

Constitution, By-Laws & Confession of Faith

Faith Baptist Church, Prosperity, WV



Adopted 20 April 1983
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Introduction

This Constitution was approved by the congregation of Faith Baptist Church on April 20, 1983. The Constitution was updated on June 24, 1994, and was further updated May 6, 2007. It replaces any previous constitution. It is the governing document of the church and is to be adhered to in all matters contained herein. Any amendments approved by the congregation of Faith Baptist Church shall be distributed to the membership in writing and will be included in any future printing.

A constitution is only as valuable as the people make it. It is imperative then that all members of Faith Baptist church read and study this constitution in order to understand it and follow it.

The church covenant, which is included, is a covenant that, when followed, will promote love, growth and unity among the brethren, and bring glory to God.

Let us take this covenant to heart and do all within our power and God’s enabling to fulfill it.

Church Covenant

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

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and 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, the expenses of the church, and relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage in a lifestyle that promotes Godliness in the corporate, family, and personal life of the church. It involves abstinence from practices that dishonor Christ and impugn the testimony of the church. We further commit ourselves to a Holy Spirit-directed life that

promotes the fruit of the Spirit. It is our passionate desire to show forth Christ to the world in all we say and do (I Cor. 10:31).

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

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

Constitution

Adopted April 20, 1983, Updated November 3, 2013

Preamble

We the membership, desiring to maintain a work pleasing to our Lord in our church worship, church government and affiliation, do hereby adopt and set forth the following rules and regulations to be our Constitution, By-Laws and Confession of Faith of the Faith Baptist Church.

Article I. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Faith Baptist Church, Prosperity, West Virginia, formerly Prosperity Fundamental Baptist Church.

Article II. Definition and Purpose

For purpose of clarification, in principles and operation, this church shall adhere to the view that a church is a local assembly of believers scripturally baptized on a credible confession of faith; having New Testament officers or pastor and deacons; perpetuating the ordinances of baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper, self-governing in polity; voluntarily banded together for worship, fellowship, service and the worldwide proclamation of the Gospel.

Article III. Government

The membership of this church shall be governed and shall worship and labor together according to the discipline, rules, and fellowship set forth by this Constitution, By-Laws, and Confession of Faith. The corporate membership of this church shall be autonomous; that is, they shall be the sole and final authority in all matters of membership, doctrine, polity or government, property, and affiliation.

Article IV. Membership

The membership of FBC shall be made up of born-again children of God whose lifestyle reflects their profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Although the practice of local church membership as we now know it is not expressly taught in the Bible, the leadership of FBC consider membership in a local church invaluable in promoting fellowship, accountability, discipleship, discipline, and in advancing the kingdom of God through world missions.

Membership is required for anyone holding any office in the church (see Constitution Article V, Section 1), and membership requirements for other areas are defined by those individual areas.

Section 1. Requirements for Membership

Each candidate for membership shall:

- A. Give satisfactory evidence of having been born again by the Spirit of God, and of being a willing follower of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- B. Be baptized by immersion following the salvation experience.
- C. Subscribe to the Confession of Faith in this Constitution.
- D. Agree to walk in harmony with the Covenant of this church.
- E. Have taken a membership class.
- F. Children are received into membership upon giving testimony of a personal relationship with Christ, and having been baptized by immersion. Upon baptism, a child is automatically received into membership. Children become voting members at 18 years of age upon:

*Subscription to the Confession of Faith in this Constitution (C)

*Agreement to walk in harmony with the Covenant of this church (D)

*Completion of a membership class (E)

Persons who grew up in Faith Baptist Church and are current attendees, having made a profession of faith in Christ, and having been baptized by immersion, who...

C. Subscribe to the Confession of Faith in this Constitution.

D. Agree to walk in harmony with the Covenant of this church
are encouraged to affirm their desire to be members of FBC by attending the Faith 101 membership class.

Section 2. Reception of Members

- A. Persons who have fulfilled the requirements for membership (as stated under Article IV, Section 1, above) shall be eligible for membership in one of the following ways:
 - I. By suitable examination by Pastors and/or deacons;
 - II. By letter of transfer/commendation from a church of like faith and order;
 - III. By membership certification from the candidate's home church (only for Associate Membership).
- B. Persons eligible for membership will be presented to the church and received into membership following a positive simple majority vote.
- C. Members who for any reason have been excluded or excommunicated, or whose names have been erased from the roll of the church, may be restored to membership upon expression of repentance and/or renewal of interest. They shall be examined by the Senior Pastor and deacons and recommended to the church for a vote into membership and given the right hand of fellowship. Restoration to church membership does not restore to any office held prior to being dismissed.
- D. Anyone divorced and remarried, with the former partner still living, shall be eligible for church membership only after being examined by the Senior Pastor and deacons and a recommendation to the church for a vote into membership and given the right hand of fellowship.
- E. Categories of membership:
 - I. Full Member: members shall be at least 18 years of age, who are able to fully participate in all voting and service activities of the church);
 - II. Associate Member: persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of FBC. They have all the privileges and duties of full membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices.

Section 3. Standards for Members

In these days of worldliness among professing Christians, it is necessary that we call the attention of believers to the plain teaching of God's Word concerning worldly amusements and habits, entangling alliances with unbelievers, and un-Christ like conduct. Special attention should be given to the following Scriptures: 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; Romans 14:21; Psalm 34:13; Proverbs 21:23; James 3:1-18. These Scriptures exhort the child of God to refrain from the carnal pleasures of the world, indulgences in any questionable practices which are associated with vice and crime. Scripture further prohibits divorce except for the cause of fornication. cf. Matthew 5:32.

