



The Independent Baptist Church of Anchorage

Covenant and Church Policies

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ARTICLE I
NAME, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

Section 1 – Name

The name of this Church shall be THE INDEPENDENT BAPTIST CHURCH OF ANCHORAGE.

Section 2 – Purpose and Objective

It shall be the purpose and objective of this church, collectively and individually to minister the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for all purposes required or consistent with the scriptures, as set forth within our Doctrinal Statement and Covenant, including, but not limited to:

- A. Evangelizing the unsaved by preaching and teaching the gospel of Christ and distributing Bibles and Christian literature within the Municipality of Anchorage, the State of Alaska, the United States of America and unto the uttermost parts of the world.
- B. Encouraging and training believers to observe the teachings of Christ, confess Him openly through baptism by immersion, scripturally obey him through local church membership and consecrate themselves to his service.
- C. Edifying, strengthening and educating our members and their children in a manner consistent with the requirements set forth in Holy Scriptures through worship, teaching and training.
- D. Actively engaging in the enterprise of missions both at home and abroad with prayers, programs, and financial support.
- E. As further expressed in our Church Covenant.

ARTICLE II
COVENANT

Having been lead, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now in the presence of God, angels 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 doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through the nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the use, distribution and sale of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Gospel of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offence, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour, 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 the principles of God's Word.

ARTICLE III DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

This church believes the scriptures to be the inspired Word of God and our sole authority in all matters of faith and practice. This church will use only the King James Version (1611) in all teaching, preaching and practice.

We believe the Holy Scripture, the sixty-six books from Genesis through Revelation, to be the inspired Word of God, written by holy men of God who were controlled by the Holy Spirit as to the very words used; totally without error, that shall remain, until the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; basic to Christian unity and the supreme authority by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried. (II Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; I Peter 1:10; II Peter 1:21)

THE GODHEAD

We believe there is one and only one living and true God, infinite, perfect, self-existent, sovereign, holy, personal, loving, all knowing, all powerful, everywhere-present whose name is Jehovah, the creator and ruler of heaven and earth; revealed in three distinct persons; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, each of whom is to be honored and worshipped equally as true God.

GOD, THE FATHER

We believe in God, the Father, perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom, measureless in power. God is the Father of believers on the Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 4:6) He is the only Father of born-again children of God. Man is a creature by creation; he becomes a child by recreation. (II Peter 1:2 & 4) He is the only living and true God, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; he is infinite in every excellence. God is the eternal Father—and to be an eternal Father, He must have an Eternal Son.

PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST

We believe in the Deity and virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ; that He is the eternal and only begotten Son of God; that he was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, not having a human father; that He was sinless in his life, and is true God and true man; that he made atonement

for the sins of the world by his death, was buried, and rose again the third day for our justification according to the scriptures. We believe in His bodily resurrection, His ascension into heaven and His life there as high Priest and Advocate; that He is the only Mediator between God and man. We believe that His coming for His own (the rapture) is imminent (pre-tribulation) and that following the Tribulation Period He will return to set up His Millennial Reign. (Isaiah 7:14, Matt 1:18-25, Matt 28:18-20, John 1:1-14, Acts 1:9-11, I Corinthians 15:3-4, Thessalonians 1:9-10, I Thessalonians 4:13-18, II Thessalonians 2:1-8, I Timothy 4:10, Titus 2:10-15, Hebrews 4:14-15, Revelation 19:11-20:6)

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is co-eternal and co-existent with God the Father and God the Son; that He came to convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; and to regenerate, sanctify, comfort, teach, indwell, guide and empower those who believe in Jesus Christ. (John 14-16)

We believe the Holy Spirit is a person, not an impersonal influence. In answer to the Saviour's promise He came on the day of Pentecost to perform His many ministries on our behalf. (Acts 2)

We believe the Holy Spirit indwells every true Christian who, in turn is commanded to be filled with and controlled by the Spirit. (Romans 8:9, I Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 5:18)

We believe that the answer to daily victory in Christian living (Godliness, Christ-likeness, personal holiness) and power for soul-winning is found in the fullness of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:8, Romans 6 & 8, Galatians 5)

We believe that all worship, witness, evangelism and missions should be conducted in the power of the Holy Spirit. We therefore discourage the fleshly methods of evangelism. All work and ministry of this church must be supported by Holy Spirit giving (through tithes and offerings) and by no other method. (John 4:24, I Corinthians 1:18, 27-31, 2:6-16)

We do not believe that "speaking in tongues" is the sign of having been baptized by the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 12:12, 30)

We believe that of all the spiritual gifts, "speaking in tongues" was recognized by Paul to open to certain abuses and danger and that even in the New Testament age it occupied a subordinate place in the life of Christians. Such ecstatic utterance does not require a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit, nor can it be accepted as a definite indication of His presence (I Corinthians 12: 27-31).

