

First Baptist Church Muncie

Constitution & Bylaws

adopted May 2007

CONTENTS

Part 1	Constitution	5
Article I	Name	5
Article II	Doctrine	5
	Section A Statement of Faith and Practice	5
	Section B Declaration of Faith	5
Article III	Vision, Mission and Purpose	6
Article IV	Organization	6
	Section A Government	6
	Section B Relationships	6
Article V	Membership	6
	Section A Qualifications	6
	Section B Admission	7
	Section C Classification of Members	7
	Section D Termination of Membership	8
Article VI	Officers	8
	Section A Lay Moderator	8
	Section B Clerk	9
	Section C Treasurer	9
	Section D Financial Secretary	9
Article VII	Ministries	10
	Section A Designation of Ministries	10
	Section B Responsibilities and Meetings	10
	Section C Ministry Leaders	10

Article VIII	Leadership Council	10
	Section A Members of Leadership Council	10
	Section B Meetings and Responsibilities	11
Article IX	The Senior Pastor	11
	Section A Principle Functions	11
	Section B Qualifications and Duties	11
	Section C Establishment of Relationships	12
	Section D Termination of Relationship	12
	Section E The Interim Pastor	13
Article X	Worship Services	13
	Section A Worship Services	13
	Section B Cancellation	13
Article XI	Church Meetings	13
	Section A Church Meetings	13
	Section B Notice and Previous Notice of a Motion	14
	Section C Vote, Quorum, and Conduct	14
	Section D Eligible Voters	15
Article XII	Nominating Committee	15
Article XIII	Fiscal Year and Terms of Office	16
Article XIV	Amendments	16
Part 2	Bylaws	17
Article I	Ministries	17
	Section A Responsibilities of Ministries	17
	Section B Ministry Leaders	19
	Section C Ministry Meetings	20
Article II	Leadership Council	20
	Section A Leadership Council Meetings	20
	Section B Responsibilities	21
Article III	Senior Pastor	22
	Section A Qualifications	22
	Section B Duties	22
	Section C Accountability and Evaluation	23
Article IV	Professional, Secretarial, and Non-Professional Staff	24
	Section A Staff Defined	24
	Section B Establishment of Relationship	24
	Section C Qualifications and Duties	24
	Section D Accountability and Evaluation	25
	Section E Termination of Relationship	25

Article V	Standing Committees	25
	Section A Diaconate	25
	Section B Congregational Life Committee	26
Article VI	Teams and Individuals	29
Article VII	Auxiliary Organizations	29
	Section A Definition	29
	Section B Auxiliary Operations	30
Article VIII	Finances	30
	Section A Policy	30
	Section B Budget	30
	Section C Expenditures	30
	Section D Distress Fund	30
Article IX	Amendments	31
Part 1 Mission and Vision	32
I	Gather	32
	A Incarnational (Physical)	32
	B Trinitarian (Unified)	33
	C Eschatological (Future Oriented)	33
II	Care	34
III	Empower	34
IV	Steward	35
V	Impact	36
	A Evangelizing our World	37
	B Pursuing Social Justice	37
	C Caring for Creation	37
	D Transforming our Culture	38
Part 2 The New Hampshire Confession, 1833	39
1	Declaration of Faith of the Scriptures	39
2	Of the True God	39
3	Of the Fall of Man	40
4	Of the Way of Salvation	40
5	Of Justification	40
6	Of the Freeness of Salvation	40
7	Of Grace in Regeneration	41
8	Of Repentance and Faith	41
9	Of God's Purpose of Grace	41
10	Of Sanctification	42
11	Of the Perserverance of Saints	42

12	Of the Harmony of the Law and the Gospel	42
13	Of a Gospel Church	42
14	Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper	43
15	Of the Christian Sabbath	43
16	Of Civil Government	43
17	Of the Righteous and the Wicked	43
18	Of the World to Come	44

Part 1 _____

_____ CONSTITUTION

Article I Name

The name of this Church shall be the First Baptist Church of Muncie, Indiana (hereinafter “Church”).

Article II Doctrine

Section A Statement of Faith and Practice

This Church accepts the Holy Scriptures as its sole authority in matters of faith and practice.

Section B Declaration of Faith

Recognizing and honoring the differences that exist among believers, this Church generally ascribes to the New Hampshire Confession Declaration of Faith as a guide to faith and practice. The New Hampshire Confession, 1833 (chapter Part 2)

Article III Vision, Mission and Purpose

This Church shall maintain a Vision, Mission and Purpose. Mission and Vision (chapter Part 1)

Article IV Organization

Section A Government

The government of this Church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is that body of believers which forms the Congregation of this Church.

Section B Relationships

While preserving its complete autonomy as a Baptist church, it shall maintain affiliation and cooperation with the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A. and its cooperating agencies and boards, the American Baptist Churches of Indiana and Kentucky, and with such other organizations as this Church may decide.

Article V Membership

Section A Qualifications

Any person professing faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior, and who ascribes to the faith and practices of this Church, may be admitted to membership. Within this fellowship, two steps are held basic, historic and scriptural as marks of the believer.

1. Voluntary and deliberate acceptance of Jesus the Christ as the Son of God, personal Savior, and Lord.
2. Public profession and witness to that decision through the ordinance of Baptism by immersion unless prohibited for health reasons.

However, we welcome to membership all who have, of their own volition, accepted Christ as Savior and Lord and have given public witness to that decision in some form of Baptism.

Section B Admission

Persons may be admitted into membership by any one of the following methods, upon recommendation by the Diaconate (established in the Bylaws) and Senior Pastor followed by presentation to the Congregation at any regularly scheduled service.