- A. Church Discipline/Restoration: When a member does not refrain from the carnal pleasures of the world and indulges in action which brings dishonor on the name of Christ, the Church and himself, the following procedure will be followed, with the desired end being the recognition of sin in the person's life, confession of that sin to the church and a change of behavior which restores them to fellowship with God and the church:
The errant member shall be counseled on the basis of the steps of Matthew 18:15-18 as soon as possible. If he refuses to heed the Senior Pastor and deacons' counsel involving public confession, the usual practice being the reading of a confession letter by the Senior Pastor with the person present, he will be summoned to meet with the Senior Pastor and/or deacons to seek further compliance and reconciliation. After further investigation is made, using all available witnesses and facts, the findings will be reported at a specially-called business meeting. If he remains uncooperative, having been fully apprised of the above process, the Senior Pastor and deacons will recommend that he be removed from the membership of the church. A ballot vote will be taken and a majority vote required for dismissal. This step will be taken with the utmost concern, dignity and compassion.
- B. Church Discipline/Restoration of a student at Greater Beckley Christian School which involves the reputation of the church will be under the final jurisdiction of the Senior Pastor and the deacons of FBC.

Section 4. Dismissal of Members

- A. By Letter: A member in good standing may request a letter of transfer to another like-minded church.
- B. By Erasure: The name of any member who shall absent himself from the service of the church for a period of twelve (12) months without giving satisfactory reason for such absence, or for failure in his Christian duty as defined by the By-Laws, may be erased from the roll of the membership after recommendation by the deacons and a majority vote of the membership. If possible, each member affected will be informed of this action. Members leaving the city for a time and who desire that their membership be retained should keep the church informed of their whereabouts through correspondence with the pastors and/or clerk.
- C. By Excommunication: In all cases of disorderly conduct, propagation of heresy, causing and abetting factions, personal slander of the pastors or fellow members, or opposing the church's life as to destroy its fellowship, and having followed the procedure outlined in Section 3, it shall be recommended that the guilty member's name be stricken from the roll and excommunicated. A simple majority vote of the church shall decide the issue. An announcement of this action will be given the following Sunday. Any action on the part of the accused as to intentionally impair or make impossible the fulfilling of Matthew 18:15-18, or failure to meet with the Senior Pastor and deacons shall not prevent a decision and/or recommendation according to the information received.

Section 5. Duties of Members

- A. To keep their covenant vows with the Lord's help.
- B. To perform their other obligations as defined by this Constitution and By-Laws.
- C. To love, honor, and esteem their pastor, to pray fervently and daily for him, and to manifest a tender regard for his reputation.
- D. We as members of Faith Baptist Church covenant together to abstain from the sale of, and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, the use of recreational drugs, and prescription drug abuse, gambling and immorality including but not limited to pornography and homosexuality.
- E. All attendees applying for membership shall attend a new believer's class.

Section 6. Ordinances

- A. Baptism by immersion, a symbol of death and resurrection with Christ, is a prerequisite to membership of this church.
- B. The Lord's Supper, symbolizing Christ's broken body and shed blood, will be celebrated at least the first Sunday of each quarter. It is a time for each believer to fellowship with Christ as he identifies himself with Christ's work for him (See also Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement).

Article V. Officers

Section 1. Elected Officers

[Note: the Pastoral Staff are officers which are not annually elected positions---See Section 11 for membership]

The following shall constitute the annually elected officers in this church: Deacons, Trustees, Church Clerk, and Treasurer.

Section 2. Qualifications of Church Officers

- A. All officers shall be active members of this church and be in good regular standing, and not less than 21 years of age.
- B. They shall live exemplary Christian lives before the world and the family of God, abstaining from every appearance of evil and worldly habits.
- C. All officers shall abstain from the use or sale of alcoholic beverages and the unlawful use or sale of narcotic drugs.
- D. There should be also a consideration of talents, gifts and abilities in view of the requirements of the various offices.

- E. Pastors, deacons, trustees and the Director of Church Education shall all be men.
- F. Anyone who has been divorced and remarried shall not be eligible for office of Pastor or deacons.
- G. An office shall be left vacant should there be no member who meets the scriptural qualifications.

Section 3. Election of Officers

- A. The nominating committee shall be composed of the Senior Pastor and deacons. This committee shall meet the first week in April and shall thoroughly investigate the character and qualifications of the nominees for church offices before presenting them to the church. The names of the nominees shall be given to the church membership two (2) weeks prior to the date of election.
- B. Election by Ballot: The election of officers is held in May. The church members shall elect all officers for the next fiscal year by ballot, and a simple majority of all votes cast shall be required to elect. New officers will take office in July. [See By-Laws Section 2]

Section 4. Pastoral Staff

- A. Senior Pastor
 - I. The Pastoral office is a special calling. Scripture is specific in identifying this office by such terms as “Elder”, “Bishop”, and “Pastor”, indicating the office as one of maturity and experience, with emphasis upon oversight of the flock. The Senior Pastor is God’s undershepherd to the local flock of His pasture. (Eph. 4:7-13, 2 Timothy 1:6-9; 2:1,2; Titus 1:5-9, chapters 2, 3.) The concept of the Senior Pastor of Faith Baptist Church is that he has been called of God to the ministry and chosen by the church as the scriptural leader in temporal and spiritual matters. An authoritarian or dictator rule by the pastor is not in harmony with Scripture or Faith Baptist Church. (1 Peter 5:2-3).
 - II. The Senior Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time, but may be terminated upon one month’s (30 days) notice by either the Senior Pastor or the church. These terms may be waived by mutual agreement.
 - III. In case of insubordination or improper conduct, the Senior Pastor shall be brought before the deacons for consideration. If necessary, the deacons will report their findings to the members of the church for legislation deemed advisable. A two-thirds majority vote shall be required to dismiss the Senior Pastor, and the decision of the church is final.
 - IV. Duties of the Senior Pastor:

- a. He shall be the moderator of all church business meetings, except in matters concerning himself. If he so desires, he may appoint someone else to moderate.
- b. He shall be responsible for the spiritual welfare, life and program of the church and various appointments necessary to its well-being.
- c. He shall be an ex officio member of all boards and committees of the church, departments, and organizations, and may be called upon at any time for advisement. The exception to this is the Greater Beckley Christian School Board where he serves as a permanent member.
- d. He, along with the deacons, will be the administrator of the ordinances of the church.
- e. He will be responsible for the preaching and teaching of the Bible.