We believe that the gifts of tongues, healing and prophecy (revelation) were a sign to Israel for the Apostolic Period and that dispensationally God did not, in His Word, teach us that such a sign is for this church age. This church is neither Pentecostal nor charismatic and the teachings and practices of these groups are not allowed within the fellowship of this church, lest divisions occur and harmony of the assembly be weakened. (Deuteronomy 28:49, Psalm 133:1, Isaiah 28:11-12, I Corinthians 14:21-23, 33-34, 40)

SATAN

We believe in the existence of Satan who originally was created a perfect being, but through pride and unlawful ambition rebelled against God (Isaiah 14:12-15, Ezekiel 28:13-17) thus becoming utterly depraved in character (John 8:44), the great adversary of God and His people (Matthew 4:1-11, Revelation 12:10) leader of all other evil angels and spirits (Matthew 12:22-28, 25:41), the deceiver and god of this present world (Revelation 2:9, II Corinthians 4:4); that his powers are supernaturally great, but strictly limited by the permissive will of God, who overrules all his wicked devices for good (Job, Luke 22:31-32), and that he was defeated and judged at the cross and, therefore, his final doom is certain (John 12:31-32, 16:11, Revelation 20:10); that we are able to resist and overcome him only in the armor of God and by the blood of the Lamb. (Ephesians 6:11-18, Revelation 12:11)

STATE OF MAN

We believe that man is totally depraved. We believe that the material universe, including man, came into being by direct creation of God, and not by process of evolution. We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, under the law of his Creator, but by voluntary transgression (Adams sin) the whole human race fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind inherited a sinful nature and are now sinners, not by constraint but by choice. We believe man became alienated from God, being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, and that man is totally depraved, positively inclined to evil and therefore under just condemnation to eternal judgment, without defense or excuse, and of himself utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Genesis 1:1, 1:26-27, 3:1-15, John 1:1-3, Romans 1:18, 3:21-23, 5:12-14, Ephesians 2:1-3, Titus 3:5, Revelation 21:8)

SALVATION OF MAN

We believe that repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are the only conditions for salvation. Salvation is totally of grace and made possible only through the vicarious death of Jesus Christ upon the cross of Calvary. There is salvation in none other than Christ, and the personal acceptance of Him is absolutely essential. To be saved, a sinner must be born again; the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus, and it is instantaneous, not a process; evidenced by visible fruits of the Holy Spirit. (John 3:6-7, 16-18 & 36; Romans 6:23; I John 5:13; II Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 5:22-23; Acts 16:31; Ephesians 2:8-9)

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the process by which, according to the Word of God, we are partakers of His holiness; that it is begun by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, in the continual use of the appointed means – especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness and prayer. The sanctification of believers is consummated at the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. (John 17:17; I Corinthians 6:11; II Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 5:25-27; Hebrews 2:11, 10:9-10; I John 3:2).

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

We believe that the great Gospel blessing which Christ secures to all who believe in Him is justification. This justification includes the pardon of sin and the gift of eternal life. It is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness, which we have done, but solely through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ by virtue of which His perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us by God and that it brings us into a state of blessed peace, needful for time and eternity. (Isaiah 53:11-12; Matthew 6:33, 9:6; John 3:16; Acts 10:43, 13:39; Romans 5:1-2, 6:23; I Corinthians 1:30-31; Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 3:7-9; Titus 3:5-7)

ETERNAL ASSURANCE

We believe, based on literal meaning, that all true believers possess eternal and everlasting life; that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; and that they are saved and kept, not by self-righteousness, but by the righteousness of Christ. (John 3:16, 10:28-29; Romans 1:16; Hebrews 13:5; I Peter 1:3-5; Jude 24-25).