1. Upon confession of faith in Jesus the Christ and Baptism.
2. By letter of transfer or certificate of Membership from another Baptist or other Christian Church.
3. By statement of Christian experience as described in subsection Section A

Section C Classification of Members

1. Active Member: An Active Member shall attend services on a regular basis and have a personal part in supporting activities of the Church. These members contribute regularly and loyally to the Church in accordance with their abilities. All members shall be considered an Active Member unless otherwise classified in accordance with this Constitution.
2. Inactive Member: When a member has been inactive for a period of one year, without showing any interest in attending services, communicating with the Church, or contributing to its support, the Diaconate shall classify the member as an Inactive Member. Reasonable attempts will be made by the Diaconate to reconnect to the member prior to reclassification. The Pastor and the Diaconate may excuse a member's absence or delinquency for good cause. The names of Inactive Members shall be placed on an Inactive Membership List and shall not be counted or reported as members, may not take part in Church business meetings, and may not vote. Inactive Members who renew active participation in the Church (see definition of Active Member) may be restored as an Active Member by the Diaconate.
3. By Association: Any believer who is temporarily living in the Muncie community for a finite period of time may unite with the Church during that limited period and retain membership in his/her home church.

He/she will have no vote on Church matters, may not hold elected position, but may attend Church Meetings and is invited to participate in all Church activities. His/her membership shall terminate upon completion of his/her temporary stay.

Section D Termination of Membership

1. By Letter of Request: Upon application members may be released to unite with some other Church or to simply withdraw.
2. By Disciplinary Action: The Leadership Council may exclude an individual from membership for one or more of the following:
 - On Inactive Membership List for one year.
 - Significant breach of the Constitution, Bylaws, and/or Christian conduct, including but not limited to, failure to work in Christian fellowship and abide by the CLC process.

Article VI Officers

The Officers of this Church shall be the Lay Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary. Other Officers may be established in the Bylaws.

Section A Lay Moderator

The Lay Moderator shall moderate Church Meetings, shall serve as Chairperson of the Leadership Council, ensure communication and coordination between Ministries, the Council, and the Congregation. The Lay Moderator shall be elected by the Congregation to serve a one-year term. The Lay Moderator shall serve no more than two consecutive terms. He/she shall serve in this office only. The Lay Moderator may appoint an Active Member(s) to assist with duties. In the absence of the Lay Moderator, or an appointee of the Lay Moderator, Leadership Council shall designate an alternate to officiate the Leadership Council or Church Meetings.

Section B Clerk

The Clerk shall keep a complete record of the minutes of all Church Meetings and the Leadership Council. The Clerk and/or a designated person shall maintain a current register of members, including addresses, with dates and types of admission or termination, noting such changes as they occur. The Clerk shall issue letters of transfer or recommendations as voted by the Leadership Council. The Clerk shall notify all Officers regarding action(s) taken by the Congregation or Leadership Council, which concerns them. The Clerk shall be responsible for preparing annual association and state records. The Clerk may appoint an Active Member(s) to assist with duties. The Clerk shall be elected by the Congregation to serve a one-year term and shall have no term limits.

Section C Treasurer

The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements made under the direction of the Leadership Council. The Treasurer shall make monthly written reports of the financial condition of the Church to the Council, and to the regular Business Meetings of the Church, and report to the Clerk such financial statements as desired for association and state records. The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio, non-voting, member of any Ministry of Stewardship meetings. The Treasurer shall submit the books for review at the end of each year or upon request of the Leadership Council. The Treasurer may appoint an Active Member(s) to assist with duties. The Treasurer shall be elected by the Congregation to serve a one-year term and shall have no term limits.

Section D Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for all the counting and depositing of all offerings and all other money received by the Church, shall keep records of individual giving, and supply annual reports. Upon request, the Financial Secretary shall provide the Diaconate and Nominating Committee with information regarding whether an individual is a giver of record, meaning that there is a written record that the individual, or individual's family financially contributed to the Church, not the amount contributed. The Financial Secretary may appoint an Active Member(s) to assist with

duties. The Financial Secretary shall report to the Leadership Council, but shall not serve on the Council. The Financial Secretary shall be elected by the Congregation to serve a one-year term and shall have no term limits.

Article VII Ministries

Section A Designation of Ministries

The Ministry areas of this Church shall be designated as the Ministry of Watchcare, the Ministry of Stewardship, the Ministry of Christian Education, the Ministry of Worship, and the Ministry of Outreach. Other Ministry areas may be established in the Bylaws.

Section B Responsibilities and Meetings

The Responsibilities and Meetings of the designated Ministry areas shall be established in the Bylaws.

Section C Ministry Leaders

Each designated Ministry area shall have a Ministry Leader. In addition, there shall be a Youth Leader and Members-At-Large elected by the Congregation to also serve as Ministry Leaders. The election, duties, and responsibilities of the Ministry Leaders shall be established in the Bylaws.

Article VIII Leadership Council

Section A Members of Leadership Council

The Leadership Council is the official leading body of the Church. The members of the Leadership Council, or “Council”, are as follows:

1. Lay Moderator
2. Clerk
3. Treasurer

4. Watchcare Leader
5. Stewardship Leader
6. Christian Education Leader
7. Worship Leader
8. Outreach Leader
9. Youth Leader
10. Members-At-Large to include one attendee of each of the classic and contemporary services (2)
11. Senior Pastor: The Senior Pastor or Interim Pastor shall be a full voting member of the Leadership Council
12. Other Professional Staff: All Professional Staff (established in the By-laws) shall be ex-officio, non-voting, members

Section B Meetings and Responsibilities

The meetings and responsibilities of Leadership Council shall be established in the Bylaws.