V. Pulpit Committee:

- a. When the church is without a Pastor (Senior, Student Ministries, Music), the deacons shall constitute a Pulpit Committee and take the necessary steps to secure a candidate for the office, with the following provisions [Note: see Section 4.D concerning replacing the GBCS Administrator]:
- b. Any person under consideration as a candidate for Pastor must be a Baptist, holding the fundamental and cardinal doctrines of the Bible as set forth in the Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement. He must be completely committed to the position and practice of total independence of the local church.
- c. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time. That is, each candidate is to be voted upon, and if he fails to get an 80% majority of those present and voting, another candidate is to be considered.
- d. A business meeting shall be announced for the purpose of voting on the candidate at the second Sunday service following the candidate's visit.

B. Pastor of Student Ministries

- I. As a member of the Pastoral Staff, the Student Ministries Pastor shall meet the same requirements as the Senior Pastor [Section 4.A, subsections I, II and III], and shall serve on the Administrative Committee.
- II. He shall be responsible for the spiritual welfare and growth of the young people of the church.
- III. He shall work under the guidance and direction of the Senior Pastor in preparing and implementing all ministry programs for the youth.

IV. He may be asked to serve as the Director of Church Education. [NOTE: adopted in 6/24/94 He shall also serve as the Assistant Pastor of Church Education. He may serve as the Pastor of Christian Ed. under extenuating circumstances.]This paragraph should read as adopted in 1994—as follows:
He shall serve as the Director of Church Education.

C. Pastor Of Worship and Music

- I. As a member of the Pastoral Staff, the Pastor of Worship and Music shall meet the same requirements as the Senior Pastor [Section 4.A, subsections I, II and III], and shall serve on the Administrative Committee.
- II. He shall work under the guidance and direction of the Senior Pastor in preparing and implementing a ministry of worship and music in the services of the church.
- III. He shall be responsible for the oversight of the music, musicians, instruments, sound equipment and performances as well as the performers as presented in the church.

D. GBCS Administrator

- I. As a member of the pastoral staff, the GBCS Administrator shall meet the same requirements as the Senior Pastor [Section 4.A, subsections I, II and III], and shall serve on the Administrative Committee.
- II. He shall be responsible for the oversight of GBCS
- III. He shall work under the guidance and direction of the Senior Pastor in all programs and activities of the church as assigned by the Senior Pastor.
- IV. He shall work under the guidance and direction of the GBCS Board of Education in matters related to GBCS.
- V. He will be reportable to the Senior Pastor and Board of Education.
- VI. A candidate for the position of Administrator is researched and recommended by the GBCS Board and Senior Pastor, approved by the Deacons and after two weeks' notice to the church, is presented to the Congregation for vote.

Section 5. Church Office (was Section 4a)

- A. Faith Baptist Church will maintain an official Church Office.
- B. The Senior Pastor will assign an office for each of his pastoral staff.
- C. The Senior Pastor will hire a church secretary.
- D. The Senior Pastor will assign one of his staff as Office Manager, who will be called the Administrative Coordinator.

Section 6. Administrative Coordinator (AC) (was Section 4b)

- A. The Administrative Coordinator will be responsible for the operations of the Church Office.
- B. The Administrative Coordinator will be responsible for the maintenance of office equipment and training in the use thereof.
- C. The Administrative Coordinator will report to the Senior Pastor.
- D. The Administrative Coordinator may be assigned other responsibilities by the Senior Pastor.

Section 7. Deacons

- A. There will normally be six deacons as qualified men are available, more if it is deemed necessary. Their term of office will be normally three (3) years, with one-third retiring each year. They shall be elected at the May meeting
- B. They shall be elected to office on the basis of Scriptural qualifications, purity of life, personal godliness, and ability to serve (Gal 6:6; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; 5:17, Titus 1:6-9; Heb 13:7, 17)
- C. They shall elect a chairman and a secretary who shall record all business conducted at both their regular and specially called meetings.
- D. They shall be responsible for the spiritual welfare of the church along with the Senior Pastor, serving as his assistants and advisors, and shall safeguard the office and reputation of the Senior Pastor at all times.
- E. They shall, in the Senior Pastor's absence, lead the meetings and/or provide suitable leadership and speakers.
- F. They shall assist in the administration of the ordinances of the church
- G. They shall be the guardians of the purity of the doctrine as set forth in the Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement.
- H. They shall be responsible for matters needing disciplinary action. [See Article IV, Section 3A and 3B, Church Discipline/Restoration]
- I. They shall be apprised and approve of all business to be presented to the church by the Administrative Committee.

Section 8. Trustees

- A. There shall be no less than six trustees, more if necessary, by church approval. They shall serve for 3 years, with one third being elected each year at the annual meeting.

- B. They shall elect a chairman and a secretary who shall record all business conducted at both their regular and specially called meetings.
- C. They shall be the custodians of all legal documents, such as Title papers, deeds, securities, investments, etc.
- D. They shall be the legal representatives of the church, registering at the County Courthouse all matters of legal importance as required.
- E. They shall consult with the Administrative Committee on matters relating to the physical properties.
- F. They shall maintain property and liability insurance on all church properties.
- G. They shall be responsible for the employment of janitorial service, and the general upkeep and maintenance of the buildings and grounds.
- H. They shall give consideration for improvements and developments of all properties.
- I. They shall supervise the receiving, recording, and depositing in the church bank account, all offerings on a weekly basis.
- J. The Trustees shall determine that the treasurer's books are audited annually and before they are turned over to a newly elected treasurer. The auditing must be done by other than those who normally are involved with handling finances.