CHRISTIAN WALK

We believe that we are called with a holy calling to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit so that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. But the flesh with its Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, being with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord. (Romans 6:11-13, 8:4, 12-13; Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 4:22-24; I Peter 1:14-16; I John 1:6-7, 3:5-9)

We believe that the Bible teaches both personal and local church separation. All believers are called to separation from the evil in the world and to separation unto God. Separation is Gods only provision to preserve His people from worldliness and to keep His churches from apostasy. (John 17:15; II Corinthians 6:14-18; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11)

THE CHURCH

We believe that a church (local assembly) is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant, in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; established by Jesus Christ; who is the sole head; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; exercising its Scriptural rights and privileges; that its only Scriptural officers are Bishops, Pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and Titus. We believe that the church (Bride of Christ – all born again believers) began with the New Testament Saints and will be consummated at the coming of Christ in the rapture. (Matthew 18:15-17; Acts 1:4-14, 2:1-47, 5:1-11, 8:1, 11:22-24, 14:23; I Corinthians 1:1-10, 11:2, 14:12; I Timothy 3; Titus 1)

CHURCH ORDINANCES

We believe that there are two church ordinances, Believers Baptism and the Lords Supper:

- A. We believe that Believers Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer in Christ, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit to show forth in a solemn and beautiful picture of our faith on the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, our death to sin and resurrection to new life; that baptism should precede the privilege of church membership and to the Lords Supper. (Matthew 3:13-17; Acts 2:41-42, 8:36-39, 16:14-15, 30-34; Romans 6:1-23)
- B. We believe that the Lords Supper is a provision of bread (unleavened) and the fruit of the vine (unfermented) representing Christ's body and blood, partaken of by believers in commemoration of the death of our Lord and Saviour, showing our faith and participation in the merits of His sacrifice, our dependence on Him for spiritual life and nourishment, our assurance of eternal life through His resurrection from the dead, and our hope of the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ for His own. (Luke 22:7-20; I Corinthians 11:23-32)

LIFE AFTER DEATH

We believe in the future life, bodily resurrection, and eternal judgment; that the spirits of the redeemed at death go immediately to be with Christ in heaven (Philippians 1:21-23; II Corinthians 5:8), where they abide in joyful fellowship with Him until His second coming (the rapture), when their bodies shall be raised from the grave and changed into the likeness of His own glorious body (Philippians 3:20-21; I Corinthians 15:35-55; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I John 3:2), at which time their works shall be brought before the judgment seat of Christ – a judgment which may issue in reward or the loss of rewards but not the loss of the soul (I Corinthians 3:8-15; II Corinthians 5:10; Colossians 3:22-25); that the spirits of the unsaved at death descend immediately into Hell where they are kept under punishment until the final day of judgment (Luke 16:19-31; II Peter 2:9-10), at which time their bodies shall be raised from the grave and they shall be judged according to their works and cast into the place of final and everlasting punishment. (Mark 9:43-48; Jude 13; Revelation 20:11-15, 21:8)

BIBLICAL PROPHECY

We believe in the pre-tribulational, pre-millennial return of Christ (the rapture) for His Bride (the Church), a blessed hope for which we should constantly watch and pray, the time being unrevealed, but always imminent; we believe at the end of the tribulation period the Lord Jesus Christ will bodily, visibly return in order to establish His glorious and literal kingdom over all the nations for a thousand years; at the close of which God will raise and judge the unsaved dead; and finally Christ will reign forever and ever with the Father, over the redeemed, in the new heaven and the new earth. (John 14:3; Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 1:9-10, 4:13-18; II Timothy 4:8; Titus 2:11-13; Revelation 1:7; Revelation 19, 20, 21)

CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is ordained of God for the punishment of evil doers and for the protection of the good. (Romans 13:1-7) We, therefore, encourage individual participation in government and consider it our duty to pray for rulers and magistrates (I Timothy 2:1-3) and to be

submissive and obedient to their authority, except in things opposed to the Word of God. (Matthew 23:10; Acts 4:19, 5:29; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13-14) We believe in the separation of State and Church. The State has no business in the church, but since the church is made up of U.S citizens, we the church, have every right to be involved in our State government.

MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

Marriage ceremonies on church properties will only be held for those members in good standing.

We believe that God has ordained marriage to be a sacred union between one man and one woman until death breaks that bond. (Genesis 2:22-24) We believe that sodomy/homosexuality and other forms of sexual sin are forbidden in the Scriptures and should not be a part of the local church or the life of a Believer who is seeking to walk in obedience to God. (Leviticus 18:22-24; Leviticus 20:13; Romans 1:26-27, Ephesians 5:3)

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Church Membership

It is the prayerful desire of this church to follow the simple Scriptural procedure concerning church membership as outlined in Acts 2:40-47; the preaching of the gospel of Christ, salvation by faith, baptism, church membership and the Lords Supper.