Article IX The Senior Pastor

Section A Principle Functions

As the spiritual leader of the Church, the Senior Pastor, or “Pastor”, shall be the lead member of the Professional staff, have primary responsibility for worship, outreach and visitation, counseling, coordination of Church programs, and serve as a resource for the fulfillment of the Church’s Vision, Mission, and Purpose.

Section B Qualifications and Duties

The Qualifications and Duties of the Senior Pastor shall be established in the Bylaws (chapter Part 2).

Section C Establishment of Relationships

Pastoral Search Team Formation: In the event of a Pastoral vacancy, the Leadership Council shall initiate action for the formation of a broadly representative ad hoc committee, called Pastoral Search Team, for the express purpose of identifying and recommending a prospective Pastor to the Congregation. The Leadership Council shall nominate persons for this Team and such nominations shall be brought to the Congregation for a vote in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws.

1. Pastoral Search Team Organization: The Lay Moderator shall call the first meeting of the Team for the purpose of electing a chairperson and other officers decided upon by it.
2. Recommendation: The Team shall present its recommendation to the Leadership Council. When the Leadership Council is prepared to recommend a Pastor to the Congregation, it shall request a Church Meeting for the purpose of presenting a candidate and for getting a response from the Congregation regarding his/her acceptability.
3. Motion to Call: The Congregation shall consider a motion to extend a call to the Pastoral candidate at a regular or properly called Church Meeting with Previous Notice of the Motion. A quorum of forty percent (40%) of the Active Members shall be required. The vote shall be by written ballot. Approval by two-thirds (2/3) of Active Members entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions, shall be required to extend the call.
4. Dissolution of Pastoral Search Team: The Pastoral Search Team shall be dissolved when the Pastor has been installed.

Section D Termination of Relationship

1. By Pastor: The Pastor may terminate the pastoral relationship by providing written notice to the Lay Moderator or Leadership Council at least one month prior to his/her last day.
2. By Congregation: The Congregation may consider a motion to terminate the Pastoral relationship upon recommendation of the Leadership Council, or written petition signed by twenty-five (25) Active Members

at a regular or properly called Church Meeting with Previous Notice of the Motion. A quorum of forty percent (40%) of the Active Members shall be required. The vote shall be by written ballot. Approval by three-quarters (3/4) of Active Members entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions, shall be required to terminate the pastoral relationship.

Section E The Interim Pastor

When an Interim Pastor is needed, the Leadership Council shall form a committee to recommend a candidate to the Congregation. The Interim Pastoral candidate may be called by a majority vote at any Church Meeting.

Article X Worship Services

Section A Worship Services

Worship services shall be held each Sunday and at such other times as the Pastor and the Diaconate may direct. A meeting of the church school shall be held each Sunday for the study and teaching of the Bible. The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed on the first Sunday of each month unless otherwise arranged by the Diaconate. In addition to the above, the Church shall have a midweek service of prayer and Bible study.

Section B Cancellation

Cancellation of any regular worship services due to emergency conditions shall be the responsibility of the Pastor and/or the Diaconate. All reasonable means shall be used to notify the Congregation.

Article XI Church Meetings

Section A Church Meetings

1. Business Meetings: There shall be quarterly business meetings as scheduled by the Leadership Council. Notice shall be given. Elections shall be held and the budget for the next Fiscal Year presented for adoption

at the fourth quarterly business meeting, which shall also be known as the Annual Business Meeting. The Pastor, the Leadership Council, and the Ministry Leaders shall present a written annual report annually.

2. Special Meetings: A special meeting of the membership may be called at any time by the Lay Moderator, at the request of the Pastor, the Leadership Council, or by written request of twenty- five (25) Active Members. Notice shall be given. Such a business meeting may be deemed a regular meeting of the membership, and any business may be transacted, provided only that the transaction of such business does not conflict with any other provision of the Constitution or Bylaws.
3. Congregational Matters: The following matters must be brought to the congregation for consideration: a. Approval of the budget b. Changes in the budget greater than \$1,000 c. Purchase of real property d. Changes in the Constitution and Bylaws e. Indebtedness f. Employment and dismissal of Senior Pastor and Professional Staff. Secretaries and Non-Professional staff are excluded. g. All other matters required by the Constitution and/or Bylaws.

Section B Notice and Previous Notice of a Motion

When Notice is required, the Church Meeting shall be called in advance of the meeting with information about its time, date, and location announced from the pulpit for two consecutive Sundays prior to the date of the meeting. When Previous Notice of a Motion is required, the intent to make a certain motion at that meeting shall be provided in writing to the membership at least two weeks in advance of the meeting, and publicly announced from the pulpit at each regular worship service for two consecutive Sundays prior to the date of the meeting.

Section C Vote, Quorum, and Conduct

Unless otherwise provided in the Constitution or Bylaws, a majority vote shall be required to adopt a motion or to elect a candidate to a position. A majority vote is defined as more than half of the Active Members entitled to vote, excluding blanks, or abstentions, at a regular or properly called meeting at which quorum is present. Quorum shall be ten percent (10%)

of the Active Members unless otherwise specified in the Constitution or By-laws. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall govern the conduct of all Church Meetings.

Section D Eligible Voters

Active Members shall be the only Classification of members eligible to vote in Church Meetings as representatives of the Congregation.