Section 9. Treasurer

- A. The Treasurer shall be elected for one year, but can be re-elected.
- B. The Treasurer shall account for all funds of the church, unless stipulated otherwise in this document. The treasurer shall oversee the paying of all bills in a timely manner, in compliance with the budget, paying no bills that are not authorized by the Budget, the Administrative Committee or the church.
- C. The Treasurer shall submit a financial report to the Administrative Committee each month and at the Annual Meeting.
- D. The Treasurer is directly responsible to the Finance Committee and Administrative Committee.

Section 10. Finance Committee

- A. The Finance Committee is chaired by the Treasurer and is responsible to form and administer all financial policies of the church.
- B. The Finance Committee is made up of the church Treasurer, a deacon, a trustee and a member at large. Others may be invited at the discretion of the committee.

- C. The Finance Committee prepares the annual church budget, taking into account any guidelines from the deacons concerning the bottom line. They will receive budget requests and projections from all departments. The budget will then be presented to the Administrative Committee where adjustments may be made without changing the bottom line, before sending it to the deacons for final approval. An appointed member of the Finance Committee will present the budget to the Congregation for their discussion and final approval in May.
- D. Encumbering Church Finances: No commitments affecting church finances may be made without prior approval of the church.
- E. See Finance Committee Handbook for financial policies in place.

Section 11. Church Clerk

- A. The Church Clerk position may be filled by the Church Secretary or other qualified person, as approved by the deacons and elected annually by the church.
- B. The Clerk shall record all congregational business and shall have custody of all church records except those kept by the deacons, trustees, and treasurer. All old records will be stored in the church office.
- C. The Clerk shall keep a record of all members of the church, with date of their reception and removal, shall record baptisms, marriages, deaths, and make full report to the church at the annual meeting.
- D. The Clerk will make certain that updates to the official documents are made in a timely manner, as approved by the Congregation.

Section 12. Director of Church Education (DCE)

- A. He shall be elected for one year, but can be re-elected.
- B. He shall be responsible for the spiritual welfare and growth of all departments in which teaching takes place.
- C. He will appoint all department heads after consultation with the Senior Pastor and deacons: Sunday School, Children's Church, AWANA, Nursery, DVBS.
- D. He shall work with the directors of all departments reportable to the DCE and the Senior Pastor in formulating and implementing the teaching programs and activities of all departments.
- E. All personnel appointments shall be approved by Pastor and Deacons.

Section 13. Administrative Committee

- A. Membership: The Administrative Committee shall consist of the Pastoral Staff, the Church Treasurer, plus the chairmen of: the Board of Deacons, the Board of Trustees, the GBCS Board and the Missions Committee. The pastor may serve as chairman of the Administrative Committee or he may appoint his Administrative Coordinator.
- B. Duties
 - I. The Administrative Committee shall coordinate the annual plans and budgets of all departments of the church into a unified Church Program and Budget. The chairman of each department will be responsible for the development of an annual plan and budget for his department, and for the presentation of that plan and budget to the Administrative Committee.
 - II. Proposed changes in departmental programs and budgets during the budget year must be presented to the Administrative Committee before such changes are made. Departmental budgets may not be overspent, except by the approval of the Administrative Committee. The unified Church Budget may not be overspent, except by approval of the congregation.
 - III. Any Administrative Committee decision requiring the authorization of the congregation must be reviewed and approved by the deacons before being presented to the congregation.

Section 14. Removal of Officers and Vacancies

- A. The failure of any Officer of the Church to fulfill the responsibilities of his/her office for a period of three months for any reason other than employment, illness, or valid absence from the city may be considered sufficient occasion for the church to declare the office vacant and to elect a successor.
- B. Vacancies which occur in the offices of the Church may be filled for the remaining term at any called or regular business meeting by a simple majority vote.

Section 15. Staff Ministry

- A. The staff of Faith Baptist Church will participate only in marriages consistent with the Statement of Faith. See Article XX, page 32.
- B. Weddings conducted in Faith Baptist Church facilities are Christian Worship Services.
- C. The use of Faith Baptist Church and Greater Beckley Christian School facilities are limited to functions and services consistent with Faith Baptist Church's Statement of Faith.

By-Laws

Section 1. Business Meetings

- A. There will be two annual business meeting for the purpose of conducting church business. These meetings shall be announced two Sundays prior to the meetings.
 - I. In May a meeting is held to Elect Officers and adopt the Church Budget and Projected GBCS Budget.
 - II. The Annual Meeting is held in July for the purpose of reviewing the previous year's financial report, hearing departmental reports and allocating any surplus funds from the last budget year.
- B. Special Called Meetings may be scheduled by the deacons for the transaction of any legitimate business and notice shall be publicly announced from the pulpit the preceding Lord's Day, or as otherwise stated herein.
- C. As far as feasible, items of business shall be announced for both regular and special called meetings.
- D. All matters of business originating from church members shall first be presented to the Pastor and/or Deacons, in writing, two weeks prior to the business meeting for prayerful consideration. It will be the responsibility of the Deacons to ensure that all matters are appropriately addressed according to scriptural principles. It shall not be the policy of this church to act upon new business from the floor, but refer it to the Administrative Committee for direction to the proper department for action and back to the church through normal channels.
- E. All matters going to the Congregation will first be approved by the Deacons [adopted April 21, 1996] See Constitution: Article V, Section 5.I.
- F. Voting for items at a business meeting will be handled via in-person votes during the meeting or via absentee ballots cast prior to the business meeting subject to the following guidelines:
 - I. Members who are eligible to vote and who are present at a business meeting are expected to vote in the usual manner for the business item under discussion (e.g. voice vote, hand vote, ballot vote, etc.).
 - II. If eligible members cannot be present to vote, they may cast an absentee ballot in the following manner:
 - a. They must come to the church office or church building during normal operating hours in the week prior to the vote;

