

**CONSTITUTION
AND
DOCTRINAL STATEMENT**

CHURCH COVENANT

HAVING, AS WE TRUST, BEEN BROUGHT BY DIVINE GRACE TO REPENT AND BELIEVE IN THE LORD Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to Him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with each other.

We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We will walk together in brotherly love, as becomes the members of a Christian Church, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require.

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others.

We will endeavor to bring up such as may at any time be under our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family and friends.

We will rejoice at each other's happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.

We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation now to lead a new and holy life.

We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. We will 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 all nations.

We will, when we move from this place, 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.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

ARTICLE I - ORGANIZATION

This organization shall be known as the FERGUSON AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH, INC. located at Savannah, Georgia, U.S.A.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of this church shall be to worship God, and to preach and teach the Word of God with the purpose of winning the lost and building up the saints in faith, and the support of the spreading of the gospel in all the earth.

ARTICLE III-DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

I. Of the Scriptures.

We believe that the Holy Bible as originally written:

- (a) Was verbally inspired and the product of God through Spirit controlled men. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Acts 1:16, 28:25)
- (b) Is Truth without admixture of error. (Psalm 119:105, 130, 160; Luke 24:25-27, 44, 45; John 17:17)
- (c) Shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme authority by which all human conduct, creed and opinions should be tried; and that men in their relationships with God must move from truth to experience and not from experience to truth. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; Matthew 7:21-23; Psalm 119:89; Proverbs 30:5, 6; Romans 3:4; 1 Peter 1:23; Revelation 22:19; John 12:48; Isaiah 8:7-11; John 1:45-47; John 5:39)

(Clarification)

1. By "THE HOLY BIBLE" we mean that collection of sixty-six books from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written, does not only contain and convey the Word of God, but is the very Word of God.
2. By "INSPIRATION" we mean that the books of the Bible were written by Holy Men of Old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be.

II. Of the True God.

We believe:

- (a) That there is only one living and true God, infinite in every excellence, Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and Earth, inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all worship, confidence and love. (Exodus 15:11, 20:2, 3; Revelation 4:11)
- (b) That in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit, equal in every Divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices. (Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; Ephesians 2:18; 2 Corinthians 3:14)

(c) In the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Concerning Him, we believe:

(1) In His Absolute Deity, that He was Divine as no other man can be, being Very God of Very God, existing for all eternity and co-equal with the Father and the Spirit. (John 1:1-3; Colossians 2:8-10; Hebrews 1:2, 3, 8; Micah 5:2)

(2) That God the Father created the heavens and the earth according to his own will, through his Son Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue to exist and operate. (John 1:3; Col.1:15-17; Heb. 1:2)

(3) That at His incarnation He was miraculously begotten of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary as no other man was or can ever be born. (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14)

(4) That at his incarnation he became fully man but remained fully God. (Phil.2:5-8; Col. 2:9)

(Our Lord Jesus Christ's WORK in Atonement is seen in VI.)

(d) Of the Holy Spirit, we believe:

(1) That He is a Divine Person, equal with God the Father and God the Son, and of the same nature. (John 14:16, 17, 26; Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 9:14)

(2) That He was active in creation. (Genesis 1:1-3)

(3) That in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled. (2 Thessalonians 2:7)

(4) That He convicts of sin, of judgment and of righteousness. (John 16:8-11)

(5) That He bears witness to and empowers the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony. (John 15:26, 27; Acts 5:30-32)

(6) That His purpose in this age is to glorify the Son. (John 16:14; 1 Cor. 12:3)

(7) That He is the agent of the New Birth. (John 3:5, 6)

(8) That He indwells, seals, baptizes, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps believers until the day of redemption. (Ephesians 1:13, 14, 4:30; John 14:26, 16:13; Acts 11:16; Romans 8:9, 14, 16; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; Romans 8:26, 27)

(9) That He never depreciates the completeness that is in Jesus Christ by exalting anyone or anything above or as an addition to Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:3; Colossians 2:10)

(10) That He gives to the believer, at salvation, gifts of service according to His will (1 Corinthians 12:11) and to be used only for the edification of the body. (1 Corinthians 13:5b; Ephesians 4:16)

