

FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH

CONSTITUTION

Adopted February 19, 2017

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CONSTITUTION OF FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH

ARTICLE 1 – *Name and Organization*

Section 1 NAME:

The name of this organization shall be FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH presently located in the County of New Castle, Delaware.

Section 2 ORGANIZATION:

The organization took place on September 5, 1963.

Section 3 INCORPORATION:

This organization was incorporated as FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH, INC.

The Church is organized and shall be operated exclusively as a nonprofit Church, for the religious, charitable and educational purposes stated herein including but not limited to licensing, commissioning, ordaining and overseeing ministers of the gospel, worship, evangelism, missions, ministry to the poor and needy, Christian education, discipleship and fellowship according to Biblical principles and is as an organization exempt from tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended or any successor statute of similar import. The Church shall also be organized for the following purposes: to make disciples by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth and to glorify God through worshipping Him, celebrating the ordinances, equipping the saints, serving others, fellowshiping together, and loving one another.

Section 4 FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH:

Faith Baptist Church is and shall remain an independent Baptist Church and will be in friendly cooperation with any association that does not conflict with the policies and doctrines set forth in this Constitution.

ARTICLE 2 – *Articles of Faith and Doctrinal Statements*

Section 1 THE BIBLE

We believe that God has spoken in the sixty-six books of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments (hereinafter referred to as “Bible” or “Scripture”), through the words of human authors. The Scriptures are verbally inspired by God and are inerrant in the original writings, i.e., autographs, and are the supreme and final authority in faith and practice (life).

Matthew 5:17-18; John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21

Section 2 GOD

We believe there is only one living and true God, sovereign over all, eternally existing as three equally divine Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Genesis 1:1, 26; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:3-4; Isaiah 46:9-10; 48:16; Matthew 28:18-20; John 17:3; Acts 5:3-4; 17:28; Hebrews 1:1-3, 8; 1 John 5:7; Revelation 4:11

(a) GOD THE FATHER:

Although God the Father shares the same essence with God the Son and God the Spirit. He is to be distinguished from the two other members of the Trinity. The Father is not begotten nor is He the One who was crucified. The Father is the one who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing and has chosen, before the foundation of the world, that in Christ we stand before Him holy and without blame. The Father loved the world and gave His Son on our behalf.

Matthew 6:9; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 1:3; Ephesians 1:3-5

Although the Fatherhood of God finds its clearest expression in the New Testament, this filial relationship was already known to the faithful in Old Testament times. For example, David, Isaiah, and Jeremiah refer to the intimacy of the Father/Son relationship.

Psalms 103:13-14; Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 3:19

In Christ, the Father was propitiated; that is, His anger against sin was turned away from us. Thus, both His love for us and His holy anger against sin found expression in and were fully satisfied through the work of Christ on the cross. Thus, we affirm that our God is our Redeemer.

(b) GOD THE SON:

We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, God incarnate (fully God and fully man). We believe that God the Son exists as a co-equal and co-eternal Person with the Trinity and as such is fully divine. Jesus Christ is Israel’s promised Messiah who existed from eternity past. He was conceived in human flesh through the Holy Spirit and born of Mary, who was then a virgin. He lived a sinless life, was crucified and died under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate. He is the one Mediator between God and man, fully God and fully man, being the only One in whose person God and man can be reconciled. We believe in His premillennial personal return as Lord and

Bridegroom of His Church and later in power and glory as Judge. To Him we gladly give our obedience and worship, being deeply grateful for His grace toward us while we were yet sinners.