1. Active Members Age 18 and Older: Active Members eighteen (18) years of age or older shall be entitled to vote on all questions before the Church.
2. Active Members Under Age 18: Active Members under eighteen (18) years of age shall not be entitled to vote on personnel matters, including but not limited to the calling, dismissal, or discipline of the Pastor or staff, property-related matters, or amendments or suspension to the Constitution, Bylaws, or other matters provided by law or contract.
3. Proxy or Absentee Ballot: Voting by proxy or absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

Article XII Nominating Committee

Candidates for elected positions shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Congregation. The Lay Moderator shall convene a Nominating Committee composed of three Active Members: one appointed by the Pastor, one appointed by the Lay Moderator, and one appointed by the Leadership Council. The Nominating Committee shall develop and present the slate of candidates to the Congregation at the Annual Business Meeting. Candidates shall be considered based on their spiritual gifts, abilities, passions and desire to serve in elected position. Candidates must be Active Members in Good Standing meaning Active Members that support the stated practices of the Church, and are givers of record, individually or as a family unit. In the event of vacancies during the year, the committee shall reconvene and shall recommend qualified replacement(s) to the Congregation at the next Church Meeting.

Article XIII Fiscal Year and Terms of Office

The Fiscal Year of this Church shall be the calendar year from January 1 through December 31. The terms of office for all elected positions shall be the calendar year from January 1 through December 31.

Article XIV Amendments

The Congregation may consider a motion to amend, modify or rescind the Constitution, or adopt a new Constitution, upon recommendation of the Leadership Council, or written petition signed by twenty-five (25) Active Members at a regular or properly called Church Meeting with Previous Notice of the Motion. A quorum of forty percent (40%) of the Active Members shall be required. The vote shall be by written ballot. Approval by three-quarters ($3/4$) of Active Members entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions, shall be required to adopt such motion.

Part 2 _____

BYLAWS

Preamble

These Bylaws shall compliment the Constitution of this Church. Should any provision herein be deemed to conflict with the Constitution, the Constitution shall prevail.

Article I Ministries

Section A Responsibilities of Ministries

Ministries shall be vision-oriented with an emphasis on new possibilities for advancement of the core objectives outlined in their responsibilities as follows:

1. Watchcare:
 - Visit members of the Church, caring for the sick, needy, and distressed members
 - Visit and assist shut-ins both in the hospital and home
 - Serve meals to bereaved families of the Church upon request
 - Deliver flowers on behalf of the Church
 - Recognize the birth of babies into families of our Church
 - Send bulletins to shut-ins and others

- Greet worshippers at the various services of our Church
- Conduct special prayer chains
- Incorporate new members into the life of the Church
- Work in conjunction with the appropriate staff
- Any other duty assigned by the Leadership Council

2. Stewardship:

- Have general charge of all business interests of the Church
- Be responsible for Church facilities
- See that all deeds, insurance policies, and contracts are in legal form and in safe keeping
- Work in conjunction with the appropriate staff
- Any other duty assigned by the Leadership Council

3. Christian Education:

- Organize and administer the educational programs of the Church, church school, and small groups
- Responsible for discovering, enlisting, training, and appointing all church school administrators, teachers, and other Church educational workers
- Study the educational needs of the Church and make decisions regarding the curriculum materials needed
- Direct all matters concerning Christian Education, including work among children, young people, and adults
- Work in conjunction with the appropriate staff
- Any other duty assigned by the Leadership Council

4. Worship:

- Develop and advance meaningful opportunities and expressions of all styles of worship that elevate the Person of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

- Promote and supervise music, arts, and drama
- Assist Pastor and worship design teams in planning and conducting services of worship
- Work in conjunction with the appropriate staff
- Any other duty assigned by the Leadership Council

5. Outreach:

- Publicize the activities of the Church to the community
- Work with other Ministries to develop programs that will attract individuals to our Church
- Engage in Evangelistic visitation
- Visit prospective members
- Research and develop mission opportunities, including but not limited to financial need
- Work in conjunction with the appropriate staff
- Any other duty assigned by the Leadership Council

Section B Ministry Leaders

1. Duties: With a focus on the future, Ministry Leaders are responsible for Ministry development via the formation of small teams to fulfill specific needs and to maintain open communication. Each Ministry Leader shall have the responsibility, with the Pastor and the appropriate staff (team members), for the spiritual life of the Church in areas designated under their Ministry area or as described. The Youth Leader shall serve as a representative of the Youth perspective. The Members-At-Large shall serve as representatives of the members at large. Each Ministry Leader, with the exception of the Youth Leader and Members-At-Large, is responsible for submitting an annual comprehensive report to the Leadership Council for consideration. Each Ministry Leader, with the exception of the Youth Leader and Members-At-Large shall also submit a proposed budget based upon their needs and the needs of the teams within their charge.
2. Election:

- Immediately following passage of these Bylaws: The Watchcare Leader, Christian Education Leader, Outreach Leader and Members-At-Large shall be elected for two-year terms with the possibility of re-election for one additional one-year term. Immediately following passage of these Bylaws, the Stewardship Leader, Worship Leader, and Youth Leader shall be elected, initially, for a one-year term. The Stewardship Leader, Worship Leader, and Youth Leader shall not be eligible for a second term.
- After Implementation of Above Section: Thereafter, all Ministry Leaders, except the Youth Leader, shall be elected to serve a two-year term with the possibility of re-election for one additional one-year term. After serving a maximum of three consecutive years, a Ministry Leader is ineligible to serve as any Ministry Leader for one year before being eligible for election as a Ministry Leader. The Youth Leader shall be elected to serve a one-year term and shall be eligible to serve one additional one-year term. Each Ministry Leader shall appoint an Active Member to serve as an alternate in the event that the Ministry Leader is unable to attend a meeting. Should the Ministry Leader be unable or unwilling to fulfill the remainder of his or her term, the Nominating Committee shall submit a new candidate to the Congregation as provided herein.