III. Of the Devil, or Satan,

We believe that Satan is a distinct personality who:

- (a) Was once holy and enjoyed Heaven's honors, but, through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell. (Isaiah 14:12-13; Ezekiel 28:15-17)
- (b) Drew after him a host of angels. (Revelation 12:9; Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:2; John 14:30)
- (c) Is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world. (1 Thessalonians 3:5; Matthew 4:1-3)
- (d) Is the enemy of God and His Christ. (Zechariah 1:3; 1 John 3:8; Matthew 13:25, 37-39; Luke 22:3, 4)
- (e) Is the accuser of the Saints. (Revelation 12:10)
- (f) Is the author of all false religions, the chief power promoting the present apostasy. (2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Mark 13:21, 22)
- (g) Although powerful and to be respected, is not omniscient, omnipotent, nor omnipresent and cannot overcome the believer who is submitting in obedience to Jesus Christ and His Word in Faith. (James 4:7; 1 John 4:4)
- (h) Is destined to find defeat at the hands of God's Son, through His death on the cross (Genesis 3:15; Revelation 19:11, 16, 20; Revelation 12:7-9; 20:1-3), and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels. (Revelation 20:10-15; Matthew 25:41)

IV. Of the Creation,

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and:

- (a) That it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically nor figuratively. (Genesis 1:1; Exodus 20:11; Acts 4:24; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 11:3; John 1:3; Revelation 10:6; Romans 1:20; Acts 17:23-26; Jeremiah 10:10)
- (b) That man was created directly by God and in God's own image and after His own likeness. (Genesis 1:27; 1 Corinthians 11:7)
- (c) That man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, nor development through long periods of time from lower to higher forms. (Genesis 2:7, 21-23; John 1:3)
- (d) That all animal and vegetable life was created directly and to reproduce "after its own kind." (Genesis 1:11, 24; Colossians 1:16, 17)

V. Of Man and His Fall,

We believe:

- (a) That man was created in innocence. (Genesis 1:27)
- (b) That by voluntary transgression he fell from his sinless and happy state. (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12, 19)

(c) That consequently, all men are now sinners by inheritance from Adam and by individual choice, and until regenerated are dead in sin and are subject to the wrath of God. (Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 3:10-13)

(d) That all men are by nature utterly void of the righteousness required by the law of God, and definitely inclined to evil and are hopelessly lost. (Romans 3:11; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:1-3; Psalm 40:12)

(e) That man is under just condemnation without defense or excuse. (Romans 3:9-20, 23; Romans 1:19, 20, 2:1, 12-15)

(f) That man's only hope of eternal life is through redemption in Jesus Christ. (John 3:3, 5; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Galatians 3:26)

VI. Of Christ's Atonement For Sin,

We believe:

(a) That the salvation of sinners is wholly of God's grace (Ephesians 2:8, 9; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24, 25); and through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by appointment of the Father, voluntarily took upon Him the form of a man, was tempted in all points as we are yet without sin in nature or deed, honored the Divine Law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins. (John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7, 8; Hebrews 2:14, 4:15; Romans 3:25; 1 John 4:10; Isaiah 53:6; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

(b) That His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a Martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. (John 10:18; Philippians 2:8; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:11; Hebrews 12:2; 1 Peter 3:18)

(c) That, having risen bodily from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His Wonderful Person the tenderest sympathies with Divine Perfection, He is in every way the suitable, compassionate, all sufficient Savior and the mediator for His believer priests. (Isaiah 53:12; Hebrews 7:25, 9:12-15, 10:10, 12, 14, 18; 1 John 2:2)

(d) That the blessings of this atonement are given to all who believe from the heart and confess to God this Lord and Savior as his own Lord and Savior. It is the immediate duty of man to obey the command to accept this offer of mercy. (Acts 17:30; Romans 10:8, 9, 10)

VII. Of Salvation By Grace,

We believe:

(a) That salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of his shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works. (John 1:12; Eph. 1:4-7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18,19)

(b) That in order to be saved, all men must be born again. (John 3:3; Galatians 3:26)

(c) That the new birth is a New Creation in Christ Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

