

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this church shall be BELCROFT BIBLE CHURCH.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of this church is the salvation of souls, the edification of Christians through the teaching of God's Word, the world-wide proclamation of God's saving grace expressed in the shed Blood and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary, the promotion of Godly worship, the defense of the "faith once for all delivered unto the saints," and cooperation with Christian activity and churches functioning in harmony with God's Holy Word, the Bible, until Christ comes again.

ARTICLE III - DOCTRINE

This doctrinal statement is not intended to summarize all the truth of Scripture; rather, it is intended to specify basic truths which we believe.

1. **The Scriptures** - The sixty-six books of the Bible, as originally given, are verbally and completely inspired by God, infallible and without error, and, therefore, our supreme and final authority for faith and practice. (II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:21)
2. **The Godhead** - There is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are the same in nature and co-equal in power and glory. (I Tim. 2:5; Matt. 28:19; II Cor. 13:14)
3. **Jesus Christ**
 1. His Person - Jesus Christ is the infinite God-Man. Prior to His birth He was with the Father and He is the creator of all things. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. Though tempted by Satan, He lived a sinless life on this earth. (Jn. 1:2, 14; Lk. 1:35; Jn. 10:30; I Jn. 3:5; Lk. 4:1,2)
 2. His Work - Jesus Christ paid the penalty for the sins of all men with His own blood on the cross. He arose bodily from the grave and ascended into Heaven, where He now intercedes for His own as their great High Priest. (Lk. 24:39; I Pet. 2:24; Acts 1:9-11; Heb. 7:25)
4. **The Holy Spirit** - The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Godhead, who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. At conversion He regenerates, indwells, seals and baptizes the believer into the body of Christ. Subsequently, by the Scriptures, He conforms the believer increasingly to the image of Christ and empowers him for spiritual service. (I Cor. 12:13; Jn. 16:8-11; Rom. 8:9; Eph. 1:13; II Cor. 3:18; Acts 1:8; Jn. 15:26; I Cor. 2:10-12)
5. **Man** - Man was created in the image of God. He sinned and thereby incurred not only physical but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. Consequently, all people are born sinners and need salvation. (Rom. 3:23; Rom. 5:12-19; Gen. 1:26; Ps. 51:5)
6. **Salvation**
 1. New Birth - Salvation from sin is personal and takes place when a sinner places his trust in Jesus Christ alone. Salvation cannot be earned by human works but is based solely on Christ's shed blood. Those who have truly received Christ are eternally secure in Him. (Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5; Eph. 1:7; Jn. 10:28)
 2. Sanctification - Sanctification is both instantaneous and progressive. Positionally, the believer is sanctified in Christ; practically, he is being sanctified by the Spirit. Sanctification is a continuing work of grace not involving the eradication of the old nature but, rather, revealing in the believer the growth of the new life in Christ. (I Cor. 1:2, 3:3; Gal. 5:16-24)
7. **The Church**

1. The Church of Jesus Christ is both invisible and visible. Invisibly, it is the body of Christ, of which He is the Head and of which every born-again person is a member. Visibly, it is a local assembly of redeemed persons. (Eph. 1:22-23; I Cor. 12:13; Phil. 1:1)
2. The primary and supreme task of the church is to fulfill Christ's command to preach the Gospel to every creature. (Mk. 16:15; I Thess. 1:8)
3. Ordinances - Christ instituted two ordinances to be observed by His church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. As an act of obedience, born-again believers should be baptized subsequent to their profession of faith in Christ as Savior. (Matt. 28:19; I Cor. 11:23-33; Acts 18:8) The Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly as a remembrance of Christ's sacrifice for our sins until He comes.
8. **Satan** - Satan is a person, a fallen angel who, with other angelic beings, rebelled against God and was cast out of Heaven. His destiny shall be the Lake of Fire. (II Pet. 2:4; Isa. 14:12-17; Rev. 20:10)
9. **The Future**
 1. All men shall be bodily resurrected, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to eternal punishment. (Jn. 5:28-29; Rev. 20:5,6,12,13)
 2. The souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await Christ's coming, when spirit, soul, and body will be reunited in the first resurrection. (II Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; I Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6)
 3. The souls of the unsaved are, at death, absent from the body in conscious misery until the second resurrection, when, with the soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the great White Throne Judgment to be cast into the Lake of Fire, where they shall be punished eternally. (Lk. 16:19-26; II Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:11-15)
 4. Jesus Christ shall return personally, bodily, and premillennially. He shall establish a universal kingdom of righteousness and peace on this earth. (Acts 1:11; Jn. 14:3; Zech. 14:4)