Section C Ministry Meetings

There shall be no set Ministry meeting schedule. Ministry Teams will be formed to accomplish specific goals and tasks and may vary in size and duration of existence.

Article II Leadership Council

Section A Leadership Council Meetings

Leadership Council shall meet monthly unless there are no items on the agenda.

Section B Responsibilities

Leadership Council responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Long range planning
2. Coordinating the Ministries of the Church
3. Reviewing the plans and programs of the ministries of the Church
4. Setting personnel policy
5. Setting worship calendar
6. Submitting a budget to the Congregation
7. Recommending to the Congregation all revisions of the Church Constitution and By-Laws
8. Employing, discharging, and establishing salaries and duties of clerical and custodial staff (such salaries shall not exceed budgeted amounts)
9. Directing a program to attain the budget requirements
10. Authorizing prompt payment of all salaries and other indebtedness
11. Holding in trust all property belonging to the Church
12. Scheduling an annual review of the Church's finances
13. At the outset of the Pastor's tenure, the Leadership Council shall, together with the Pastor, formulate mutually desirable procedures and expectations, which shall be reviewed annually
14. Assisting the Pastor and Congregation in working together harmoniously
15. Appointing a church historian

Article III Senior Pastor

Section A Qualifications

1. He/she shall be an ordained minister whose credentials are recognized by the American Baptist Churches of Indiana and Kentucky.
2. It is preferred that the Senior Pastor be a graduate of an accredited seminary with a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent.
3. He/she shall demonstrate a good preaching ability.
4. He/she shall exhibit a Christian character, a living example of compliance with the teachings of the Bible, and have a friendly, helpful, sincere attitude, and be an influence of good in the community.

Section B Duties

The Senior Pastor duties include, but are not limited to:

1. Worship
 - Preaching
 - Worship Leadership
 - Administration of Ordinances
 - Officiating at Weddings and Funerals
2. Teaching Role
 - Teaching (Bible Study and Membership classes)
 - Evangelism; Ethical or Discipleship Concerns & Issues
 - Training Leaders
 - Counseling couples, individuals, families and/or groups
3. Pastoral Care
 - Advance spiritual welfare of the Church
 - Counseling couples, individuals, families and/or groups

- Visitation (Evangelism, Homes, Hospital, Nursing Homes)
- Minister to the bereaved
- Administration: The Senior Pastor is responsible for administration of the total Church program though many of the duties of administration may be delegated to the staff and/or volunteer leadership. The Senior Pastor shall:
- Be available to assist Officers, Council, Ministries and Committees with long range and short-term planning and execution of their tasks by consulting, advising, coordinating, and evaluating.
- The Senior Pastor functions as leader of the staff and will be responsible for building effective staff relationships.
- Enable staff members to utilize their gifts in the ministry of the Church.
- Prepare periodic, at least annual, evaluations of staff for submission to the Leadership Council

4. Personal Growth and Recreation

- Take appropriate time for personal reading, research and meditation
- Take one-month of vacation each year
- Have one to two days off each week
- Attend denominational and interdenominational conferences and encourage other staff persons and members of the Congregation to do likewise
- Plan for the completion of two Continuing Educational Units or equivalent annually

Section C Accountability and Evaluation

The Senior Pastor is accountable to the Church, corporately, with special accountability to the Leadership Council. There will be a periodic review, at least annually, by the Leadership Council. The Senior Pastor is subject to the process set forth by the Congregational Life Committee (subsection Section B).

Article IV Professional, Secretarial, and Non-Professional Staff

Section A Staff Defined

1. Professional Staff: Professional Staff will include pastoral and ministerial staff, except the Senior Pastor, such as: Assistant Pastor; Minister of Evangelism; Minister of Visitation; and/or any other Pastoral staff deemed necessary by the Congregation and designated as such by the Leadership Council.
2. Secretarial and Non-Professional Staff: Secretarial Staff shall be designated as such by the Leadership Council. Non-professional Staff shall be all other staff such as interns and custodians.

Section B Establishment of Relationship

1. Professional Staff: Upon a vacancy in the Professional Staff, a Search Team shall be formed in the same method and manner as provided in Constitution Art. LX, Section C., except as follows: the Congregation shall consider a motion to extend a call to the Professional Staff candidate at a regular or properly called Church Meeting with Previous Notice of the Motion. A quorum of thirty percent (30%) of the Active Members shall be required. The vote shall be by written ballot. Approval by two-thirds (2/3) of Active Members entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions, shall be required to extend the call. Interim Professional Staff may be approved at any Church Meeting.
2. Secretarial and Non-professional Staff: The Senior Pastor shall recommend the establishment of a Secretarial employment relationship to the Leadership Council for approval in accordance with budgetary constraints. The Leadership Council shall approve the establishment of an employment relationship with Non-professional Staff in accordance with budgetary constraints.

Section C Qualifications and Duties

The Leadership Council in conjunction with the Senior Pastor will establish qualifications and duties of all staff.

Section D Accountability and Evaluation

All staff are accountable to the Senior Pastor on day-to-day matters. All staff members are subject to the process set forth by the Congregational Life Committee upon the request of the Leadership Council. The Senior Pastor may make recommendations to the Leadership Council regarding personnel matters. The Leadership Council shall make the final determination regarding all personnel matters unless otherwise provided in the Constitution or Bylaws. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the completion of periodic reviews, at least annually, of the staff. Such reviews shall be submitted to the Leadership Council for review.