- (d) That it is instantaneous, and not a lengthy process. (John 3:5-7; Acts 16:30-33)
- (e) That in the new birth, the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made partaker of the Divine Nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God. (2 Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1, 4-9; Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:5)
- (f) That the new creation is brought about in a manner above comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of The Holy Spirit in connection with Divine Truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience by faith in the Gospel. (John 1:12, 13, 3:8)
- (g) In God's electing grace and that this does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Ezek. 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18, 19, 36; 5:40; 1 Thessalonians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Colossians 3:12; 1 Peter 1:2; Rev. 22:17)
- (h) That salvation is freely offered to all by the Gospel. (Romans 10:9-13; Revelation 22:17)
- (i) That it is the immediate duty of all to accept this salvation by whole-hearted, penitent and obedient faith. (John 3:15-18; 1 Timothy 1:15; Acts 2:37-41; Romans 10:8, 9)
- (j) That nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel. (John 3:18, 36; Romans 1:18, 20, 2:1, 4, 5)
- (k) That its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith in the finished work and Person of Jesus Christ and newness of life. (Romans 10:8-10; 1 John 5:1-5)

VIII. Of Justification.

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification, and :

- (a) That justification includes the pardon of sin, the imputation of Christ's righteousness and the gift of eternal life on the basis of Christ's righteousness and atonement. (Acts 13:39; Isaiah 53:11; Romans 5:1, 9, 8:1)
- (b) That it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness, which we have done or ever will do, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood is His righteousness imputed to us. (Titus 3:5-7; Romans 4:24, 25, 5:1, 17; Galatians 3:11)

IX. Of Repentance and Faith.

We believe that repentance and faith:

- (a) Are inseparable graces. (Mark 1:15)
- (b) Are solemn obligations. (Acts 20:21)
- (c) Are wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God who convicts the believer of guilt, danger, helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, so that the believer turns to God with unfeigned contrition, and confesses to God his wholehearted faith in the work and person of the Lord Jesus Christ as his all sufficient Savior. (Acts 2:27, 28; Romans 10:9-13)

X. Of Sanctification,

We believe that Biblical Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, the believer is set apart from sin, unto Christ, and has three aspects:

- (a) The believer has been set apart positionally before God the moment he believes. (1 Corinthians 1:30, 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 10:10, 14)
- (b) The believer is being set apart progressively in his walk day by day as he grows in grace toward the likeness of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit in the continual use of the appointed means, especially the Word of God, self-examination, watchfulness, prayer and yielding to the Spirit through Biblical change. (John 17:17; Romans 8:13; 2 Peter 3:18; Romans 8:28, 29a; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 4:7b; Hebrews 5:12-14; 1 John 3:3; Romans 12:1, 2; Ephesians 4:22, 24)
- (c) The believer is to be set apart prospectively from the very presence of sin when his sanctification is completed at the coming of Christ for the church. (1 John 3:2; 1 Thessalonians 3:13, 5:23)

XI. Of the Security of the Believer or Perseverance of the Saints,

We believe this is the design of God's Divine Plan:

- (a) That every person, immediately upon acceptance of Christ as personal Savior and Lord receives eternal life and is made at once a Son of God. (1 John 5:11-13; John 1:12)
- (b) That believers are kept by the power of God through faith, are kept in a state of grace, and are eternally secure apart from any human works.
- (c) That such only are believers who endure to the end. (Philippians 1:6; John 8:31; Revelation 21:7, 8; Ephesians 2:10)
- (d) That the believers' persevering attachment to Christ and His own, and their growth in the likeness of Christ are God's marks which distinguish them from superficial professors. (Romans 8:28, 29a; John 14:21-23; John 10:27-29; 1 John 2:19; 5:1-3; John 13:34, 35; Ephesians 2:10, Titus 2:11-13; James 2:14-20)

XII. Of the Church,

We believe:

- (a) That the church universal is a New Testament institution, established by Jesus Christ, who is its sole Head; revealed through the apostles; empowered and perpetuated by the Holy Spirit; His body for service and His bride for glory. It began with the New Testament Saints at Pentecost and will be consummated at the coming of Christ in the Rapture. (Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:8, 2:1-13, 41-47, 15:14; Ephesians 1:22, 23, 3:21, 5:23-32; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
- (b) That the church universal is manifested through the local church which is:

(1) A congregation of baptized believers, associated together by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel. (Acts 2:41, 42)

(2) Observing the ordinances of Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:2)

(3) Governed by His laws. (Ephesians 1:22, 23)

(4) Exercising the gifts, responsibilities and privileges invested in them by His work. (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:4,8,11)

(c) That its scriptural offices are those of pastors (elders or bishops), and deacons whose qualification, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures. (Acts 14:23, 6:5, 6, 15:23, 20:17-28; 1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 8-13)

(d) That the true mission of the church is expressed in the New Testament and abbreviated in Matthew 28:19, 20 and Ephesians 4:11-16.

..To make individual disciples.

..To baptize them into a properly organized and functioning local church.

..To teach them to obey His Word as He has commanded. This includes assisting parents in teaching truth.

(e) That the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit's direction by the Word. (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23, 24; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

(f) That it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel and that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. (Acts 15:22; Jude 2, 3; 2 Corinthians 8:23, 24; 1 Corinthians 16:1-3)

(g) That on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, and of benevolence, the will of the local church following the Word of God is final. (Malachi 3:10; Leviticus 27:32; 1 Corinthians 5:11-13)

XIII. Of the Ordinances.

We believe:

(a) That Christian Baptism is:

(1) The immersion in water of a believer. (Acts 8:36-39; Matthew 3:6; John 3:23; Romans 6:4, 5; Matthew 3:16)

(2) In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)

(3) To show forth in a solemn testimony and picture of our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life. (Romans 6:3, 5; Colossians 2:12)

(b) That the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of our Lord's death until He comes, by the sacred use of broken bread and the freshly pressed juice of the vine as symbols of the price He paid for us. This commemoration should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. (1 Corinthians 11:23-28)

XIV. Of the Righteous and the Wicked,

We believe:

(a) That there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked. (Galatians 3:22, 26; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17, 18; 1 Peter 4:18; Proverbs 11:31)

(b) That those (through faith), justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified or set apart by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in their standing before God. (Romans 1:17; 1 Corinthians 15:22; John 5:24; Romans 3:22-24, 4:22-24; Ephesians 1:6, 7)

(c) That all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and are under the curse. (1 John 5:19; Galatians 3:10; Romans 6:23, 7:5)

(d) That this distinction holds among men both before and after death, in the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost. (Matthew 25:34, 41, 46; Luke 9:26, 16:25, 26; John 8:21; Romans 6:23; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 20:10-15)

XV. Of Civil Government,

We believe:

(a) That civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society. (Romans 13:1-7; 2 Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21, 22)

(b) That magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed (Matthew 22:21; 1 Timothy 2:1, 2; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13, 14, 17; Daniel 1:8-15), except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:19, 20, 5:29; Daniel 3:17, 18, 6:10, 11), who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the Kings of the earth. In this connection we stand firmly for the separation of the church and state. (Matthew 10:28, 22:21, 23:10; Revelation 11:16; Philippians 2:10, 11; Psalm 72:11)

XVI. Of the Family,

We believe:

(a) That marriage of a man to a woman is the plan of God and sacred in His sight. (Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:3-9; Ephesians 5:18-32; 1 Timothy 3:4, 5, 12; Malachi 2:13, 14)

(b) That the roles of husband, wife, parent, and child are clearly defined in Scripture. (Ephesians 5:21-32; Colossians 3:16-21; 1 Peter 3:1-7)

(c) That sexual relationships are sacred and fulfilling only within the bonds of marriage, and are condemned outside the marriage relationship. (1 Corinthians 7:3, 4; Hebrews 13:4)

(d) That children are a blessing of God and the responsibility for them rests solely upon the parent and they are to be brought up in loving structured control and conscientious instruction in the truths of God and His principles of life. (Psalm 127:3; Ephesians 6:4; Deuteronomy 6:6, 7; Psalm 78:4-7; Proverbs 22:6; Proverbs 17:6)

XVII. Of the Resurrection, Return of Christ, and Related Events.

We believe in and accept the sacred Scriptures upon these subjects at their full and face value. These beliefs include:

- (a) Christ's bodily resurrection from the tomb. (Matthew 28:6, 7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; 1 Corinthians 15:4-8; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6; Acts 2:24, 32, 3:15, 4:2; Romans 4:25)
- (b) His ascension to the Father's right hand. (Acts 1:9, 11; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19; Hebrews 10:12)
- (c) His future appearing in the air to receive His saints. (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; Acts 1:11; Hebrews 9:28)
- (d) The resurrection of the righteous dead. (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 15:52)
- (e) The physical change of the living in Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:17; Philippians 3:20, 21)
- (f) The believer's response to God's Word will be evaluated at the Judgment Seat of Christ for reward or loss. (2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; Romans 14:10; 2 Timothy 4:8; Revelation 22:2)
- (g) Christ's bodily return to the earth. (Matthew 24:29-32; Luke 1:32; Isaiah 9:6, 7; Acts 2:29, 30; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Isaiah 32:1, 11:4, 5; Psalm 72:8; Revelation 20:1-4, 6)
- (h) The White Throne Judgment of the unsaved, and the new heaven and the new earth. (Revelation 20:11-15, 21:1, 2)

ARTICLE IV - BY-LAWS

A. MEMBERSHIP

1. Any person who has repented of his sins and has received Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord, and who subscribes to the above doctrinal statement and who expresses a desire to make his life conform to God's Holy Word, is eligible for membership.
 - a.) Those with no previous contact with the church who desire to unite with the church will be received as members after a personal interview with the pastor or the membership committee (which is composed of any three (3) active deacons/elders).
 - b.) Those with whom the church is acquainted and show fruits of being born again may be received as members of the church by letter from another New Testament church or by statement of faith with the approval of the congregation at any regular service.

2. It is expected that a member support the work of the church by prayers, loving fellowship and tithes and offerings as God prospers, and in reliance upon God and His Word, live in the spirit of the Doctrinal Statement.
3. An un-baptized applicant for membership shall be required to be baptized by immersion before being given the right hand of fellowship. (see Article XIII Doctrinal Statement)
4. Any member falling into gross sin, or who seeks to injure another member, or who willfully disregards the Doctrinal Statement, or who goes contrary thereto after loving admonition and instruction by: 1) The Pastor, 2) The Pastor/Elder and/or deacon, 3) The Church Body; 4) after the above three steps have been taken, if, that member continues in sin or contrary belief, said member will be dropped from the membership. (Matthew 18:15-17)
5. Any member who does not attend the services and who does not contribute toward the support of the church for a period of one (1) year, unless showing sufficient reason therefore, will be automatically dropped from the membership after a letter has been sent.
6. A letter will be granted to any member united with another New Testament church upon request of said church. If a member unites with a church that is not a New Testament church, that church will be notified the member has been dropped from our church roll.

B. GOVERNMENT

1. The government of this church, under God, shall be of a congregational type, i.e., that the autonomy of the local church shall be believed in and practiced, and that the local body of believers shall conduct its own internal affairs, carry on its own business and discipline its own members bowing to no other authority save God's Holy Word as led and directed by the Holy Spirit. This local church is an independent body, and will not be bound by any recommendation, or resolution handed down by any higher ecclesiastical authority.
2. The government of this church, under God, shall be committed to an official council of ordained elders and an official board of deacons serving for the local congregation, who qualify according to I Timothy 3, each of who shall be a member of this church and in complete accord with its doctrinal statement. Both elders and deacons will rotate its members upon completing a specified term. An elder and/or deacon may be elected to succeed himself if no qualified person can be found. Furthermore, those who are elected as elders or deacons should be spiritual men who maintain a good Christian testimony by abstaining from all drugs, food, drink, and practices which bring unwarranted harm to the body and/or jeopardize their own or another's faith, and/or harm the testimony of the church. Also, elders and deacons are expected to support the ministry of the church with his tithe. The official Elder Council and the Board of Deacons shall be a body of worth while, trained ordained and lay workers, led by the pastor, and, who, living with the remainder of the people, shall lead them to love one another, attending all services possible. Each elder and deacon should also make a diligent effort to support the ministries of FABC in a conspicuous and sacrificial Christian manner.