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

10. **Qualifications** - Persons who have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, and who are in agreement with the doctrinal statement, covenant, and constitution of this church are invited to become members. Baptism by any mode shall not be a prerequisite. Candidates shall be considered for membership upon the recommendation of the Pastor, who shall discuss with them the constitution of the church. After they are examined and approved by the Board of Elders regarding their conversion and subsequent Christian experience, they shall be received into membership and shall be introduced publicly to the church at any regular worship service of the church.
11. **Responsibilities** - Members are expected to adhere faithfully to the constitution and by-laws of the church. They shall pray consistently for the Pastor, officers, and one another. Members shall be in Scriptural submission to the Pastor and Elders of the church. Members shall attend church meetings and participate in church activities insofar as is possible, and shall give to the church as the Lord has prospered them. (1 Tim. 2:1; Eph. 5:18; Heb. 13:7,17; Heb 10:25; 1 Cor. 16:2)
12. **Discipline** - Members may be suspended or dismissed from the membership by the Elders for either of the following reasons:
 1. For willfully, and without valid reason, absenting themselves from regular Lord's day services for a period of one year.
 2. For being found guilty of serious offence against Biblical standards of conduct, and for neglecting or refusing to remedy such offence after personal consultation with the Elders. Any person dropped from the membership roll shall be so advised and the congregation informed at the next regularly convened congregational meeting. (Gal 5:19-21)

13. **Voting** - Any member who is 18 years of age or older, and in good standing, shall be eligible to vote.
14. **Associate Membership** - Persons whose residence in the area is temporary and who wish to become a functional part of the church are encouraged to become associate members. Procedure for receiving associate members will be the same as for regular members. Associate members will have all the privileges of regulars, except the right to vote. They shall be permitted to retain membership in their home church.

ARTICLE V - GOVERNMENT

15. Principles

1. The basic principle of our church government shall be representative and democratic. The supreme Ruler in the church shall be Jesus Christ. His rule shall be executed by the Officers elected by the members, and by the vote of the congregation in duly constituted business meetings.

2. This church shall follow the pattern of the New Testament churches and be autonomous. It shall be organizationally independent and not subject to any external ecclesiastical body. This church shall, however, cooperate with churches of like precious faith which function according to God's Word.

16. Pastor

1. Qualifications - He must be a born-again man who is of exemplary Christian character. He must also be a graduate of an evangelical training school and be in harmony with the doctrinal standards of this church. The Pastor must be ordained, and be able to communicate God's Word clearly. (II Tim. 1:9; I Tim. 4:12; I Pet. 5)

2. Responsibilities - The Senior Pastor shall pray for the flock, diligently study God's Word, and feed the flock by preaching and teaching God's Word. He shall have the general oversight of the worship services, the administration of the ordinances, and the ordination and installation of Elders. He shall be an *ex officio*, non-voting member of all committees and organizations in the church, and shall serve as an Elder (voting member) and as moderator of the Board of Elders and of congregational meetings. He shall visit members of the church, the sick, and visitors of the church. He shall submit a written report of his activities at the June Meeting. (Acts 6:4; II Tim. 2:15; II Tim. 4:2)

3. Provision

1. Salary - The church shall pay a stated salary to the Pastor. The amount will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees for presentation to the membership at the June meeting. (I Tim 5:18)

2. Vacation - The Pastor shall be entitled to one month's annual vacation with pay.

3. Special Meetings - The pastor shall be free to conduct outside ministries for a total of two weeks annually as the occasions arise.

