

Constitution And By-Laws
Union Baptist Church
2900 Highway 106 South
Hull, Georgia 30646

Identification/Name

This congregation is incorporated as the Union Baptist Church, Inc. The office and principal place of business shall be 2900 Highway 106 South, in the city of Hull, Georgia.

Preamble

We the members of Union Baptist Church, Inc. do establish this document as adopted by the church as the constitution and by-laws and to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, and to govern the body in a Christ-like manner to the glory of God.

Statement of Faith

We affirm the Scriptures, God's Holy Word, as written by men divinely inspired. It is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. The Holy Bible has God as its Author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter. Union Baptist Church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in the year 2000. (See Article: VII)

Church Covenant

Union Baptist Church approves and adopts as its own covenant the document used by other Southern Baptist churches of the Southern Baptist Convention which is known as "The Church Covenant." (See Article: VIII)

Objective

The purpose of Union Baptist Church shall be to worship the Almighty God according to the teaching of God's Holy Word, to sustain the ordinances and doctrines and to practice the precepts and examples of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ as set forth in the New Testament, to preach and propagate among all people the Gospel of God's salvation by personal faith in Jesus Christ, the Savior and Lord.

Mission Statement

The mission of Union Baptist Church is to, Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that Jesus Christ commanded (Matthew 28:19-20).

Polity And Doctrine

The government of this church shall be vested solely in the body of believers who compose it as an autonomous group. It shall be subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but shall recognize and sustain the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation with the Sarepta Baptist Association, the Georgia Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Article I: Church Membership

Section 1. Membership: The church shall be composed of persons who are members as of the date of the adoption of the Constitution and By-Laws and such other baptized believers in the Lord Jesus Christ as may hereafter be accepted in the fellowship of the church.

Section 2. Candidacy: Any person may present himself/herself as a candidate for membership at any service. All persons presenting themselves for membership will be subject to the vote of the congregation. Persons will be accepted in to full fellowship and privileges of membership when the following criteria are met:

- A. By profession of faith and believer's baptism by immersion.
- B. Upon receipt of a letter of recommendation from another Southern Baptist Church or a Baptist church of like faith.
- C. By statement of prior conversion experience in a church that practices believer's baptism by immersion; or by statement that records of a prior membership in a Southern Baptist Church that has been lost or destroyed.
- D. Application for membership under circumstances other than those in paragraph (A) and (C) will be submitted to the pastor, staff, and deacon fellowship for review and recommendation to the church.
- E. Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the pastor, staff, and deacon fellowship for review and a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days.
- F. Watchcare: Persons who will be in the area for a limited time but wish to become a part of Union Baptist Church may do so by coming for Watchcare membership. A person may present himself/herself in any of the ways outlined above, except baptism by immersion shall not be required. Persons will have full privileges of membership except for voting.

Section 3. Duties of Church Members

- A. It shall be the duty of each church member to actively support and sustain the work, the doctrines, the services of the church and to abide by the Constitution and By-Laws.
- B. Each member shall also concern himself/herself with the needs, spiritual and otherwise of fellow church members, other Christians, and those who are strangers to the Kingdom of God.
- C. Each member shall strive daily, with God's help, to live the Christian life through daily witness, Bible study, visitation, and in the giving of tithes and offerings.
- D. Each member shall be expected to be in harmony with the purpose of Union Baptist Church as stated in this document. (Objective: Paragraph 5)

Section 4. Rights of Church Members

The government of this church shall be vested in the body of believers who comprise it. All members shall enjoy equal rights and privileges in affairs concerning the church in accordance with God's Word and the Constitution and By-Laws. (See Article: IV Church Meetings)