Section 2 – Establishing Membership

Grounds upon which membership may be established:

- A. BY PROFESSION – Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour, giving evidence of regeneration and baptism by immersion, may be received into church membership.
- B. BY LETTER – Any person who is in accord with the views and principles of this church may be received into membership after a statement of faith and acceptance of a letter in good standing from any sister Baptist church, of like faith and practice, in which they hold membership.
- C. BY EXPERIENCE – Any believer of worthy Christian character, who was formerly a member of a Baptist church of like faith and practice, and for an acceptable reason, cannot present a letter from that church, but is in accord with the views of faith and practice of this church, may be received upon statement of faith and evidence of Scriptural baptism.
- D. BY RESTORATION – Any member who has lost their membership for any reason and has shown evidence of repentance may be restored to membership upon the recommendation of the pastor and deacons and the unanimous decision of the church. Public offenses require public repentance and a probationary period in an inactive status (length of time period to be determined by the Pastor and the Deacons). The restoration of the member must also be evidenced by his acceptance of the Covenant and Church Policies.

It is the duty of every member of this church to love and support the ministry of the pastor(s) of the church. Every church member should respect and acknowledge the pastor's position and calling as the spiritual leader of the congregation, putting into practice the admonition of Hebrews 13:17. Every church member should seek to shield and protect the pastor(s) from destructive and unkind criticism (II Thessalonians 3:1-5, James 3:1-15). Above all else, every church member should continually pray for the pastor(s). (I Thessalonians 5:25, Hebrews 13:18)

Section 3 – Application and Procedure

- A. Each candidate for church membership shall publicly confess Christ as Saviour, and indicate their desire for church membership, by responding to an invitation at the close of any church service.
- B. Candidates for voting church membership shall meet with the pastor and deacons for instruction necessary in the areas of Bible doctrine, Baptist polity and the responsibilities of church membership. They are to declare their understanding and acceptance of the Covenant and Church Policies before a recommendation can be made.
- C. The names of all applicants recommended by the pastor and the deacons may be presented to the church and voted on at any meeting or at the close of any church service.

Section 4 – Duties of Membership

- A. Members shall strive to keep their covenant obligations. They should honor, esteem and love the pastor; pray for him daily; recognize his authority in spiritual affairs, and assist him in carrying out the programs of the church. Each member should cherish a brotherly love for all members and endeavor to preserve the unity of the church. If at any time a member finds themselves unchangingly opposed to the doctrines and procedures of this church (as described in the Covenant and Church Policies) they shall NOT seek to disrupt its fellowship, but shall quietly submit a request for immediate removal from membership.
- B. Each member of the church is expected to attend its meetings, work for its spiritual and physical growth, guard its good name in the community and keep the Minister of Records informed as to their residence
- C. Every member is expected to walk circumspectly before the world and support the ministry in prayer, and financial giving (tithes and offerings) according to the Biblical beliefs and practices of this church.
- D. Upon reaching the age of 18 a member may obtain voting status by written acceptance of the Covenant and Church Policies and by recommendation of the pastor and deacons.

Section 5 – Termination of membership shall occur by:

- A. Death of a member
- B. Letter of transfer and commendation to any other Baptist church of like faith and practice. Such a letter shall be sent only to a requesting church.
- C. A member may be removed from membership as a result of disciplinary action (Article V).
- D. Member's request

Section 6 – Standing of Members

Members who do not attend at least one service per week for a period of three months and have not communicated with the church shall be placed by the Minister of Records, upon the recommendation of the deacons, on the Inactive Membership List. This action shall be taken only after a conscientious effort has been made by the pastor and deacons to renew the interest of the member and the effort has failed.

- A. Any inactive member shall not have the privilege of voting in any business meeting or holding any position of leadership.
- B. Names continuing on the Inactive Membership List for more than one year will automatically be removed from the membership role.
- C. Members on the inactive list may be reinstated to active status by the pastor and deacons, upon personal request, after a period of three months of regular attendance and evidence of resumption of covenant obligations.
- D. Members who communicate legitimate reasons to the pastor and deacons for their absence shall not be placed on the Inactive Membership List.

ARTICLE V CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, states the churches duty to exercise discipline; excluding from its fellowship any member who persist in sin and disobedience to God's Word. His command to exercise discipline in the church is as definite as His commands to baptize and to commemorate His death by use of symbols (Matthew 18:15-20). The disciplining of sinning members is necessary for the spiritual health and blessing of the church. It is indispensable to building true Christian, spiritual, victorious congregations. To surrender this duty and privilege means weakness and defeat; sin and the world will slip in and take over; the Holy Spirit will be grieved and quenched.