- b. They must sign the “Absentee Ballot Registry” and receive their ballot and an envelope from the church clerk or the clerk’s designated appointee;
 - c. After filling out the desired ballot entries, they must place the ballot into the envelope and seal it, then return the envelope to the church clerk;
 - d. The church clerk will hold all absentee ballots until the business meeting, and will turn them over to the head teller when the in-person ballots are gathered;
 - e. Ballots cast via this absentee ballot process are final, and cannot be changed, or removed as there will be no way to distinguish and identify the ballot;
 - f. Members who vote via this absentee ballot process may not vote during the in-person meeting. If it has been determined that a person on the Absentee Ballot Registry has also cast an in-person ballot, the entire ballot will be declared void, and a new ballot date will be determined.
- III. If members cannot vote in-person during the business meeting, and they are unable to come to the church office to participate in the absentee process noted in F.II, above, they will be able to cast their vote utilizing Internet-based programs as they become available and approved for use in the church. It is important to have a record of who is using this tool as well as provide the security and privacy of the ballot.

Section 2. Fiscal Year

The church year shall be from July 1 through June 30.

Section 3. Amendments.

Any amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws must be submitted to the members at least two Sundays prior to the meeting; and a two-thirds majority of all votes cast shall be required for adoption. It is understood there shall be no alterations or amendments to those provisions having to do with doctrine, ownership, or control of Faith Baptist Church.

Section 4. Rules of Order

All business of the church shall be conducted using Robert’s Rule of Order, and always in harmony with the Scriptures.

Section 5. Right to Vote

The right to vote upon church affairs is limited to members of the church who are in good standing, and who are eighteen years of age and over. However, this right shall be denied to

those who have for the previous six months refused, neglected or failed to attend the services, failed or neglected to communicate with the church, or participate in its activities.

Section 6. Quorum

- A. No business will be transacted without a quorum.
- B. Quorum is defined as the number of members present at a properly stated or called meeting to conduct business. This number has no relationship to ballots or other votes cast. We have defined this number as more than one-third of the best reckoned count of eligible members. In the event that the only purpose of the meeting is to conduct a vote, and if any absentee ballots have been cast, Quorum is defined by the number of members present plus the number of absentee ballots cast, provided that the total meets or exceeds the above defined amount.
- C. A simple majority is required to pass a motion, except as noted in this document: calling a Pastor requires 80% [Article V, Section 4.A.5.c], Amendments to Constitution/By-Laws require 2/3rds majority [By-Laws, Section 3, Amendments].

Section 7. Organizations and Committees

- A. Greater Beckley Christian School
 - I. The Greater Beckley Christian Schools, Inc. shall be governed by a Board of Education in accordance with the Constitution/By-Laws of Faith Baptist Church. Persons nominated to serve on the Board of Education shall first be approved by vote of the church body of Faith Baptist Church, and shall be ultimately responsible to the church body through the Senior Pastor and the Administrative Committee. The Board of Education shall give oversight to the Administrator who shall oversee the day to day operations of the school.
 - II. The Senior Pastor and Administrative Committee shall work through the school board when recommending changes. Any constitutional changes proposed for GBCS, plus any building programs, shall first be presented to the congregation of Faith Baptist Church for prior approval at a church business meeting. The Board of Education, the pastors of Faith Baptist Church, and the Administrative Committee shall also be sensitive to obtaining the prior approval of the FBC congregation for recommended changes at GBCS that are of such major impact as to change the overall direction of the school.
 - III. The projected annual budget of GBCS shall be presented to the congregation of FBC for general approval at the May church business meeting. Regular monthly financial reports will be made to the Administrative Committee and will be available to any church member upon request.

- IV. Normally the staff and faculty shall be encouraged to be members of Faith Baptist Church. In special circumstances provision shall be made at the discretion of the school board for membership in other independent churches of like faith.
- V. The GBCS Board of Education will be made up of not less than 60% members of FBC. Up to 40% may, with the approval of FBC membership, be members of other churches with doctrinal statements which are in essential agreement with the FBC doctrinal statement.
- VI. The Pastor's authority in regard to GBCS is twofold. First he is a permanent member of the board of education. Second, he may present any item of business regarding GBCS through the Deacons to the congregation for approval. The Senior Pastor will attend FBC Board Meetings.

B. The Missions Committee

The Missions Committee shall consist of not less than four and normally not more than six members who shall represent the Board of Deacons, the youth organization in the Church and the congregation as a whole. These shall be approved by the pastor and Board of Deacons and appointed by church membership. The Missions Committee shall serve according to the purposes, plans and procedures set forth in the Missionary Policy of the church. See MC Handbook.

C. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee will be chaired by the Treasurer, recommend and give oversight to the financial policies of the church, prepare and recommend budget figures annually to the Administrative Committee. See FC Handbook.

D. Church Education Committee

The Church Education Committee will be chaired by the Director of Church Education. He will research and oversee the educational programs of all church departments. See CEC Handbook.

E. Building Committee

The building Committee is chaired by the Senior Pastor, and functions as a vision casting arm of the church with reference to long range planning, properties use and building programs. The chairman of the Trustees is a member of this committee.