Section E Termination of Relationship

1. Professional Staff: The Professional Staff may terminate the employment relationship by providing written notice to the Senior Pastor or Leadership Council at least two weeks prior to his/her last day. The Congregation may consider a motion to terminate the employment relationship of Professional Staff upon recommendation of the Leadership Council, or written petition signed by twenty-five (25) Active Members at a regular or properly called Church Meeting with Previous Notice of the Motion. A quorum of thirty percent (30%) of the Active Members shall be required. The vote shall be by written ballot. Approval by three-quarters (3/4) of Active Members entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions, shall be required to terminate the Professional Staff relationship.
2. Secretarial and Non-Professional Staff: The Leadership Council may terminate the employment relationship of Secretarial and Non-professional Staff.

Article V Standing Committees

Section A Diaconate

1. Members: Candidates shall be interviewed and appointed by a committee consisting of the Pastor, the Lay Moderator, and the Watchcare

Leader as to his/her acceptance of the Scriptural qualifications and duties as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8–13 and Acts 6:1–4. The Diaconate shall consist of nine Active Members, including a minimum of 3 women and 3 men and a minimum of 3 regular attendees of each of the classic and contemporary services, who shall serve one three-year term. Rotation shall be staggered so that the (3) members rotate off each year and (3) members are added.

2. Duties:

- Sustain a strong prayer Ministry
- Support Pastoral Ministry of the Bible
- Administer Distress Fund
- With the Pastor be responsible for observance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper
- Make provision for worship services together with the Pastor or in the absence of the Pastor
- Give spiritual guidance to the Ministry of Worship regarding worship services
- Promote Christian fellowship within the Church
- Deal with members who may be neglectful of their Christian obligations
- Track member attendance and classification and take appropriate action on any status change
- Disciple new Christians

Section B Congregational Life Committee

1. Introduction/Purpose: Life together in the Congregation can result in blessings as well as conflict between members. While conflict is painful and difficult, it is our belief that working through conflict can lead to the spiritual and emotional growth of all parties as well as strengthening the Congregation. The Congregational Life Committee (CLC) has been created to assist our Church members in restoring relationships. In order to maintain unity within the body it is paramount that our

members be in a right relationship with each other, with the Church, and most importantly, with God. Therefore, the purpose of the committee is to establish and monitor a conflict resolution process based on Biblical principles. Using the examples set forth in scripture, particularly those found in Matthew 5:23–24, Matthew 18: 15–20 and 1 Corinthians 6:1–8 we affirm the following process for conflict resolution within the Congregation in which disputes and/or grievances can be resolved. It is important to note that the CLC committee will not be a mediating body as a whole or in part. It serves only to maintain the integrity of the process that has been developed for mediation. It is also important to note that this grievance process covers all members of our Church, regardless of title or position, and non-members should be encouraged to participate if all parties are in agreement. Ultimately, this process is designed to be the sole Constitutional remedy for any controversy or dispute arising within the Church body. Failure to comply with the requirements of conflict resolution after all steps in the grievance process have been exhausted may result in disciplinary action outlined and defined by the Church Constitution.

2. Definition: The selection and roles of the CLC are defined as follows:
 - Members of the CLC shall be nominated by the Leadership Council and elected by the Congregation. The criteria of selection will include: the ability to hear viewpoints other than their own without taking sides, the ability to keep confidences, and the capacity to remain neutral and non-judgmental. Makeup of committee should reflect diversity of Congregation and exhibit maturity in Christian faith.
 - The committee shall consist of three members. Immediately following passage of these Bylaws, one of the three members shall serve a term of three years, one of the three members shall serve a term of two years, and one of the three members shall serve a one year term. After implementation of above specified term limits, each member shall serve a three-year term and shall be limited to serving for two terms.
 - The role of the CLC shall be to manage the protocol and progression of the conflict resolution process. The committee shall meet on a quarterly basis unless active applications require additional

meetings. Such meetings will be scheduled on an “as needed” basis determined by the committee chairperson.

3. Process: Serious disputes which arise between or among any members of our Church body shall follow a Biblical process of mediation and seek timely reconciliation. To this end, Church members should acquaint themselves with the steps in the process, the spiritual preparedness for dialogue, and the need for timely settlement of differences. Steps in the process are as follows:

- The member(s) seeking reconciliation shall quickly go to the member(s) with whom he (she, they) has (have) a difference and attempt to make things right. Matthew 5 indicates that this reconciliation should be sought with immediacy and that it should be done initially in private, between the parties involved. If, in that process, a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved, the member(s) seeking reconciliation shall end the conversation and leave. (Note: if a third party knows of a conflict between two other parties, that third party should encourage direct communication between the parties involved and avoid serving as a go-between. Direct communication is essential in resolving conflict in a healthy manner. Third party involvement threatens the unity of the Congregation by fostering divisiveness and fractionalization.)
- The member(s) seeking reconciliation shall return to the member(s) with whom he (she, they) has (have) a difference, taking one or two members of the Church so that there may be a witness. (A member(s) of the Congregational Life Committee would be available to serve in this capacity if requested.)
- If there is still no reconciliation between the aggrieved members and if there is a mutual interest in finding a solution, the person(s) or faction(s) seeking reconciliation shall file a request for mediation assistance with the Congregational Life Committee who shall review it. Mediation Request Forms are available in the Church office. If it is clear that a good faith effort has been made to resolve the matter following the steps outlined above but no resolution has been reached, and the involved parties are willing to sign an Agreement to Mediate, the CLC shall forward a request

for a (outside) state mediator to work with the aggrieved members for a solution. If, on the other hand, the CLC finds that the steps outlined above have not been followed, the CLC will work with the aggrieved member(s) to work through the process before contacting an outside mediator.