Council of Elders

1. Duties of the Council of Elders shall be:
 - a) The Elders are to give themselves over to prayer and the ministry of the Word.
 - b) To watch over and care for the members of the Church, with special emphasis on their spiritual well-being but not neglecting the physical needs of the members.
 - c) To supervise and coordinate the corporate worship of the church.
 - d) To assist the pastor in the administration of the ordinances of Baptism and Communion.

- e) To recommend the receiving and dismissing of members to and from the Church.
 - f) To create, oversee, and manage the ministries of the Church.
 - g) When deemed necessary to exercise church discipline according to Matt. 18:15-18.
2. Fifty percent (50%) plus one, of the Elder Council must be present for the transaction of its business.
- a) The Council of Elders shall not meet without the Pastor unless mutually agreed upon beforehand by both parties, or when the church is in the process of obtaining a new pastor.
 - b) Any vacancies that may occur during the year shall continue until the next Yearly Conference, unless otherwise deemed necessary by the Council.
 - c) The Elder Council shall elect from among themselves and Deacon Board a Nominating Committee for the election of church officers, teachers, sponsors, and the like, and for the appointment of committees deemed necessary for the program of the church.
 - d) The Elder Council shall be responsible to the congregation and all of the Council's recommendations shall be presented to the congregation for approval.

The Board of Deacons

The duties of the Deacon Board shall be:

1. To assist the Elder leadership in the caring for the members of the church, both spiritually and physically.
2. To oversee the maintaining of the physical plant (all buildings and grounds) which, is to include all repairs, renovations and/or new building projects.
3. To assist the Elders in creating, overseeing and managing of the various ministries of the Church.
4. To assist the pastor and elders in the administration of the ordinances of the church.
5. To perform other duties as assigned by the Elders.
6. The Deaconø shall be allowed to spend up to but not exceeding \$5,000.00 for any alteration, modification and improvement of all church property during any two-month period.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

A Board of Trustees shall be elected according to the laws of the State of Georgia, I Timothy 3, and shall be custodians of all church properties, both real and personal, with the exception of monies deposited in banks by various treasurers. Their work shall be under the direction of the congregation.

When authorized by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of a congregational meeting, the Trustees shall have power:

1. To take and hold by lease, gifts, purchase, grant, devise or bequest, any property, real or personal, necessary or desirable for attaining the objects and carrying into effect the purpose of the Church Corporation, subject, however, to any alternation or modification made by general law of the State of Georgia, the amount of real and personal property to be held by the Corporation.
2. To transfer and convey its real and personal property.
3. To borrow money for the purpose of the Church Corporation and issue bonds, therefore, and execute the same by mortgage.

The Board of Trustees shall be allowed to spend up to but not exceeding \$200.00 per quarter for alteration, modification and improvement of all church property. An expenditure exceeding \$200.00 must be cleared through the Elder Council and/or Board of Deacons, and passed on by the Congregation.

Any recommendation of major importance suggested by the Board of Trustees shall be presented to the Elders & Deacons for consultation, before it is presented to the Congregation for final action.

CHURCH OFFICERS

1. CLERK - The Clerk shall serve for the Church and shall keep complete and accurate minutes properly indexed of all business proceedings of this body.
2. TREASURER - The Treasurer shall keep full and accurate accounts of general receipts and disbursements and shall deposit all monies in the name and to the credit of the church and in such depositories as may be designated by the Council of Elders, Deacon Board and the Congregation. Disbursements of all funds shall be made as ordered by the Congregation. Accounting shall be rendered to the Council of Elders and Deacon Board monthly and whenever required, of all his transactions as Treasurer; these shall be subject to yearly audit. The duties applicable to the church Treasurer shall apply to anyone elected as treasurer for a special account when deemed necessary by the church.

The records and books kept by the above officers shall be considered church property. These records, with the exception of those for personal envelope posting, shall be available for inspection by any church member.