F. Other Auxiliary Organizations

Any auxiliary organizations using the church name, property, or influence, shall not be formed without the knowledge and consent of the Church. Each group or organization shall fully subscribe to and share the view of this Constitution, By-Laws and Confession of Faith. Each group will petition the Administrative Committee for an account with the Treasurer and will not incur indebtedness which is not covered by their budget without

prior approval of the Treasurer. All Auxiliary organizations come under the oversight of the Deacons. Each organization will schedule their meeting times by coordinating with the church office and reporting these to the office. Some examples are:

- Men of Trust
 - Women on Wednesday
 - Women of Faith
 - Three "T's"
 - Faith Riders
 - Young at Heart
 - Singles
 - SWAT
- G. All officers, leaders and anyone holding a position of responsibility shall be members of the church, except members of Greater Beckley Christian School Board of Education who are members of other churches who are in essential agreement with the FBC Doctrinal statement, and fulfill requirements of Article V, Section 2.B and C.
- H. All organizations shall be free to elect their own officers, and free to use their own funds in spiritual ways, but never to take funds away from the church budget or its regular program.
- I. No organization of the church may take on the regular support of any work or missionary project without first consulting with the Pastor and Deacons, and approval of the Missions Committee.
- J. The purpose of each organization shall be to promote evangelism, education, the spreading of the Gospel, edification, prayer, study of the Word, submission to the Will of God, missionary education and assistance.
- K. All organizations shall schedule regular planning sessions to plan and promote the best possible meetings.
- L. No organization shall become exclusive from the others, or be a secret body.
- M. All organizations shall submit written annual reports at the annual meeting.
- N. All organizations shall announce forthcoming meetings publicly and/or by notifying the office of items for the bulletin, giving invitation for attendance.

Section 8. Raising Funds

- A. All funds of the church shall be raised on a voluntary basis in tithes and offerings, except for major projects in which case funds may be borrowed.
- B. Any fund raising project requires prior approval by the Administrative Committee.
- C. No member, class or organization rolls of any kind shall be given to any person or organization for purposes of exploitation.

Section 9. Social Agencies

No community social agencies shall be formed or have chapters in this church.

Section 10. Property

- A. The purchasing or selling of church property may only be authorized by the Church upon recommendation of the Trustees and Administrative Committee.
- B. The rights to any property that may be acquired by this church shall be and remain vested in that body of believers who shall remain faithful to the standards of faith, doctrine, and practice contained in this Constitution, By-Laws, and Confession of Faith.
- C. All matters with reference to properties, church/GBCS buildings, and equipment are the responsibility of the Trustees. These matters include, but are not limited to the following: maintenance of buildings/grounds, cleaning, acquisition/sale and use of buildings.
- D. Joint usage of properties, buildings and equipment present unique circumstances for implementation and reportability, requiring careful communication and understanding that the Trustees are the lawful custodians of all FBC properties/buildings/equipment. Anyone delegated responsibility in any of these areas is ultimately responsible and reportable to the Chairman of the Trustees.
- E. Each department which purchases equipment with church funds must keep an accurate record of the date, amount and place of purchase, warranty and parts information. The equipment may be assigned for personal use and will be amortized for depletion. Each department is responsible to keep accurate records of, and know where that equipment under their supervision is located

Section 11. Ordination

- A. When, in the judgment of the Deacon Board, a man in this membership is called to the Christian ministry, it shall be within the power of the Deacon Board to call and conduct a council for ordination, provided that this authority is granted by a vote of the church.

- B. The ordaining council shall thoroughly examine all applicants for ordination as to their call to the Christian ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation and character, doctrinal belief, and a demonstrated efficiency in Christian service

Section 12. Dissolution

- A. Should this church be dissolved, all assets, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all liabilities, shall be distributed to one or more mission organizations which the church had been supporting.
- B. The congregation of Faith Baptist Church, Prosperity, WV, may direct the Board to dissolve the corporation known as "Greater Beckley Christian Schools, Inc." Upon dissolution of the corporation, the Board of Trustees of Faith Baptist Church shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, transfer all of the assets of the corporation to Faith Baptist Church.

Section 13. Affiliation

The church is independent. This church does not claim or acknowledge membership, affiliation, connection, nor is a constituent in any denominational convention, association, or religious body.

Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement

Article I. The Scriptures

- A. We believe that the Holy Bible
 - I. was written by men controlled by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Acts 1:16; 2:25);
 - II. has truth without any mixture of error (Psalm 119:105; Psalm 119:160; 130; Luke 24:25-27; John 17:17; Luke 24:44-45); and
 - III. therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried (Psalm 119:89; Proverbs 30:5-6; Romans 3:4; 1 Peter 1:23; Revelation 22:19; John 12:48; Isaiah 8:20; Eph. 6:17; Romans 15:4; Luke 16:31; Psalm 19:7-11; John 5:45-47; John 5:39).
- B. By “The Holy Bible” we mean the collection of sixty-six books from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written, does not merely contain and convey the Word of God, but is the very Word of God.
- C. By “Inspiration” we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.

Article II. The True God

We believe that

- A. there is only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth (Ex. 20:2-3; Genesis 17:1; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; John 2:24; Psalm 147:5; Psalm 83:18; Psalm 90:2; Jeremiah 10:10);
- B. He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love (Ex. 15:11; Revelation 4:11; I Timothy 1:17; Romans 11:33; Mark 12:30); and
- C. in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in ever divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 1 John 5:7; John 10:30; John 17:5; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 2:10-11; Philippians 2:5-6; Eph 2:18; 2 Cor. 13:14).

Article III. The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit

- A. is a divine person equal with God the Father (John 14:16-17) and God the Son (Matthew 28:19);
- B. is of the same nature (Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35);
- C. was active in the creation (Genesis 1:1-3);
- D. in His relation to the unbelieving world restrains the Evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled (2 Thess. 2:7);
- E. convicts of sin, judgment and righteousness (John 16:8-11);
- F. bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony (John 15:26-27; Acts 5:30-32);
- G. is the agent in the New Birth (John 3:5-6);
- H. seals, baptizes, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer (Ephesians 1:13-14; Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:29; John 16:13; John 14:26; Romans 8:14; Romans 8:16; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; Romans 8:26-27; Gal. 5:22-23; Ephesians 5:18-21); and
- I. shows His indwelling in the believer by the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance) rather than by speaking in tongues and other spectacular demonstrations.