- Upon reconciliation, the aggrieved members shall construct a Memorandum of Understanding stating the terms of the reconciliation. This document, initiated by the mediator, will be signed by both parties and the mediator. Both parties will be provided a copy of the document, as will the CLC.
- The mediator will schedule a follow-up session with the parties involved to solidify any gains that have been made and to attend to any lingering issues.
- If the aggrieved members fail to use the mediation process OR if they do not reach reconciliation after working with a state mediator and it is clear to the CLC that the conflict is disruptive to the unity of the Congregation, one or both members may be subject to Church discipline as defined by Church Constitution.

Article VI Teams and Individuals

The Congregation, Lay Moderator, Senior Pastor, Professional Staff, Leadership Council, Officers, and/or Ministry Leaders, may elect or appoint individuals or teams of individuals for the purpose of accomplishing a specific task of a short- range nature. After the task has been accomplished, the election or appointment concludes.

Article VII Auxiliary Organizations

Section A Definition

Auxiliary Affiliated Organizations are defined by: 1. Being named with First Baptist Church 1. Having a separate treasury 1. Having separate officers 1. Being consistent and compatible with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Church

Section B Auxiliary Operations

The Church regards all auxiliary organizations as formed for the purpose of carrying out designated activity of the Church. Auxiliary organizations may be disbanded by a Congregational vote at any Church Meeting. The volunteer officers and/or leaders of these organizations shall be Active Members of the Church elected by their representative organizations. The Constitution and/or Bylaws of auxiliary organizations shall not conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of this Church. Meetings of auxiliary organizations shall be planned to avoid any conflict with regular Church meetings.

Article VIII Finances

Section A Policy

The financial policy of this Church, and of all auxiliary organizations, is predicated upon personal, voluntary giving as an act of worship. Annual pledges toward the budget of the Church may be solicited on this basis. Additional free-will offerings may be taken for special purposes, when deemed necessary.

Section B Budget

At the Annual Business Meeting, the Congregation shall adopt a unified budget for the next Fiscal Year.

Section C Expenditures

Appropriations are to be expended under the direction of the Leadership Council. Checks for expenditures in the amount of \$2,500.00 or greater shall require two signatures: signatories to be designated by the Council.

Section D Distress Fund

There shall be a Distress Fund administered by the Diaconate, to be used for the purpose of giving emergency relief or aid to members and friends of the Church, or other worthy benevolent persons. Monies for this fund shall come from contributions made at the communion services and from other monies, which the Church may designate for the fund. The Diaconate shall

not be required to account for individual disbursements from this fund, but shall give a summary report to the Congregation with the annual report.

Article IX Amendments

The Congregation may consider a motion to amend, modify or rescind the By-laws, or adopt new Bylaws, upon recommendation of the Leadership Council, or written petition signed by twenty-five (25) Active Members at a regular or properly called Church Meeting with Previous Notice of the Motion. A quorum of thirty percent (30%) of the Active Members shall be required. The vote shall be by written ballot. Approval by two-thirds (2/3) of Active Members entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions, shall be required to adopt such motion.

APPENDIX A

MISSION AND VISION

A Spirit-led people gathered to care for and empower each other by stewarding God's resources to impact our community for Christ

I Gather

We are people who are gathered by the Holy Spirit

We are each called to this time and place to live in community with one another pointing to the cross of Christ

A Incarnational (Physical)

Because God chose to be with us in the flesh, we are also called to be among each other. (Phil. 2:5–11)

Our gathering is physical, incarnational. We are the body of Christ.

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Heb 10:25 NIV)

Our gathering celebrates our unique giftedness in Christ

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. (1 Cor 12:12 NIV)

B Trinitarian (Unified)

Because God is three in one, we are called to be one. Even in our diversity, we are to have the mind of Christ. (John 14:9–12)

Our gathering models the community of the Triune God.

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. (Deut. 6:4 NIV)

Our gathering promotes one mind, the mind of Christ

I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. (1 Cor 1:10 NIV)

C Eschatological (Future Oriented)

Because God has a plan for the future, we are called to live into His plan. (Jer. 29:11)

Our gathering reminds us of who we are, and who we are to become

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Pet 2:9 NIV)

Our gathering points future generations to the Kingdom of God

18) Let this be written for a future generation, that a people not yet created may praise the LORD: 19) “The LORD looked down from his sanctuary on high, from heaven he viewed the earth, 20) to hear the groans of the prisoners and release those condemned to death.” 21) So the name of the LORD will be declared in Zion and his praise in Jerusalem 22) when the peoples and the kingdoms assemble to worship the LORD. (Psa 102:18–22 NIV)

II Care

We are called to care for one another

Because God has loved us, we are called to love one another

If anyone says, “I love God,” yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. (1 John 4:20 NIV)

When we are hurting, we share in each other’s pain

3) Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4) who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. (2 Cor 1:34 NIV)

When we are struggling, we lift each other up.

Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Gal 6:2 NIV)

When God makes us strong, we share our strength with each other

I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one. (1 John 2:14 NIV)

When we falter, we serve as accountable agents to each other

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Heb 10:24 NIV)

III Empower

We are called to live into the Kingdom of God. As we gather, we are called to empower each other for Kingdom living. We call this process discipleship.