Section 1 – Personal Offenses

Offenses are inevitable and it is important that they be settled privately according to the pattern outlined in Matthew 18:15-16. Members are to seek reconciliation in a spirit of love when offenses occur, whether noticed by the offender (Matthew 5:23-24) or the offended person. However, if the parties involved will not follow this pattern, or if, upon following it reconciliation has not been reached, the pastor and deacons may need to become involved in order to preserve the peace and unity of the church.

- A. When the sin or offense is personal and private, the injured should go at once to the one who has done the injury and show them their fault in the spirit of love and humility. Every effort should be made for reconciliation. Patience, love, and understanding should be exercised. (Matthew 18:15-22; I Corinthians 13:4-7)
- B. In connection with these scriptures it is well to consider also, the duty of one who has reason to believe that a member has been injured by them and is offended. We find the law of the Lord

Jesus Christ for such cases in Matthew 5:23-24. This is also to be a very private matter between the two. Each should carefully guard the reputation of the other. To follow these teachings of the Lord would mean continued harmony, love, fellowship and the blessings of God upon the church.

- C. If the injured goes to the one doing the injury, and that one sees their fault and repents of it, the injured party should immediately and fully forgive them, at which time the matter would end.
- D. But if the one doing the injury will not see and acknowledge their fault, or repent of it, a second step may be taken. (Up to this time the utmost privacy has been maintained, in the hope that the wrong doing might not become known and injure the church.) When such private effort at supporting righteousness fails, the injured party is commanded to get one or two spiritual persons to go with them to the offender. It is suggested that these persons be the pastor(s) or deacons.
- E. If after much prayerful discussion reconciliation is not made, the injured may then take the matter to the church, under the consultation and direction of the pastor and deacons.
- F. If the offending party will hear the church and yield to the prayerful decision of the members assembled, there should be an immediate and complete reconciliation.
- G. But if the member will not hear the church, then by vote of the church, membership shall be revoked.
- H. The members of the church shall continue to pray for the individual's complete restoration, but shall not extend such comfort and sympathy as would lessen or alleviate the effect of the exclusion.
- I. No member will enter into legal confrontation with any other member but will strive to settle any and all disputes within the stated Scriptural bounds (Article IV, Section 4, A) and within the church. Members will accept decisions of the church as final (Matthew 18:15-18; I Corinthians 6:1-7).

Section 2 – General Offenses

Should any member become an offense to the church and a stumbling block to the ministry, secretly or otherwise, by reason of immoral, disorderly or non-Christ-like conduct; undermining, divisive or rebellious actions; consistent breach of covenant vows; or by reason of heretical beliefs, the church may terminate membership.

- A. Such action may be initiated only by the pastor and deacons. (NO public recommendation to either consider or prosecute such a move shall be made except by the pastor and deacons.)
- B. In all cases where disciplinary discharge is considered, the pastor and deacons shall exercise every spiritual means of persuasion and prayer to draw the errant member back into the membership of the church.
- C. When every effort has failed to restore such a member, the pastor(s) and deacons by majority vote may remove the person's name from the membership role.
- D. The recommendation of the pastor and deacons shall include only sufficient information to clearly indicate the nature of the offence (Ephesians 5:12).
- E. A member shall be excluded from church membership only after much prayer and loving patience has been exercised toward a Scriptural reconciliation. The end purpose of church discipline is restoration.

ARTICLE VI CHURCH LEADERS

Section 1 – Pastors (Shepherds, Bishops, Elders)

Qualifications of the Pastor (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:4-2:15)

- A. He must be above reproach (blameless). No grounds for accusing him of improper behavior; does not mean sinless perfection.
- B. Husband of one wife; only married once (except in the case of a widower.)
- C. Cautious, observing, watchful, alert.
- D. Prudent, sensible, wise, self-controlled and balanced in judgment.
- E. Respectable, demonstrating good behavior and an orderly life.
- F. Hospitable, unselfish, willing to share his home, material blessings, and personal life with others.
- G. Able to teach, able to communicate sound doctrine and truth to others in a non-argumentative way.
- H. Temperate, absolute abstinence from alcoholic beverages. The overseer must not be a drinker.
- I. Not a striker or person given to physical violence; gentle.
- J. Non-contentious; not given to quarreling or selfish argumentation.
- K. Free from the love of money; not stingy with his material blessings and a good steward of his money.
- L. One who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity. He must have the respect and obedience of his family.
- M. Not a new Convert; a mature believer who demonstrates spirituality.
- N. Good reputation with those outside the church. Unbelievers respect his character and integrity.
- O. Not self-willed; not stubborn or one who tries to have his own way.
- P. Not quick tempered; doesn't anger quickly or "fly off the handle."
- Q. Loves what is good; desires to do the will of God in everything.
- R. Must be just, fair and impartial; judgments are based on scriptural principles.
- S. Devout: separated from sin.
- T. Must hold fast the faithful Word of God; stable in the faith, does not teach one thing and live another.