Article IV. Sanctification

We believe that sanctification has a twofold meaning:

- A. that of setting apart of things, days or persons specifically for God, and that the believer at the time of his regeneration is so set apart by God the Father (1 Cor. 1:30; Hebrews 10:10, 14); and
- B. the progressive work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer, obedient to the Word of God experiences the power of the indwelling Christ for holiness of life and Victory over the old nature, whose work will be completed when the believer stands in Christ's presence (Col. 1:26-28; John 17:17; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Cor. 3:18).

Article V. The Devil, or Satan

We believe that Satan

- A. was once holy and enjoyed heavenly honors but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:14-17);
- B. drew after him a host of angels; (Rev. 12:9; Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:40);
- C. is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world (Eph. 2:2, John 14.30);
- D. is man's greatest tempter, (1 Peter 5:8; 1 Thess. 3:5; Matthew 4:1,3);
- E. is the enemy of God and His Christ (Zechariah 1:3; 1 John 3:8; Matthew 13:25, 37-39; Luke 22:3-4);
- F. is the accuser of the saints (Rev.12:10);
- G. is the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy (2 Cor. 11:13-15; Mark 13:21-22);
- H. is the lord of the Antichrist (1 John 4:3; 2 John 2:22);
- I. is the author of all powers of darkness (Rev. 13:13-14; 2 Thess. 2:8-11):
- J. is destined to final defeat at the hand of God's Son, and (Rev. 19:11; 16, 20; Rev. 12:7-9; Rev. 20:1-3); and
- K. is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels (Rev. 20:10; Matthew 25:41).

Article VI. The Creation

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and

- A. that it is to be accepted literally, not allegorically nor figuratively (Genesis 1:1; Exodus 20:11; Acts 4:24; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 11:3; John 1:3; Rev. 10:6, Romans 1:20; Acts 17:23-26; Jeremiah 10:12; Nehemiah 9:6);
- B. that man was created directly in God's own image and after his own likeness (Genesis 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 11:17);
- C. that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change in species, or in development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms (Genesis 2:7; Genesis 2:21-23); and
- D. that all animal and vegetable life was made directly and by God's established law, that they should bring forth only "after their kind" (Genesis 1:11; Genesis 1:24).

Article VII. The Fall of Man

We believe that

- A. man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker but (Genesis 3:1-6);
- B. by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state (Romans 5:12; Romans 5:19);
- C. in consequence of which transgression, all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but by choice (Romans 3:10-19; Ephesians 2:1,3; Romans 1:18; Ezekiel 18:19-20; and
- D. man is therefore under just condemnation and without defense or excuse (Romans 1:32; Romans 1:20; Romans 1:28; Galatians 3:22).

Article VIII. The Virgin Birth

We believe that Jesus Christ

- A. was begotten of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner (Genesis 3:15);
- B. was born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of a woman (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; Mark 1:1; John 1:14; Psalm 2:7; Galatians 4:4);and
- C. is both the Son of God, and God, the Son (I John 5:20; 1 Cor. 15:47).

Article IX. The Atonement

We believe that

- A. the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace (Eph.2:8; Acts 5:11; Romans 3:24);
- B. through the mediatory offices of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the father, freely took upon Himself our nature, yet was without sin, and honored the divine law by His personal obedience;
- C. by His death, Jesus Christ made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins (John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Phil 2:7; Hebrews 2:14; Isaiah 53:4-7; Romans 3:25; 1 John 4:10; 2 Cor. 5:21;
- D. His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree (John 10:18; Phil 2:8; Gal 1:4; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18; Isaiah 53:11; Hebrews 12:2); and
- E. having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His wonderful person the tender sympathies with divine perfection. He is in every way qualified to be suitable, compassionate and all sufficient Savior, (1 Cor. 15:20; Isaiah 53:12, Hebrews 9:12-15, Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:2).

Article X. Grace in the New Creation

We believe that

- A. in order to be saved, sinners must be born again (John 3:3);
- B. the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17);
- C. it is instantaneous and not a process (Luke 5:27; 1 John 5:1; John 3:6-7; Acts 16:30-33);
- D. in the new birth, the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God (2 Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1; 2 Cor. 5:19; Colossians 2:13),
- E. the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel (John 3:8; John 1:2-13); and
- F. that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruit of repentance and faith and newness of life (Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 5:9).

Article XI. The Cost of Salvation

We believe

- A. in God's unconditional electing grace (1 Thess. 1:4; Colossians 3:12; 1 Peter 1:2; Titus 1:1; Romans 8:29-30);
- B. that the blessings of salvation are made free to all through the gospel (Matthew 11:28; Isaiah 55:1; Revelation 22:17; Romans 10:13; John 6:37);
- C. that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent and obedient faith (Isaiah 55:6; Acts 2:38);
- D. that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel (Isaiah 55:7; John 3:15-16; 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 Cor. 15:10; Ephesians 2:4-5; John 5:40); and
- E. that rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation (John 3:18; John 3:36).

Article XII. Justification

We believe that the great gospel which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is Justification;

- A. that Justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness (Acts 13:39; Isaiah 53:11; Zechariah 13:1; Romans 8:1; Romans 5:9; Romans 5:1);

- B. that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith on the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us (Titus 3:5-7; Romans 1:17; Habakkuk 2:4; Galatians 3:11; Romans 4:1-8; Hebrews 10:38).

Article XIII. Repentance and Faith

We believe that Repentance and Faith are

- A. solemn obligations, (Acts 20:21);
- B. inseparable graces (Mark 1:15);
- C. wrought in our souls by the life-giving Spirit of God (Acts 2:27-36);
- D. used thereby so that, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy (Luke 18:13); Romans 10:13; Psalm 51:104; Psalm 51:7; Isaiah 55:6-7);
- E. at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all sufficient Savior (Luke 12:8; Romans 9:11).