4. Termination - The Pastor shall serve until his pastorate is terminated in an orderly process.

1. Resignation - If the Pastor resigns, he shall give a minimum of thirty (30) days notice.

2. Dismissal - If at any time the Pastor fails to adhere to the requirements of ARTICLE V, B.2., or his personal belief, preaching, teaching, or behavior conflicts with the doctrinal statement and constitution, this shall be grounds for dismissal. A vote of 2/3 of the members present at a duly constituted congregational meeting shall be sufficient to dismiss the Pastor. Such a meeting must have a quorum of 50% of the active, eligible voting members. In the event of an abrupt termination, his salary shall be continued thirty (30) days. (I Tim. 5:19)

5. Calling - Each pastoral candidate must sign a statement affirming his agreement with and commitment to the church constitution in general, and to the church's independence from any ecclesiastical body (Article V, Section A, Paragraph 2) in particular, prior to his presentation to the

congregation. The Pulpit Committee shall inform the congregation that such a statement has been signed before it recommends a candidate. The congregation shall vote on the recommendation from the Pulpit Committee, as approved by the Board of Elders. The Pastor shall be called by a 3/4 vote of the members present for the purpose.

17. Other Salaried Positions - In accordance with the needs of the church, appropriate professional and staff positions may be established by action of the membership. Such positions shall be filled by call according to the manner of voting for Pastor as stated in ARTICLE V, B.5., of this constitution. The church shall include in the call a statement defining the duties of the position.

18. Officers - General Information

1. Qualifications - Since the spreading of the Gospel and the teaching of God's Word have been committed to believers, every officer shall give evidence of having been born again. Regular church membership shall be a prerequisite. Each officer shall give evidence of loyalty to the church and its program through faithful attendance at the Lord's Day services, prayer meetings and special services as fully as possible. Officers shall be persons whose way of life is believed to be in accordance with the rules laid down in I Tim. 3:1-13, and who adhere to the principles set forth in this constitution.

2. Term of Office - Shall be for three years unless otherwise specified in the constitution for designated officers. Officers may be re-elected for a second consecutive term after which there shall be a minimum interval of one year. Partial terms shall not apply to the two consecutive term restriction.

3. Vacancies - Normal vacancies resulting from expiration of terms shall be filled by appointment or election at the June Meeting (See Board of Elders, ARTICLE V, E., and Nominating Committee, ARTICLE VI, E.). Vacancies occurring at other times will be filled as required and recommended by the Elders and/or the Nominating Committee.

4. Discipline - Any officer who fails to maintain the standards set forth in this section of the constitution may be dismissed from office by the congregation at duly constituted special meetings by a vote of 2/3 of the eligible voting members present.

19. Board of Elders

1. Composition

1. There are three different paths to membership on the Board of Elders as listed in b through d below. These paths do not represent distinct statuses within the Board.

2. The Senior Pastor

3. Elders elected from among the membership - The number elected shall be determined by the congregation, but shall be no less than four in number.

4. Appointed elders - The Elder Board may appoint additional Elders from among the pastoral staff, subject to the limitation that at no time shall the pastoral representation (Senior Pastor plus Appointed Elders) on the board of Elders constitute 50% or more of the total Board.

2. Term

1. The Senior Pastor shall remain an Elder as long as he holds the office of Senior Pastor.

2. An elected Elder's term shall be three years. However, an elected Elder who has not previously successfully completed either one term of office as an Elder at Belcroft Bible Church or one year as an Associate Elder at Belcroft Bible Church, must serve the first year of his term in a probationary status. Following this year, he will be subject to a confirmatory vote by the membership. Upon confirmation, he may complete the remaining two years of his initial term.