Section 5. Dismissal of Members

- A. Letter: Upon written request from a church of like faith and order a member in good standing with this church, who has fulfilled his or her obligation in a satisfactory manner, when united with another church of like faith and upon order of said church shall be granted a letter of recommendation of full fellowship. The church clerk can grant the letters requested and report to the church during the next scheduled business meeting. As a church letter is the property of the church only, no letter will be granted to an individual.
- B. Death: Following death, a member's name and date shall be recorded in a book maintained by the church clerk listing those who have gone on to be with the Lord.
- C. Exclusion: In case a member be guilty of conduct unbecoming to a Christian so that the church and the name of Christ are brought into disrepute, it will be the responsibility of the pastor, staff, and deacon fellowship to confer with such person in accordance with the New Testament teaching (Matthew 18:15-17) in hope to restore than one. If he/she will not hear these brethren, it will be their responsibility to report the attitude to the church and if he/she will not hear the church, the name of the church member in question shall be removed from the membership rolls, if a majority of the members present at any regular business meeting of

the church votes to exclude him or her. In case any member joins another denomination, the church will exclude such a person from its membership.

Section 6. Restoration of Membership

Any member whose name has been erased from the church roll or who has been excluded from church membership, may be restored by request upon confession of any error committed or by giving satisfactory evidence to the church of having maintained a Christian character.

Article II: Church Officers

Section 1. Pastor

- A. The pastor shall be a member of a cooperative Southern Baptist church which is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. He must agree with the Constitution and By-Laws upon acceptance of the church. He will, of course always have the right to propose any changes that he deems necessary, and these changes must follow procedure as set down in the Constitution and By-Laws themselves. The pastor is to be the leader of the church in organization and spiritual development. He shall conduct the public worship of the church. The general development of all church work shall be under his supervision. He shall be ex-officio member of deacons and committees. He shall act as moderator of all sessions of the church when present. In the pastor's absence he shall notify the ministerial staff and the associate pastor shall act as moderator of that session.
- B. The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, organizations, ministerial staff, and the deacon fellowship to perform their assigned tasks (1 Peter 5:1-5).
- C. The pastor is the leader of pastoral ministries in the church. As such, he works with the ministerial staff, deacon fellowship, and the church to:
 - a) Lead the church in achievement of its mission.
 - b) Lead the church to engage in fellowship of worship, witness, education, and ministry.
 - c) Proclaim the Gospel to believers and non-believers.
 - d) Care for members and others persons in the community.

Section 2. Procedures For Selection

When the church becomes pastorless, a committee of five members and two alternates shall be elected for the specific purpose of finding God's choice as pastor and serve until the task is finished. They shall bring no more than one preacher at a time before the church. The church shall never consider more than one individual at any given time.

Section 3. Associate Pastors

A. Duties:

- a) The ministerial staff is directly responsible to the pastor for effectively performing their work according to their job descriptions.
- b) The ministerial staff will be responsible to work with the pastor in leading the church in the achievement of its mission.

B. Associate Pastor: Youth and Children

- a) He shall be responsible for overseeing and administering all church ministries relating to the youth and children in cooperation with the pastor and the mission of the church.
- b) He shall work closely with the pastor to involve youth and children, and their families in the ministries designed to help them become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

C. Associate Pastor: Music and Education

- a) He shall be responsible for the music program of the church in cooperation with the pastor and musicians. He shall have oversight of the music in all services of the church. He shall follow sound and proven methods, using all available helps from associational, state, and the Southern Baptist Convention, and other aids he may deem necessary.
- b) He shall be the executive officer of all education programs and shall exercise oversight with the pastor over all departments and classes. He shall seek to lead the entire education program of the church with the purpose of bringing all members to maturity in Jesus Christ.
- c) He shall preside over all matters pertaining to Sunday School and Discipleship ministries.

Section 4. Vacancy of Ministerial Staff

- A. The office of the pastor or an associate pastor shall be vacated by death.
- B. The office of pastor or an associate pastor shall be vacated by resignation.
- C. The termination of the pastor or an associate pastor by action of the church must take place in a business meeting called for that specific purpose.