We are empowered by God (2 Tim 1:7 NIV) and empowering each other by ...

engaging **Scripture** together

16) All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17) so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:16-17 NIV)

sharing our **stories**, our testimonies

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. (1 Pet 3:15 NIV)

praying for one another

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. (Eph 6:18 NIV)

prompting each other in **spiritual disciplines**

7) train yourself to be godly. 8) For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. (1 Tim 4:7-8 NIV)

discerning and utilizing our **spiritual gifts**

4) There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5) There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. (1 Cor 12:4-5 NIV)

IV Steward

All that we have is God's. It has been entrusted to us for His purposes. We are called to utilize these resources for the building of His Kingdom.

The resources that God has entrusted to the church are:

Creation, Spiritual Gifts, People, Property, Time, Technology, Money

We are called to carefully discern the management of these resources.

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; (Psa 24:1 NIV) offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God this is your spiritual act of worship. (Rom 12:1 NIV)

”Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20) But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. (Matt 6:19-20 NIV)

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7) Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8) And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (2 Cor 9:6-8 NIV)

Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children 2) and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (Eph 5:1 NIV) And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. (Heb 13:16 NIV)

If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? 18) Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. (1 John 3:17-18 NIV)

And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. (Matt 5:40 NIV)

V Impact

The culmination of our existence is to impact our community for Christ. We are the sent agents of God into world. We are on mission to do God's work in the world by ...

A Evangelizing our World

God desires that all people be reconciled to Himself. Jesus' work on the cross provides forgiveness of sins, this is the gospel (the good news). We are called to proclaim this message to the world. Through relationships, we are called to share this good news.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16 NIV)

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20) and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt 28:19-20 NIV)

B Pursuing Social Justice

God's desire is that the world would be made right. Participating in God's redeeming work requires us to engage the social injustices of our world.

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Mic 6:8 NIV)

We are called to engage areas of injustice in our world. Those who are suffering the effects of poverty and racism are all around us. We are called to step into those places with the love of Christ.

C Caring for Creation

God created all things and calls us to care for His creation.

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." (Gen 1:28 NIV)

God is in the process of restoring all creation. We join him as we care for our environment.

19) The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. 20) For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21) that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. 22) We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. (Rom 8:19–22 NIV)

D Transforming our Culture

God is transforming all areas of culture. As we live in our community, we are called to be salt and light. We are doctors, waitresses, factory workers, school teachers, nurses, beauticians, businessmen, trainers, secretaries, counselors, and more. God works through us to do his work in the world.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God this is your spiritual act of worship. 2) Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Rom 12:1–2 NIV)

APPENDIX B

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CONFESSION, 1833

1 Declaration of Faith of the Scriptures

We believe [That] the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true centre of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.

2 Of the True God

[We believe] That there is one, and only one, living and true God, [an infinite, intelligent Spirit] whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness; [and] worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love; revealed under the personal and relative distinctions of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

3 Of the Fall of Man

[We believe] That man was created in a state of holiness, under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but by choice, being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, wholly given to the gratification of the world, of Satan, and of their own sinful passions, therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense of excuse.

4 Of the Way of Salvation

[We believe] That the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the Mediatorial Offices of the Son of God, who [by the appointment of the Father, freely] took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honoring the [divine] law by his personal obedience, and made atonement for our sins by his death; being risen from the dead he is now enthroned in heaven; and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, [he] is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.

5 Of Justification

[We believe] That the great Gospel blessing which Christ of his fullness bestows on such as believe in Him, is Justification; that Justification consists in the pardon of sin and the promise of eternal life, on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through His redemption and righteousness, [by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God;] that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful of time and eternity.

6 Of the Freeness of Salvation

[We believe] That the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, [penitent,]

and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth except his own [inherent depravity and] voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation.

7 Of Grace in Regeneration

[We believe] That in order to be saved, we must be regenerated or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; and is effected in a manner above our comprehension or calculation, by the power of the Holy Spirit, [in connection with divine truth,] so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; and that its proper evidence is found in the holy fruit which we bring forth to the glory of God.

8 Of Repentance and Faith

[We believe] That Repentance and Faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply convinced 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; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior. (This article was added in 1853)

9 Of God's Purpose of Grace

[We believe] That Election is gracious purpose of God, according to which he [graciously] regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely [free,] wise, holy, and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting, promotes humility, [love,] prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it is ascertained by its effects in all who [truly] believe the gospel; [that it] is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves, demands and desires our utmost diligence.

10 Of Sanctification

[We believe] That Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means - especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness and prayer. (This article was added in 1853)

11 Of the Perserverance of Saints

[We believe] That such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from mere professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and [that] they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

12 Of the Harmony of the Law and the Gospel

[We believe] That the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy, just, and good; and that the inability which the scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible Church.

13 Of a Gospel Church

[We believe] That a visible Church of Christ is a Congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word; that its only proper officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

14 Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper

[We Believe] That Christian Baptism Is the Immersion of a Believer in Water, in the Name of the Father [and] Son, and Spirit, to Show Forth in a Solemn and Beautiful Emblem, Our Faith in a Crucified, Buried, and Risen Savior, With Its Purifying Power; That It Is Prerequisite to the Privileges of a Church Relation; and to the Lord's Supper, in Which the Members of the Church, by the [Sacred] Use of Bread and Wine, Are in Commemorate Together the Dying Love of Christ; Preceded Always by Solemn Self-Examination.

15 Of the Christian Sabbath

[We believe] That the first day of the week is the Lord's Day or Christian Sabbath; and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and [sinful] recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

16 Of Civil Government

[We believe] That civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed, except [only] in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

17 Of the Righteous and the Wicked

[We believe] That there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

18 Of the World to Come

[We believe] That the end of this world is approaching: that at the last day Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.