3. The term of an appointed elder is indefinite, subject to his maintaining the standards set forth in the scriptures and as required by this constitution, the Elder's continuance on staff and the condition that the pastoral representation on the Board of Elders does not constitute 50% or more of the total Board. In the event of a conflict, the Board shall determine which appointed Elder(s) is to remain on the Board. Appointed Elders must be confirmed by majority vote of the congregation.

3. Responsibilities

1. Board - The Elders, with the Senior Pastor, shall have the spiritual oversight of the congregation and all church organizations. They shall receive and consider suggestions, requests, grievances, and recommendations from any member or organization in the church. The Elders may call special congregational meetings to receive instruction from the congregation. Such meetings shall be called in accordance with ARTICLE VIII, B. The Elders shall interview all applicants for church membership and, after ensuring all qualifications are met, receive such applicants into membership. The Elders may also dismiss members in accord with ARTICLE IV, C. The Elders shall be responsible for assistance to the poor of the congregation, visitation of the sick and the preparation of the elements of the Communion service. They shall maintain an Elders' Assistance Fund, which shall consist of the loose offering received on Communion Sunday and at other times as may be required or requested by the Elders. Loose offering is defined as that money placed in the offering plate not designated for a specific purpose, not contained in a regular offering envelope, and in the denomination of \$20.00 or less. The Elders shall administer the Lord's Supper as scheduled by the Board of Elders. The Board shall have authority to appoint ministry heads (such as those referenced in Article VI) from among qualified members in good standing whose lives exhibit a positive Christian testimony. The Board shall appoint annually the following committees as listed in ARTICLE VI: Christian Education, Missions, Visitation, Music, Pulpit, and ad hoc committees as needed.

2. Clerk - The Clerk shall keep an accurate record of all Elder's meetings, congregational business meetings and any other meetings designated by the congregation. He shall be responsible for the keeping of a record of the church membership, admissions, dismissals, deaths, dedications, baptisms, and ordination services. He shall have custody of the church seal, shall carry on and maintain a complete record of all correspondence and other records as may pertain to his office. He shall also have in his custody any other papers, records of documents as directed. The clerk shall be elected annually by and from the membership of the Board of Elders.

4. Qualifications - Elders are to be men whose lives are in accord with the principles in I Tim. 3:1-7. Elders should be available to the congregation for consultation on spiritual matters.

5. Discipline - Any Elder who fails to maintain the standards set forth in this constitution, may be recalled by the congregation at a duly constituted meeting by a vote of 2/3 of the eligible voting members present.

20. Board of Trustees

1. Composition and Term - The Board of Trustees shall consist of the following: (1) a minimum of five and a maximum of ten members to be elected by the congregation from the membership; (2) the church treasurer, if not a Trustee, shall be *ex officio*, non-voting. The Board shall elect annually from its number a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary. Trustees may serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms (see ARTICLE V., D.2.).

2. Responsibilities

1. The Board shall be the trustees of the Corporation as required by the law of the State of Maryland and as such shall own and manage the physical properties of the church. They shall hold title to all real estate and equities in real estate owned by the church and shall provide for the proper upkeep thereof. They shall perform such other duties as are delegated to them by the Corporation. The Trustees shall disburse only those funds which have been budgeted and approved by the congregation, except that they shall be authorized to make expenditures not to exceed \$50.00 per single item for unforeseen items not budgeted.

2. The Chairman shall be the chief executive officer of the Corporation and shall act as the general manager of its business affairs subject to the control of the Board of Trustees. He shall preside at all meetings of the Corporation and of the Board of Trustees, report his official acts to the Board of

Trustees for approval, and perform all other duties as may be required of him under the laws of the State of Maryland, the constitution of the church, and the resolutions of the Board of Trustees. He shall sign all the documents, deeds, contracts and obligations of the Board of Trustees. When required, additional signatures may be obtained from other officers of the Board.