CONGREGATION

1. The voting membership of the Church (i.e., those eighteen (18) years of age and older), hereafter referred to as the Congregation, shall meet once each quarter on the third Sunday afternoon of each January, April, July, and October (each meeting shall begin at 5:00 pm, or no later than 5:30 pm) for the purpose of transacting any necessary business and recommendations brought by the Elders and/or Deacons. The necessary reports of the various departments of the Church shall also be heard.
2. The Council of Elders, and/or Deacon Board may call special business meetings of the Congregation if, and when necessary. A week's notice shall be given to the Congregation. Special called business meetings are limited to the stated purpose for which the meeting was called. This purpose must be given to the congregation in written form when notification of meeting is given.
3. The Congregation present at a duly called business meeting shall constitute a quorum. A majority vote of those present shall be required to pass any motion.
4. The Congregational meeting shall be chaired by the church moderator, who will be chosen by a joint decision of the Elder Council and Board of deacons. This person shall serve for one year, and may serve for no more than 3 consecutive years. The person chosen shall meet the biblical qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3, but this position does not make the individual a deacon. This position may be filled by (but is not limited to) the current Deacon chairman, deacon vice-chairman, or any current elder except the Pastor.

COMMITTEES

The Church may maintain active committees. These committees shall carry on their own work, manage their own affairs, and elect their own officers. They are, however, subordinate to the Official Board of Elders and/or their designate and shall be expected to work in harmony with the overall program of the Church and in full accord with its doctrinal statement.

PASTORAL RELATIONS

1. The Pastor is the under shepherd of the flock and shall teach and train other officers as well as the general laity. He shall not be the servant of the Elder Council or the boss of the same, but its leader. As leader of the church, his position of leadership shall be assured unless there is sufficient reason to alter this position as leader.
2. To call a pastor to serve the Church, a Pulpit Committee shall be appointed consisting of at least one of the Elders who will serve as Chairman, three (3) Deacon Board members (elected by the Deacon Board), and (3) members from the congregation (as elected by the congregation). The Pulpit Committee shall select candidates for presentation to the Elder Council, Deacon Board and the Congregation. If approved by the Elder Council and Deacon Board, the candidate shall be presented to the Congregation for action. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting membership present shall be required to appoint a pastor.
3. The Pastor shall have a spiritual oversight of the Church. All questions regarding the Pastor's relationship to the Church shall be decided by the Council of Elders and, if necessary, brought before the Congregation. The Pulpit shall be under the care of the Pastor, who shall recommend guest speakers and evangelists as the need may arise, and who shall be given the liberty to share the pulpit from time to time with visiting preachers, missionaries, and Christian workers with consent from the Elder Council when it will be spiritually profitable for the Congregation. The Pastor shall at no time give the Pulpit over to anyone who is unsound in doctrine as related to the doctrinal statement, or who is not in sympathy with the beliefs and practices. The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees within the framework of the Church.
4. A pastor's services may be terminated by either party (pastor or church) subject to thirty (30) days notice or compensation. Any action concerning the termination of the pastor's services shall come through the Council of Elders and/or Deacon Board, in turn passed to the Congregation for final action.
5. The Pastor shall be entitled to two (2) weeks vacation annually with pay.

ARTICLE V – Election Procedures

Procedure for election of Elders and Deacons:

1. Church body will pray before considering anyone.
2. The longest serving one-third (1/3) of each council/board will be rotated off the active body every year. New Elder/Deacon elections will occur yearly.
3. Church body will turn names of men they believe qualified to the Elder Council.
4. Elders will pray and interview each man to ensure that he is qualified according to I Timothy.
5. After prayerful consideration the active Elders would present to the church a list of spiritually qualified men who have been contacted, interviewed and have agreed to serve (if elected).

6. These names would be presented at the October quarterly church meeting (or Special Called meeting). If there are no objections from the church body there will be a called meeting one-month later to vote on and pass these recommendations.
7. If more men are qualified and agree to serve than are needed to fill the vacancies on the active board, a ballot will be taken to determine those who will serve. If sufficient number of qualified men are not found the board will operate with only those qualified.
8. If at all possible, the board of Elders will have at least 2 men and no more than seven (7) besides the pastoral staff, the Board of Deacons will have at least five (5) and no more than twelve (12) active members.

ARTICLE VI

By-law amendments or changes can come only after all active members have been notified by letter of the proposed change and the date of the meeting at which the vote to adopt said change will take place. A two-thirds ($2/3$) majority of the voting members present is necessary to pass any proposed change.

Approved by congregation 11-17-04