Matthew 1:18-23; 11:5; 17:5; 28:6; Mark 16:19; John 1:1; 14:6; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 1:20-23; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 1:8; 1 John 3:5; Revelation 20:6

(c) GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT:

We believe that the Holy Spirit exists as a co-equal and co-eternal Person with the Trinity and as such is fully divine. We believe that He glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father in all that He does. He convicts the unconverted of their sin and regenerates all who believe; and in Him all believers are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs into the family of God. By the Holy Spirit the Godhead now indwells all believers. He also illuminates, guides, equips, and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

John 7:38-40; 16:7-11; Acts 1:8; 5:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 5:16-18

We believe that the Holy Spirit distributes gifts to the Church for the edification of the body of Christ. These gifts of service are intended to display both the diversity and unity of the one body in its mutual edification and ministry. The Holy Spirit never departs from a believer and is ever present to testify of Christ, bringing about the fruit of the Spirit. His presence in the life of the believer is the guarantee that God will bring us safely into heaven where we will enter fully into the inheritance that awaits us.

John 15:26; 16:8-9, 13; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Titus 3:5-6

Section 3 ANGELS AND SATAN

We believe in the existence of created beings called angels. These spirit beings are generally invisible but have some unknown form. They are persons and bear the image of God. They are superior to man, but inferior to God. There are holy, elect angels and unholy, fallen angels (demons). The elect angels minister on behalf of God to the nations of the world and to believers. The fallen angels chose to follow Lucifer (Satan). Satan now uses his gifts and abilities to oppose God at every level and by every possible means. The fallen angels assist Satan in his scheme. Eventually, Satan and all the fallen angels will be cast into the Lake of Fire for eternity.

Genesis 1:31; Job 1:6-7; 38:7; Isaiah 6:2-7; 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:14; Daniel 8:16; 10:11; 12:1; Matthew 4:24; 8:16; 12:42-45; 25:41; Mark 5:1-5; Luke 16:22; 24:4, 37-39; John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 6:12; 1 Timothy 4:1; Hebrews 1:14; 1 Peter 1:12; 1 John 4:1, 3; Revelation 1:1; 5:1; 8-9; 12:4; 20:10; 22:16

Section 4 THE HUMAN CONDITION OF MANKIND

We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image as male and female, thus the gift of two different yet complementary sexes reflects the goodness of God's creation. However, because Adam and Eve voluntarily rebelled, as their descendants, we are born under the condemnation of sin and also inherit a sin nature. Therefore, sin has affected the whole of our being, leaving us morally and spiritually "dead in [our] trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, renewed, and reconciled to God.

Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3

Since humanity is the crowning work of God's creation, each human being is created in His image, is sacred, and is worthy of respect and Christian love. This respect must be accorded to all human life from the moment of conception until natural death.

Psalm 139:13-16; Revelation 5:9-10

We believe there is an essential difference between the redeemed (saved) and the unbeliever (lost). The redeemed will be resurrected and/or raptured to life everlasting to enjoy God's presence in heaven; the unbeliever to damnation to be tormented forever in the lake of fire.

John 3:36; 5:28-29; Revelation 20:11-15

Section 5 SALVATION

We believe that because of sin, its results, and the character of God, all of mankind needs salvation. This salvation was sufficiently provided for all of mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, but efficiently applies only to those who believe. Salvation is wholly the work of God's grace, God's mercy, and is completely apart from works. All three members of the Trinity are involved in salvation. The Father planned it, the Son (Jesus) purchased it, and the Holy Spirit preserves it. A redeemed person has been converted and justified as God has declared him to be righteous. A redeemed person is sanctified as he grows to be more like Jesus Christ. A redeemed person will be glorified when he reaches his eternal home. The sinless Christ is the sinner's substitute, whereby, reconciliation is made with God on his behalf, redemption is made from the slavery of sin, regeneration makes him alive, and he is adopted as a child of God with all its rights, privileges, and responsibilities. All this is possible through the atoning death of Christ. This salvation is evidenced by one's fellowship with God and His people, one's obedience to God, one's love for God's people, one's confession of Jesus, one's being made new, and one's works of righteousness. Salvation is secure as it is based in the very character, promises, power, and deeds of God so that the true believer cannot lose one's salvation and will be preserved until glorification.

Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; John 1:12; 3:3-7, 16; 10:28-29; 17:9, 20, 24; Acts 16:31; 20:21; 26:20; Romans 3:10-12, 24; 5:1, 12, 19; 6:23; 8:30-39; 10:9-10, 13; 2 Corinthians 5:17, 21; Galatians 2:16; 4:5; Ephesians 1:3-14; 2:8-9, 10-13; 4:30; Colossians 1:20-21; 1 Timothy 2:6; 4:10; 2 Timothy 1:9-10; Titus 2:11-15; 3:5; Hebrews 2:9; 12:14; 1 John 1:3; 2:2-3, 29; 3:14; 4:15

Section 6 THE CHURCH

We believe that the Church of Jesus Christ needs to be understood in two senses, namely universal and local. In the universal sense, the Church consists of all those during this age (Pentecost through the Rapture) who have been born of God's Spirit and have therefore been baptized into the body of Christ. In the local sense, a Church is a called-out, living assembly of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith, organized by New Testament principles, assembling regularly together, led by pastors who are supported by deacons, under the discipline of God's Word and the Headship of Christ, and observing the ordinances. The ordinances are those commands of Christ given to the Church, specifically, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are an act of obedience, not the conveyance of grace. The purpose of the Church is four-fold: worship of God, fellowship with God and His people, edification of believers, and evangelization of the unbeliever (lost).

Matthew 5:16; 28:19-20; Mark 1:5-10; 16:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8; 2:41-47; 6:1-7; 11:19-26, 30; 13:1-3; 1 Corinthians 11:23-31; 12:13; Galatians 3:26-29; Ephesians 1:22-23; 1 Timothy 3:2, 8-13; Titus 1:5-7

We believe baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only scriptural ordinances of the Church. We believe baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, and

of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, symbolizing the essential facts in redemption—the death, burial, and resurrection to newness of life.

Matthew 3:13-17; 28:19; Romans 6:3-5

We believe the Lord's Supper is a memorial service in which the elements symbolize the broken body and the shed blood of Christ at Calvary, and it is to be partaken of, after solemn self-examination, at regular intervals by all believers in Christ.

Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

Section 7 THE LORD'S DAY

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

The Church shall meet together for public worship each Sunday and at other times throughout the week as the Senior Pastor and/or Leadership Board may determine. The meeting time may be changed or canceled by the Senior Pastor and/or Leadership Board as deemed necessary (e.g. weather, emergency, etc.).

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10

Section 8 STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

We believe that marriage unites one man and one woman in a lifetime commitment to each other. We believe that God has also commanded there be no intimate engagement of sexual activity outside of a marriage.

Genesis 2:23-24; Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Corinthian 6:15-20

Marriage provides for intimate companionship, pure sexual expression, procreation, and reflects the relationship of Christ and the Church. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We also believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. Such sinful patterns, if not repented, will be a barrier to membership, employment, and leadership in this body of believers. We invite all people to our church, because we are all sinners and are able to receive Christ's grace and forgiveness.

Genesis 1:28; 2:24-25; 19:5; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Proverbs 5:15-19; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9-11; 7:1-5; Ephesians 5:31-33; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4

Section 9 STATEMENT ON THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

We believe that human life is a sacred gift from God and must be respected from the moment of conception (fertilization) until natural death. We believe that the intentional, willful termination of a pregnancy ("abortion") at any time after conception constitutes the taking of unborn human life. Accordingly, abortions, including for reasons of birth defects, gender

selection, birth control, population control, or even in the tragic instances of rape or incest, and acts of encouraging, facilitating, or paying for abortions (as individuals), are inconsistent with Scripture and the glory of God. If pregnancy threatens the life of the mother, and there is no way to save the child, an ethical case can be made for terminating the pregnancy.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Psalm 119:73; 127:3-4; 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; 31:15; Matthew 10:28; Acts 5:29

We oppose active intervention with the intent to produce death (“euthanasia”), whether for the relief of suffering, economic considerations, or convenience of the person, family, or society. We do not oppose the withdrawal or failure to institute artificial means of life support in patients who are clearly and irreversibly deteriorating, in whom death appears imminent beyond reasonable hope of recovery (e.g. do not resuscitate order or advance medical directive).