3. The Secretary shall take minutes at all meetings of the Board which accurately reflect the actions or decisions of the Trustees. The original copy will be retained by the Secretary to be passed on to his successor.

3. Qualifications - Members of the Board of Trustees shall live according to the standards expressed in I Tim. 3:1-13, Rom. 12:11, and shall adhere to the principles set forth in this constitution.

4. Meetings - The Board shall meet as a distinct body at least once a year or for special meetings as called by the Chairman, Pastor, or Elders.

21. **Sunday School Superintendent** - Under the direction of the Christian Education Committee, the Sunday School Superintendent shall plan, supervise and maintain an effective, spiritual, Sunday School program. He or she shall be elected by the congregation at the June meeting. The Superintendent will train an Assistant Sunday School Superintendent in all the duties associated with being Superintendent. (It will normally be the Assistant who replaces the Superintendent.) The Superintendent shall serve a one-year term and may be re-elected annually. The Superintendent shall present a written report at the June meeting.

22. **Church Treasurer** - The Treasurer of the church shall be elected for a one-year term by the congregation at the June Business Meeting and may be re-elected annually. The church treasurer shall perform the following: (1) receive and deposit church funds; (2) disburse funds as approved; (3) maintain a ledger showing monthly income and disbursements; (4) prepare a monthly financial statement for the Board; (5) prepare an annual financial statement to present at the June Business Meeting; and (6) provide donors' receipts. The Church Treasurer shall have custody of legal papers pertaining to the property and finances of the church such as deeds, abstracts of deeds, insurance policies, bonds, notes, etc., which shall be kept in a depository designated by the Board of Trustees. The books shall be available to the Board of Trustees at all times and must be submitted to an audit at least once a year as directed by Board of Trustees. In the event the Treasurer is unable to perform his/her duties, or there is a vacancy in the office, the Treasurer's duties may be performed by an interim treasurer appointed by the Board of Trustees. At the expiration of the Treasurer's term, all records shall be transferred to his/her successor or to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The Church Treasurer shall be bonded.

23. **Assistant Sunday School Superintendent** - Under the direction of the Sunday School Superintendent the Assistant Sunday School Superintendent shall assist the Sunday School Superintendent in all duties associated with the office of Sunday School Superintendent. This position will be elected by the congregation at the June meeting. The person will serve a one-year term and may be re-elected annually.

ARTICLE VI - COMMITTEES

24. **Missions Committee** - The purpose of the Missions Committee is to discern God's will concerning the role of the Belcroft Bible Church in fulfilling the Great Commission (Mk. 16:15). The committee shall consist of five or more members, one of whom must be the Missions Treasurer. The Chairman and the remaining members will be appointed by the Board of Elders. They shall serve for one year and may be reappointed for additional terms. Meetings ordinarily will be held bimonthly. The committee shall be responsible for maintaining a Missions Handbook for policy and general guidance. The committee shall promote missions in the church by all Scriptural means.

25. **Christian Education Committee** - The Christian Education Committee shall have the oversight of the teaching ministries of the church, and may recommend the materials used to carry out these ministries. The committee shall have as its chairman an Elder, and a minimum of three other members, one of whom shall be the Sunday School Superintendent. They shall serve for a period of one year and may be reappointed for additional terms. This committee shall endeavor to meet quarterly, or may meet for special meetings as the need arises. They shall, with the Sunday School Superintendent, review the teaching staff and facilities to determine if this ministry can be improved or expanded.

26. **Music Committee** - The purpose of the Music Committee is to plan and provide for music which will prepare hearts for and supplement the ministry of the Word. The committee is responsible for the oversight of vocal and instrumental ministries, the organization and performance of the choir, and the procurement of music for the choir. It also shall be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of all church owned musical instruments. The committee shall appoint a choir director annually, subject to the approval of the Board of Elders. The committee shall consist of a chairman, secretary, and a minimum of two additional members. This committee shall endeavor to meet monthly or as the necessity arises. The tenure shall be for a minimum of one year and may be reappointed.