Article XIV. The Church

We believe that the church, the body of Christ, is composed of all those who have true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we further believe that a local New Testament Church is a congregation of baptized believers:

- A. associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel (Acts 2:41-42);
- B. observing the ordinances of Christ (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:2);
- C. governed by His laws (Ephesians 1:22-23);
- D. exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:4, 8-11);
- E. with scripturally designated officers (pastors, elders and deacons), whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures (Acts 14:23; Acts 6:5-6; Acts 15:23; Acts 20:17-28; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 2 Timothy 3:8-13);
- F. whose true mission is found in the Great Commission: first, to make individual disciples; second, to baptize them; third, to teach and instruct, as He has commanded (Matthew 28:19-20);

- G. with the absolute right of hierarchy of individuals or organizations, and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23-24; 1 Peter 5:1-4;
- H. that has a scriptural basis for cooperation with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation (Acts 15:22; Jude 2-3; 2 Cor. 8:23-24; 1 Cor. 16:1; Malachi 3:10; Leviticus 27:32; 1 Cor. 16:2); and
- I. with a final will on matters of membership, polity, government, discipline and benevolence (1 Cor. 6:1-3; 1 Cor. 5:11-13).

Article XV. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is

- A. the believer's immersion in water (Acts 8:36-39; Matthew 3:6; John 3:23; Romans 6:4-5; Matthew 3:16);
- B. in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19);
- C. to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12); and
- D. an act that in scriptural order precedes the privileges of church membership and is the public recognition of the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41-42; Matthew 28:19-20);

We further believe that the Lord's Supper is a memorial service in which the elements of bread and wine remind us of the love of God in Christ Jesus, "Who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all"; that this ordinance is to be observed in anticipation of His coming and preceded always by solemn self-examination (1 Cor. 11:23-28; Romans 8:32).

Article XVI. The Perseverance of the Saints

We believe that

- A. true believers will endure unto the end (John 8:31-32; Colossians 1:21,23);
- B. their preserving attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes believing Saints from superficial professors (1 John 2:19; Matthew 13:19-20);
- C. a special Providence watches over their welfare (Romans 8:28; Matthew 6:30; Psalm 121:3; Hebrews 1:14); and
- D. they are kept by the power of the God through faith unto eternal salvation (1 Peter 1:5; Philippians 1:6; John 10:29; John 16:8; Romans 8:35-39).

Article XVII. The Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that

- A. there is radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17-18; Proverbs 11:31; 1 Peter 4:18);
- B. only those who, through faith, are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His sight (Romans 1:17; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Acts 10:34-35; 1 John 2:29; 1 John 3:7; Romans 6:16);
- C. those who demonstrate unbelief and a lack of repentance for their sins are wicked in His sight, and under the curse (Romans 6:16; Romans 3:3; 1 John 5:19; Galatians 3:10; Romans 7:6; Romans 6:23); and
- D. this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting blessedness of the righteous and the everlasting conscious suffering of the wicked (Proverbs 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matthew 25:34, 41; John 8:21; Luke 9:26; John 12:25; Matthew 7:13-14).

Article XVIII. Civil Government

We believe that civil government is

- A. of a divine appointment, for the interest and good order of human society (Romans 13:1-7; II Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21-22);
- B. administered by magistrates who are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed (Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14, 17); and
- C. to be obeyed except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 5:20; Acts 4:19-20; Daniel 3:17-18), who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth (Matthew 10:28; Matthew 23:10; Revelation 10:6; Philippians 2:10-11; Psalm 72:11).

Article XIX. The Resurrection, Return of Christ and Related Events

We believe in:

- A. The bodily resurrection (Matthew 28:6-7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; 1 Corinthians 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2, 4-6);
- B. The ascension (Acts 1:9; Acts 1:11; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19; Revelation 3:21; Hebrews 8:1; Hebrews 12:2);
- C. The high priesthood (Hebrews 8:6; 1 Timothy 2:4; 1 John 2:1; Hebrews 2:17; Hebrews 5:9-10);

- D. The second coming (John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:16; Matthew 24:27; Matthew 25:13; James 5:8; Matthew 24:42; Hebrews 9:28);
- E. The resurrection of the righteous dead (1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:42-44; 1 Cor. 15:52);
- F. The change of the living Christ (1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thess. 4:17; Phil. 3:20-21);
- G. The throne of David (Luke 1:32; Isaiah 9:6-7; Acts 2:29-30); and
- H. His reign on earth (1 Cor. 15:25; Isaiah 32:1; Isaiah 11:4-5; Psalm 72:8; Rev. 20:1-2; 6).

Article XX. The Family

We believe

- A. marriage was ordained by God as one male and one female becoming one flesh. We believe it was God's design that a man and woman enter the marriage union for life. (Gen. 2:18-25; Matthew 19:3-9; Romans 7:2; Ephesians 5:22-32)
- B. God has provided for intimate sexual relations between a man and a woman within the covenant of marriage. Sexual relations outside the bonds of marriage, including but not limited to; homosexuality, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, adultery, fornication, and pedophilia are a sin. (Genesis 2:24; 19:5, 12-13; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 7:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; Ephesians 5:3-5)
- C. acts that defile God's human creation such as gender modification, through medical procedure or otherwise are against the will of God, and are sins. (Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:18-32; Ephesians 5:3-5)
- D. participation in sexual degradation through pornography and other means are attacks against the family unit are against the will of God, and are sins. (Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; Ephesians 5:3-5; 1 Thessalonians 4:8)
- E. in the sanctity of human life. We believe human life begins at conception and from conception through the elderly adult years should be respected as a creation of God. We believe abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, suicide, assisted suicide, and other similar acts are acts of murder and therefore against the will of God. (Genesis 1:27; Exodus 20:13; Leviticus 19:32; Job 12:12; Psalms 139:13-14; Isaiah 44:2,24; Jeremiah 1:5; Romans 9:20-22; 1 Timothy 5:1-2)
- F. children are a blessing from God and are to be taught spiritual and moral values by their parents, who are to rear them with loving discipline following the example and instruction of the Lord. (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Psalms 78:4-7; 127:3; Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4)

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