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Exodus 20:13; Leviticus 19:32; Job 1:21; 12:10; 14:5; 33:4; Psalm 90; Ecclesiastes 3:1-2; 8:8; Matthew 10:28; Acts 5:29; 17:25; Hebrews 9:27

ARTICLE 3 – Church Membership Agreement

Having received the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord (*Romans 10:9-10*), and having confessed Him as such through baptism (*Romans 6:4*), we sincerely agree together to walk worthy of God (*Ephesians 4:1, Colossians 2:6-7*). We understand that God is at work in our lives, conforming us into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ (*Romans 8:29*).

Therefore, we determine by God's Spirit to walk in Christian love (*Galatians 5:18-26*); to strive for the spiritual progress of this Church (*Ephesians 4:16*); to maintain peace and unity (*Ephesians 4:1-3*); to support the services, ordinances (*Acts 2:41-42*), disciplines (*1 Timothy 4:8*), and doctrines of this Church (*Titus 1:9*), not forsaking regularly to meet together (*Hebrews 10:25*); to give cheerfully and faithfully, as God has prospered us, of self and substance (*2 Corinthians 9:7*); to support this ministry so that effective evangelism may be carried out locally, nationally, and worldwide (*Acts 1:8*).

Also, we determine to sustain prayer (*1 Thessalonians 5:17*) and the reading of the Bible in our homes (*John 5:39*); to teach the Word of God through word and deed to our children (*Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Ephesians 6:4*); to pray for and to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances (*Colossians 4:2-6*); and to pursue godly ways in our relationships with the world (*Philippians 2:12-15*). We believe in biblical liberty with responsibility and accountability (*1 Corinthians 10:23-33*), “But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak” (*1 Corinthians 8:9*) “and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires” (*Romans 13:13-14*).

As members, we agree that if we should move from this place, we shall as soon as possible unite with a local Church where we may carry out the spirit of this agreement and the principles of the Holy Scriptures.

As members, we agree to abide by Faith Baptist Church's Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies of the Church Corporation, including but not limited to its Articles of Faith and Doctrinal Statements (see Article 2), Statement on Marriage and Sexuality (see Article 2, Section 8), Church Discipline (see Bylaws, Article 3), and Christian Dispute Resolution (see Bylaws, Article 12).

All members shall sign a copy of this Church Membership Agreement.

ARTICLE 4 – Commissioning of Missionaries, Licensing of Preachers, Ordaining of Ministers

A member of the Church who feels called of God to specific service may be so set apart by the following procedure:

1. Both men and women may be commissioned to Christian service, but only men may be licensed or ordained to the ministry.
2. The candidate shall be recommended by the Senior Pastor and Deacons for commissioning, licensing, or ordination.
3. The candidate must subscribe in writing to the Articles of Faith and Doctrinal Statements of the Church.
4. The Senior Pastor and Deacons shall examine the candidate to determine the person's scriptural qualifications for service.
5. If satisfied with the person's qualifications, the Senior Pastor and Deacons shall at a business meeting, recommend to the Church that the candidate be commissioned, licensed, or ordained. The candidate shall be approved by three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) majority of those voting.
6. Commissioning, licensing, and ordination services, including the use of ordination councils, etc., shall be the Senior Pastor's and Deacons' responsibility.

ARTICLE 5 – Amendments

This constitution shall be changed or amended only at a special business meeting called for this purpose if the Leadership Board recommends the amendment. The amendment(s) shall be offered in writing and made available to the voting members at least 30 days prior to a final consideration. Such action requires a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) majority of those voting.

Adopted: _____

Signed: _____

Church Clerk, Faith Baptist Church