27. **Visitation Committee** - The function of this committee is to visit persons who have attended the church and to follow up evangelistic meetings. The purpose of each visit is to present the Gospel to those who have not accepted Christ and to make nurture calls on new believers. The committee shall be headed by a chairman appointed by the Elders to serve for a period of one year and may be reappointed. The committee shall consist of those persons whom the chairman and Elders consider qualified for this ministry. Visitation shall ordinarily be conducted on a weekly basis, at a time selected by the committee. It is not intended that the activities of the committee should preclude visits by other members of the church.

28. **Nominating Committee** - The committee shall consist of five members as follows: 3 members of the congregation, one Elder and one Trustee. The Pastor shall serve as a non-voting member. This committee shall be elected at the June meeting. The committee shall serve for one year and shall present nominees for the offices and committees as designated in this constitution for election at the June meeting. The Clerk shall provide the list of vacancies to be filled. The committee shall elect its own chairman. The committee shall carefully select at least one nominee for each vacancy provided that each nominee is qualified and faithful in all aspects of Christian stewardship. The list of nominees shall be posted in a prominent place in the church at least two weeks before the June meeting. Should a church member desire to submit one additional nominee for one or more of several positions, he shall present his written request to the Clerk containing the signed approval of each nominee. The clerk shall submit each name to the Board of Elders for approval. Each approved request shall be posted no less than one week in advance of the posted date of the meeting. The Elders and Trustees shall be elected in such manner that the terms of approximately one-third of the members in each group shall expire each year. The committee shall present nominees for the following positions: Officers: Elders, Trustees, Sunday School Superintendent, Assistant Sunday School Superintendent, Church Treasurer; Committee: Nominating.

29. **Pulpit Committee** - The committee shall be formed whenever a pastoral vacancy exists. It shall consist of the following members: two Elders, one Trustee and three members of the congregation. The committee shall prayerfully seek God's guidance to the man of His choice. Committee recommendations are processed as outlined in ARTICLE V. B. If the committee is unable to produce a candidate within six months, it shall be replaced. (1 Sam. 16:7)

30. **Youth Committee** - The committee shall consist of at least two ladies and at least two men of the church appointed by the Elders for a term of one year, and members may be reappointed. The committee is responsible for maintaining Christian youth programs for the purpose of evangelizing and discipling young men and women for Christ. It shall select qualified leaders and communicate spiritual needs and

victories to the church.

ARTICLE VII - ELECTIONS

The Nominating Committee shall nominate candidates for vacancies. Nominees for church offices must receive an affirmative vote of a majority of the regular members present at the June congregational meeting in order to be recognized as elected officers. Nominating Committee members will be elected by plurality vote of regular members present at a duly constituted congregational meeting.

ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS

31. **Worship** - The church shall conduct regular weekly services designated as Sunday School, Sunday Morning, Sunday Evening, and midweek Prayer Service. The Youth Groups shall also endeavor to meet on a weekly basis. Additional meetings and ministries outside the church shall be held as often as necessary, subject to the approval of the Elders.

32. **Business**

1. **Semi-annual** - A meeting of the congregation and corporation shall be held in January and June. The call for meeting and the agenda shall be posted on the church bulletin board and announced two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. Each committee chairman shall be responsible for rendering an annual report at the June meeting. Written reports for the fiscal year shall be disseminated to the congregation not later than the 2nd Sunday of September.

2. **Special** - Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Elders or by the members with a petition signed by 1/5 of the eligible voting membership provided that the petition clearly specifies the purpose of the meeting. Notice of these meetings shall be posted and announced two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. No other business may be transacted by the congregation in such special meetings except that specified.

3. **Committees** - Must meet once a year or as often as the committee chairman directs. Two members of any committee may direct the chairman to call a meeting.

