in that action, suit, or proceeding, he or she may be indemnified against expenses, including attorneys' fees, actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding.

### SECTION 3 | LIMITATIONS OF INDEMNIFICATION

Any indemnification made under this Article, may be made by the church only as authorized in the specific case on a determination that indemnification of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Section 1. The determination shall be made (a) by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the pastor and deacons who were not and are not parties to or threatened with the action, suit, or proceeding; (b) if the described quorum is not obtainable or if a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested deacons so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by a majority vote of the members of the church.

### SECTION 4 | TIMING OF INDEMNIFICATION

Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article, may be paid by the church as they are incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, as authorized by the board of deacons in the specific case, on receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the church.

### SECTION 5 | EXTENT OF INDEMNIFICATION

The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise

required as a matter of law or under any agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the church, both as to action of each person seeking indemnification under this Article in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding that office, and may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent and may inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

#### SECTION 6 | INSURANCE

The church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this Article.

### ARTICLE X – BINDING ARBITRATION

#### SECTION 1 | SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION

Believing that lawsuits between believers are prohibited by Scripture, all members of this church agree to submit to binding arbitration any matters which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bringing any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

#### SECTION 2 | NOTICE OF ARBITRATION

In the event of any dispute, claim, question, or disagreement arising out of or relating to these bylaws or any other church matter, the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreement as befits Christians. To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interests not to disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution. If they do not reach such solution within a period of sixty (60) days, then upon notice by either party to the other, disputes, claims, questions, or differences shall be finally settled by arbitration as described in Section 1, above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to Section 4, below.

#### SECTION 3 | LIMITATIONS ON ARBITRATION DECISIONS

- (A) Should any dispute involve matters of church discipline, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures for church discipline as outlined under Section 4, were followed.
- (B) Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the pastor or any church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in Article 7 were followed.

#### SECTION 4 | ARBITRATION PROCEDURES

The Procedures for Arbitration shall be as adopted by the pastor and the board of deacons.

## ARTICLE XI – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

### SECTION 1 | PURPOSE

The church believes that, as much as is possible, it is to provide the members' children with an education which is based upon and consistent with Biblical teachings. We believe that both the home and the church are responsible before God for this great work. To this end, the church shall engage in ministries in education in keeping with the following dictates.

### SECTION 2 | CHURCH PARTICIPATION

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the church; however, the pastor may permit nonchurch members to participate in church educational programs or courses of instruction if he deems it in the best interest of the church.

### SECTION 3 | STAFF MEMBERSHIP

All instructors, teachers, and administrators shall be members of this church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, or preachers engaged for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals, or other special meetings on a temporary basis. Further exceptions may be made for teachers who would meet the qualifications of Article 5 and have the Pastor's and Deacon's approval to work in the school.

### SECTION 4 | STATEMENT OF FAITH ACCORD

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the Statement of Faith of the church. The church shall not hire, appoint, or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Articles of Faith or the Addendum to the Articles of Faith.

### SECTION 5 | UNITY

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the church.

### SECTION 6 | TEACHING

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted consistent with the teaching of the inerrant Word of God. Any assertion or belief which conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every instructor or teacher to present the inerrant Word of God as the sole infallible source of knowledge and wisdom.

### SECTION 7 | CHRISTIAN WALK

All administrators, instructors, and teachers shall continue or adopt a lifestyle consistent with the precepts which they teach, whether in or out of the classroom.

## ARTICLE XII AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any regular business meeting by a simple majority vote, provided four weeks notice has been given the Church.

## ARTICLES OF FAITH

### **Article I: *The Scriptures***

The Bible, including both Old and New Testaments, in the original autographs is the inerrant, infallible, and inspired Word of God. The Scripture is the final Authority in all matters of faith and practice. (*II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20, 21*)

### **Article II: *The Sovereign God***

God is a Person, eternally existing, as a Trinity in unity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – three Persons and yet but one God. (*Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 8:6*)

### **Article III: *The Son of God***

Jesus Christ, eternally existing, is the only begotten Son of God, Who became a man totally apart from sin, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, and is true God and true man. (*Luke 1:30-35; John 1:1-15; Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 1:15*)

### **Article IV: *Man***

Man was created in the image of God but fell through sin, bringing not only physical death but also spiritual death – separation from God. Now all mankind is totally depraved, having inherited a sinful nature, is bent toward sinning, and has become sinful in thought, word, and deed. (*Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:16, 17; 3:6-19; Romans 3:10-23; 6:23*)

### **Article V: *Salvation***

The Salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, accomplished through personal faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. (*John 1:12; 3:3-7; Ephesians 2:8-9*)

### **Article VI: *Security***

The elect of God, at the point of salvation, are given the gift of eternal life. They are thus kept by God's power and are secure in Christ forever. (*John 10:27-30; Romans 8:31-39; Romans 6:23; I John 5:11-13*)

### **Article VII: *Sanctification***

Sanctification is the process, begun at the point of salvation and continuing until the time of glorification, whereby the believer is set apart as a partaker of the holiness of Christ. (*Hebrews 10:10; Philippians 3:21; John 17:17*)

### **Article VIII: *The Church***

A New Testament Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, observing His laws, practicing His ordinances, and carrying out His commission. Such a group is associated together by a common faith and fellowship in the Gospel.