Duties of the Pastor

The New Testament clearly teaches that pastors of local churches have a multiple ministry. They are pastors (shepherds) who lead, feed, teach and protect the congregation (flock); they are bishops (superintendents); and elders (presiding officers)

As the under-shepherd of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the senior pastor shall have charge of the pulpit ministry and conduct their regular and special services of the church. He shall have pastoral supervision of all the teaching and preaching of the church and its ministries in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

The pastors of this church are cautioned against “being lords over Gods heritage” (I Peter 5:3), ever remembering their ministry is one of love, example, service and spirit-filled leadership. They must always remember their accountability to the Lord (I Peter 5:4) and to this church congregation.

As God provides and leads, the pastor may designate and appoint, if necessary, certain God-called men to serve as associate pastor, assistant pastor, youth pastor or minister (director) of music, etc.

There shall be a senior pastor who shall preside over the pastors, deacons, committees, fellowships, and congregation. That pastor shall also serve as the chairman of the deacons.

The Provision and Care of the Pastor

The matters of salary, housing, utilities, insurance (including health, automobile, house and life), automobile and transportation expenses, travel allowance, library allowance, vacation and retirement, etc., shall be mutually agreed upon. These arrangements shall be reviewed annually by the deacons and Budget Committee.

When it is necessary to call a pastor, the deacons, acting as the Pulpit Committee, together with the Stewards shall discuss the financial arrangements with the prospective candidate.

The Call of the Pastor

This is the general procedure to be followed by the deacons acting as the Pulpit Committee:

1. Prayerfully seek out possible qualified candidates.
2. When so lead by the Holy Spirit, discuss with the prospective candidate the possibility of being called to this church and give background information concerning the church.
3. Mail or give to the possible candidate a copy of the Church Covenant and Policies.
4. After the possible candidate has had sufficient time to study the Covenant and Policies, he should be questioned as to his understanding and adherence.
5. If the possible candidate professes agreement with the Covenant and Policies (including the Doctrinal Statement) he may, by unanimous decision of the pulpit committee be invited to the church on a get acquainted basis. During this visit the candidate should be thoroughly examined by the pulpit committee concerning doctrine, polity, and practice. Provision should be made for an informal congregational meeting to better acquaint the candidate with the congregation and for a time of questions and answers.
6. After prayerful deliberation, by unanimous decision, the pulpit committee may invite the prospective pastor back as a candidate.
7. Only one candidate at a time may be presented to the church for a vote.

8. The pastor's call shall be for an indefinite period.

Termination of Tenure

- A. This tenure may be terminated by the resignation of the pastor.
- B. Tenure may also be terminated as a result of disciplinary action by a three-fourths majority vote of the eligible voting members present.
 - a. Accusations brought against the pastor are to be well documented with both scriptures and evidence.
 - b. Two or three witnesses shall have presented the accusations in writing, validated by the witnesses' signatures.
 - c. Matthew 18:15-18 and Galatians 6:1 shall be the strict guideline for any action against the pastor.

*"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor;
especially they who labor in the word and doctrine." (I Timothy 5:17-18)*

Section 2 – Deacons

The Greek word for deacons (*diakonos*) was a common everyday household word for ministering servant. In the New Testament the word is used to speak of a very special scriptural office of ministry and service to the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. I Timothy 3:10-12 restricts this office to men only.

The deacons of this church shall not be thought of as being a managerial board. They are to be born-again, Spirit-filled men who have a "servant spirit" (Philippians 2:7). Every effort must be made to maintain Biblical pastoral leadership, deacon service and congregational government.

- A. Qualifications of a Deacon (Acts 6:3; I Timothy 3:8-13)
 - a. A man of dignity, a man who is held in high respect.
 - b. Not double-tongued; not a person who slanders or is a talebearer.
 - c. Not given to much wine; total absolute abstinence from alcoholic beverages or anything else that is harmful to the body or mind.
 - d. Not fond of sordid gain; free from the love of money or the selfish pursuit of money.
 - e. Holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience; a pure and loyal conscience is the means by which he preserves the faith.
 - f. Beyond reproach; blameless; no grounds for accusing him of improper behavior; does not mean sinless perfection.
 - g. Husband of one wife; married only once, except in the case of a widower.
 - h. Good manager of their children and their own households; they superintend the home relationship well. (I Timothy 3:11)
- B. The number of deacons shall be determined by the pastor.
- C. Ordinances – The deacons shall prepare for and assist in the observances of believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper.