4. **Procedure** - All congregational and corporation meetings shall be conducted in Christian love under parliamentary procedures as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order (Revised). The method of voting in all duly constituted congregational meetings must be by secret ballot unless there is unanimous agreement among the regular members in attendance for a non-secret form of voting.

ARTICLE IX - FINANCIAL POLICY

33. **Fund Raising** - All offerings shall be voluntary. Anything of a secular or commercial character shall be permitted only by approval of the Elders. (Matt. 10:8; I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:7-8)

34. **Dissolution** - The Washington Bible College is designated as the recipient of the Belcroft Bible Church's accumulated assets in the event the church is dissolved.

ARTICLE X - CHURCH RECORDS AND PROPERTY

The original minutes and records kept by duly appointed or elected officers shall be retained in binders and shall be considered official records of the church property. The individual leaving office shall turn over the original records to his successor or to the clerk.

Property pertaining to the church may not be removed, installed or altered without permission of the Board of Trustees or other officers specifically responsible for the property in question.

ARTICLE XI - YOUTH OR OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

Any youth or outside organizations wishing to solicit the support of this church must subscribe to the tenets of this constitution and be subject to the approval of the Elders. All requests must be submitted in writing.

ARTICLE XII - ADDITIONAL MINISTRIES

35. **Licensing** - Any man, called of God to the work of the ministry and in accord with our doctrinal statement, who evidences a spirit-filled life and teaching ability may be licensed to the work of the ministry, by approval of the Elders. Such licensing is valid for one year and implies only that the church is aware of the licensed man's testimony and his call of God to the ministry.

36. **Ordination** - When it is proposed to ordain a man to the work of the ministry, the candidate shall at an ordination council (composed of the Elders and others invited to participate) be examined as to his call to the Christian ministry, Christian experience, education, doctrinal belief, and knowledge of the English Bible. Upon favorable report of the council an appropriate ordination service will be arranged for the candidate. A majority of the Elders must have had personal knowledge of the applicant's Christian testimony in the six months preceding the ordination request. (Acts 13:3; I Tim. 5:22)

37. **Commissioning** - Missionary candidates, accepted and assigned by a mission board, may make request for commissioning to the Elders. The Elders shall examine the candidate as to his calling, doctrinal beliefs, Christian experience and preparation. Approved candidates shall be commissioned in an appropriate congregational service. A majority of the Elders must have had personal knowledge of the applicant's Christian testimony in the six months preceding the request. (Acts 3; I Tim. 5:22)

38. **Dedication** - Parents desiring to dedicate their children to the Lord may make their desire known to the pastor, who will counsel with the parents and, at an appropriate worship service, conduct the dedicatory service. (I Sam. 1:28)

ARTICLE XIII - AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the eligible voting members present at either the January or June semi-annual meetings. Notification of the proposed amendments must be published two successive Sundays immediately prior to the meeting. An amendment shall be considered published when a copy has been given to the Church Clerk (or any seated Elder if Clerk is not available) and posted on the church bulletin board.

A constitutional amendment cannot be amended at the semi-annual meeting and must be voted on yes or no as written. However, if the original amendment fails and an amended version, within the scope and

context of the original amendment is determined to be a better version of the original amendment by a vote of 2/3, then a special congregational meeting may be scheduled within a two to four week period to approve this revised amendment. The procedures relative to this amended amendment shall be the same as those of a normal constitutional amendment for a semi-annual meeting.

ARTICLE XIV - CHURCH COVENANT

Having been born again by the grace of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and being justified on the ground of His shed blood, and having confessed our faith before men, 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 power of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, to relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to educate our children in the Word of His Grace; and to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances.

We engage, too, by the grace and power of God, that as strangers and pilgrims we will abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul; that we will put away from us all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, and be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; and to aid each other in sickness and distress while waiting for the appearing of our Savior.

Last amended 2/12/06