The Church is an autonomous body, free from the mandates of any hierarchy and responsibility directly to her Lord.

The Scriptural officers of a Church are Bishops (or Pastors) and Deacons, whose qualifications and responsibilities are defined in Acts 6, I Timothy 3, and Titus 1. (*Acts 2:41-42; I Corinthians 11:2; Matthew 28:19-20; Ephesians 1:22-23*)

### **Article IX: *Baptism and the Lord's Supper***

There are two Church Ordinances: 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 Savior, 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 a 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; 28:19-20; Acts 8:35-39; Romans 6:3-5; I Corinthians 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12*)

### **Article X: *Civil Government***

Civil government is divinely appointed for the interest and good of human society. Thus, magistrates are to be prayed for and conscientiously obeyed, except in things opposed to the Will of God.

The Church and State are to be separate. That is, neither should exercise control over the other. (*Romans 13:1-7; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:29; Matthew 23:10; Revelation 19:16*)

### **Article XI: *Education***

The primary responsibility of education was given to the home and the church. We believe that our children should be taught subjects from a Christian point of view. The education of children should include informing them of the necessity of a personal experience with Jesus Christ.

A commitment to Christian Education must also be a commitment to Academic Excellence and

Academic Responsibility. (*Deuteronomy 6:1-10; Job 28:28; Psalms 1; Psalms 19:7-11; Proverbs 22:6; Matthew 7:24-27; Matthew 28:18-20; I Corinthians 1:18-31*)

### **Article XII: Stewardship**

God is source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these are 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. **The tithe is to be considered the starting place of Christian stewardship.** (*Leviticus 27:30-32; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 23:23; Luke 12:16-21*)

### **Article XIII: Future Events**

At death the spirit and soul of the believer pass instantly into the presence of Christ and remain in conscious joy until the resurrection of the body when Christ comes for His own (*II Corinthians 5:8; I Corinthians 15: 51-57*). The blessed hope of the believer is the imminent, personal, pre-tribulation, pre-millennial appearance of Christ to rapture the Church (*Titus 2:13; I Thessalonians 4:14-17*). His righteous judgments will then be poured out on an unbelieving world during the Tribulation. The climax of this era will be the physical return of Jesus Christ to the earth in great glory to introduce the Davidic Kingdom (*Revelation 19:11-16*). Following the Millennium, the Great White Throne Judgment will occur, at which time the bodies and souls of the wicked shall be reunited and cast into the Lake of Fire (*Revelation 20:11-15*). The righteous shall enjoy eternal conscious blessedness with the Lord.

## ADDENDUM TO ARTICLES OF FAITH

- (A) **Bible.** We believe the King James Version to be the preserved Word of God and will use only the KJV in all classes and services of the church.
- (B) **Separation.** We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Saviour and Lord. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and to refrain from all immodest and immoderate appearances, piercings, and bodily markings. (*Lev. 19:28; Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11*)
- (C) **Creation.** We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (*Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11*)
- (D) **Civil Government.** We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and

balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)

**(E) Human Sexuality.**

1. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, and adultery are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)
2. We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

**(F) Family Relationships**

1. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)
2. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are an heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)
3. We hold a sincerely-held religious belief that women are not to be involved in military endeavors that involve taking up arms and going to war. Repeatedly the Scriptures emphasize that it was "*men*" and "*males*" who were chosen to go out and fight. Thirteen times in Numbers 1 we are told that the army should be comprised of "*every male . . . . able to go forth to war.*" Men were told to be "*strong*" and "*courageous*" and were to be protectors of their women. A wife was specifically referred to as a "*weaker vessel.*" A man when called upon was to give his life for his bride. Women were also to be under the protection of their fathers until "*given in marriage,*" at which time they would come under the protection of their husband. Married women were also commanded to be "*keepers at home*" which they could not do if they were away from their families for indefinite periods of time on a battlefield. (Ex. 17:9; Num. 1; Num. 14:22; Ruth 2:9; 1 Cor. 7:38; 1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 5:25; 1 Peter 3:7; 1 John 2:14)

- (G) **Divorce and Remarriage.** We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)
- (H) **Abortion.** We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)
- (I) **Euthanasia.** We believe that the direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus we believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment. (Ex. 20:13, 23:7; Matt. 5:21; Acts 17:28)
- (J) **Love.** We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)
- (K) **Lawsuits Between Believers.** We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)
- (L) **Missions.** We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20)
- (M) **Giving.** We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to financially support his local church. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of his tithe or

offering once the gift has been made. (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

### **AUTHORITY OF ARTICLES OF FAITH**

The Articles of Faith and Addendum to the Articles of Faith do not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that these Articles accurately represent the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Articles of Faith and Addendum to the Articles of Faith.

#### ***Church Covenant***

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

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Bible to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to bring tithes and offerings cheerfully and regularly 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.

We also engage to seek the salvation of lost souls; to maintain family and private devotions; and to teach our children the Truths of God's Word; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; and to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drink as a beverage.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love, to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offence, but always ready for reconciliation; to avoid the sins of the tongue by giving only a good report about others or by remaining silent.

We moreover engage that, when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other Bible-believing church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.