- D. Membership – The deacons, along with the pastor, shall be responsible for the instruction and presentation of new members to the church. They shall also assist the pastor and Minister of Records in updating the membership list.
- E. Term of Office – The deacons shall be brought before the church and appointed by the pastor (Acts 6:1-3) to serve for a one year term of office. Deacons may be re-appointed to serve consecutive terms of office as determined by the pastor.

“For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (I Timothy 3:13)

Section 3 – Minister of Finance and Minister of Records

The office of the Minister of Finance and Minister of Records, being necessary for the maintenance of church financial records and church correspondence, shall be filled by godly, Spirit-filled members. Given the nature of each of these offices, the Minister of Finance and Minister of Records must be able to support and serve under the pastor’s direct authority and leadership. Candidates for these offices shall be selected by the pastor and deacons and presented at the annual business meeting. Eligible voting members of the congregation shall then elect, by simple majority, the candidate for Minister of Finance and Minister of Records. The Minister of Finance and Minister of Records shall serve for a one-year term of office.

- A. In the event that either office shall be vacated before the term of office is expired, the pastor and deacons will, as above, nominate and present the candidate(s) to the eligible voting membership. Both these offices will be filled as soon as possible; a special business meeting may be called with a one week notification to the congregation.
- B. Because of the nature of these offices and the necessity for harmony with the pastor, the pastor reserves the right to remove either the Minister of Finance or the Minister of Records.
- C. Under the direction of the pastor an assistant Minister of Finance shall be chosen in the method prescribed above. In such case the assistant Minister of Finance will fill in as necessary for the Minister of Finance.

Section 4 – Stewards

Stewards shall be for the management of properties and assets of the church. The Stewards shall consist of the senior pastor, one deacon, the Minister of Finance, and one layman. This layman shall be a Godly, spirit-filled man who is experienced in business matters.

Selection of the Stewards shall be as follows:

- A. The pastor shall recommend the deacon-steward, with the affirmation by the remaining deacons.
- B. The Minister of Finance will be elected yearly at the Annual Business Meeting.
- C. The layman-Steward shall be recommended by the pastor, the deacons and the Minister of Finance and confirmed by a simple majority vote of the eligible voting membership at the Annual

Business Meeting for a one-year term of office. The layman-steward can continue in this office with the recommendation of the pastor and deacons.

Section 5 – Budget Committee

The Budget Committee shall be created at the beginning of each year for the purpose of establishing a budget for that year. It shall consist of the pastor and those members who shall be recommended by the pastor and approved by a simple majority vote of the eligible voting membership. The committee shall be dissolved after presentation and approval of the annual budget.

ARTICLE VII CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Section 1 – Congregational Church Government

In an effort to be true to the New Testament model, this church shall practice the congregational form of church government. This church shall not be governed by “bishops” from without the church, nor by “lay leaders” from within the church.

Section 2 – Definition (Acts 20:28; Romans 12; Philippians 2:1-11; I Peter 5:1-7)

By congregational government we mean that the pastor should be functioning as the bishop and overseer that he is; the deacons should be functioning as the ministering servants of the church; and all other members should be exercising their believer’s priesthood responsibilities. Here we see the pastor, deacons, and other members prayerfully and lovingly working together as a local church congregation. This is true CONGREGATIONAL GOVERNMENT.

Congregational Government should not be thought of as government by the members of the church as though they were somehow apart from the pastors and deacons. Pastoral leadership, deacon service, and prayerful participation by the entire membership results in true Congregational Government.

All of this must be done under the Lordship of Christ, the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the authority of the Word of God, and in Christian love. Every member of the church must be courteous, ever seeking to put others first.

Every member of the church must learn to seek the Lordship of Christ over the church. All self-will and self-seeking independence must be put aside. We must all (pastor, deacons and congregation) surrender our wills to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. All “rights” belong to Him. To Him be all glory.

Section 3 – Church Polity

This church shall not function as a political unit. Prayerful effort must be made to avoid self-will, politicking, scheming, rivalry, polarizing into rivaling cliques, and carnal division. (James 3:14-17)

This church is a priesthood of believers seeking, knowing and doing the will of the Lord Jesus Christ, Head of the church; exercising sole liberty with every member equal before God, free to express and/or vote (voting privileges defined in Article IV, Section 3, B & C; Section 4, C & D) their conscience as taught by the Word of God and led by the Holy Spirit in answer to earnest prayer.

Section 4 – The Love Principle

This church shall practice the “Love Principle” of church government as outlined below:

- A. Every area of church life (ministry, fellowship, business) shall be governed by an overriding principle of “love one another”. (Ephesians 4:2-3)
- B. The principles of church polity as taught in Philippians, Chapter 2.
 - a. Be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. (v.2)
 - b. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; stop and pray until there is unity, love and mutual understanding. (v.3)
 - c. In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. (v.3; Romans 12:10)
 - d. Pastors, deacons and all members should manifest a servant’s spirit. (vs. 5-8)
- C. The Lordship of Christ, not the will of the people, is to be acknowledged and honored. (Romans 14:9; I Corinthians 12:3; Ephesians 1:22; Philippians 2:11)
- D. The leadership of the Holy Spirit is to be sought and followed. (Galatians 5:16-26)

ARTICLE VIII BUSINESS MEETINGS

Section 1 – Annual Business Meeting

The regular business meeting shall be held for the purpose of receiving financial reports, the election of the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Records, and for taking care of any business that should come before the church. An announcement shall be made from the pulpit prior to the annual meeting.

Section 2 – Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings may be called by the pastor and the deacons at any regular service of the church.

Section 3 – Extending a Pastoral Call

The deacons, acting as the Pulpit Committee, may call a special business meeting for the purpose of voting on the call of a pastor by having a proper announcement made in both morning and evening services on the Sunday prior to the meeting. Business shall be conducted by the eligible voting members present. A three-fourths majority vote by the eligible voting members present shall be required in order to extend a

call to a pastor. Every prayerful effort must be made to reach a unanimous decision in this most important matter.

Section 4 – Opening

All meetings shall begin with Bible study and prayer for Gods guidance.

Section 5 – Proposals

All proposals in any meeting must be presented by an active voting member.

Section 6 – Rules of Order

As the Bible admonishes “Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40), this church shall use the King James Version to conduct all meetings.

- A. Discourteous language or remarks adapted to injure the reputation or feeling of any member shall be ruled out of order, and shall forfeit the speaker’s right to the floor.
- B. The moderator may speak upon any subject under discussion.
- C. Every voting member wishing to speak shall respectfully address the moderator.
- D. No member shall speak more than twice upon the same subject.

Section 7 – Voting

All questions shall be decided, all business brought forward shall be approved and all elections shall be made with a simple majority vote of the eligible voting members present, except where otherwise specified.

ARTICLE IX AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

Amendment or revisions to this Covenant and Church Policies must be presented to the pastor and the deacons for prayerful consideration and recommendation to the church. All such proposed amendments and/or revisions shall be presented to the church for adoption after the amendments and/or revisions have been printed and distributed to the members. An eighty percent majority vote of members present shall be required for adoption of amendments and/or revisions. Prayerful effort must be made to reach a unanimous decision.

This Covenant and Church Policy shall not be amended or revised for a full two years after the call of a new pastor.

AT NO TIME SHALL ANY AMENDMENT OR REVISION BE MADE TO THE BIBLICAL POSITION, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE, DOCTRINAL STATEMENT OR CHURCH GOVERNMENT PORTIONS OF THESE COVENANTS AND CHURCH POLICIES THAT WOULD CHANGE THE MEANING OR STATED INTENTIONS.

**ARTICLE X
FINANCIAL POLICY**

This church shall be supported by the tithes, offering and voluntary gifts of the Lord's people. We believe that every Christian should seek to give systematically, regularly, proportionately, sacrificially and cheerfully of his substance to the Lords work through the local church. (II Corinthians 9:6-7) No means such as raffles, suppers, rummage sales, games or entertainment shall be used to raise money for the church and its ministries.

**ARTICLE XI
DISTRIBUTION OF ASSETS**

Upon dissolution of this church, the deacons and stewards shall pay or make provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the church with existing church assets and dispose of all assets of this church to such organizations that are organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational or religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) and only to a fundamental, separated, pre-millennial, Baptist, non-profit church, the doctrinal position of which is in keeping with the Doctrinal Statement (Article III) of these Covenants and Church Policies.

No member shall profit in any way from the disposal of the assets of this church.

**ARTICLE XII
NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY**

This church shall have a racially non-discriminatory policy as to members and, therefore, shall not discriminate against applicants on the basis of race, color and national or ethnic origin.