Section 5. Deacons

A. Qualifications

- a) All men must be age 21 and above to be eligible to serve on the deacon fellowship.
- b) All men must have been a member of Union Baptist Church for one (1) year before they are eligible to serve on the deacon fellowship.
- c) In accordance with the meaning of the work and practices of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacon is to serve with the Pastor and the Ministerial Staff in performing pastoral ministry tasks; proclaim the Gospel to believers and unbelievers; care for the members and other persons in the community; lead the church by example to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, and ministry, faithful stewardship; and lead the church in achieving its missions.

B. Election and Term

- a) The active deacons shall consist of seven (7) men elected by the church. The deacons will serve according to the rotation plan. Each subsequent year, two deacons will rotate off the deacon fellowship and the church will elect two replacements from the eligible men of the church. These deacons will serve a four year term before rotating off. In the year that the two deacons rotate off, they must be inactive for one year, and will, therefore, will not be eligible for re-election until the following year.
- b) The Pastor, Ministerial Staff, and Deacon Fellowship shall be responsible for recommending a list of men to fill the existing vacancies. This list shall appear in the church bulletin the week before formal action by the church.

C. Duties

- a) The Deacon Fellowship shall assist in the distribution of the Lord's Supper.
- b) It shall be the duty of the Deacon Fellowship to meet at least once each month, and make such recommendations to the church as they may deem necessary.
- c) The Deacon Fellowship shall elect annually a chairman, vice chairman, and a secretary.
- d) Special meeting may be called by the Pastor or chairman of the Deacon Fellowship as the need arises.

D. Vacancy of Deacon Office

- a) The office of Deacon shall be vacated by death.
- b) The office of Deacon shall be vacated by resignation.
- c) The office of Deacon shall be vacated by termination by action of the church. Such action must take place in a business meeting called for that specific purpose.

Article III. Elected Church Organizational Leadership

Section 1. Qualifications

- A. All persons holding office in the teaching ministry of Union Baptist Church shall be active members of the church. They must be known to not be novice.
- B. Before accepting any office, persons should understand that close cooperation must exist between all workers, various officers, associates, and leaders.
- C. Each officer, leader, teacher, and associate must be a good example for Christ before other people. They must be of good report before their fellowmen.
- D. Any non-member invited to preach, teach, or lead in any organization of the church should be of the same faith, having previously been approved by the Pastor and Ministerial Staff.

Section 2. Election

All church officers and organizational leadership shall be nominated by the Nominating committee and elected by the church.

Section 3. Church Clerk

The Church Clerk shall be elected annually. The clerk shall keep an accurate record of all church business which shall be approved at each business meeting, and at any such time that the church as a body is called into business session. It is the clerk's responsibility that minutes are recorded at each business session. The clerk will keep an accurate membership roll and should ask for adequate help in this, should the need arise. The clerk shall grant or reject requisitions for church letters only after the church has voted on such. The church shall pay all postage and other expenses incurred on behalf of the church. The Deacon Secretary shall serve as assistant to the Church Clerk.

Section 4. Church Treasurer

The Church Treasurer shall pay all bills incurred under the church budget, and all other bills as the church might direct from the funds entrusted to the care of the Finance Committee. The Church Treasurer shall receive and disburse the same under the direction of the budget approved by the church. All money shall be deposited in a reputable bank that has been designated by the church. The Church Treasurer and Finance Committee shall make a monthly report available to the church. These reports are to be prepared and copied for the church membership to view. All regular church offerings are to be counted by those so designated by the church. Monthly bank statements and cancelled checks shall be made available to the Finance Committee upon request. The Church Treasurer shall serve as a financial secretary, having the responsibility of keeping such records, and shall record all money according to the individual's giving. Such contributions are to be confidential. The Church Treasurer shall distribute to those who give as many reports as the church may designate. All postage and other expenses incurred shall be paid by the church.

Section 5. Nominating Committee

All organizations shall be under the control of the church, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church. The Deacon Fellowship shall recommend to the the Nominating Committee two names to be elected by the church body. The Nominating Committee shall consist of three (3) persons including the Sunday School Superintendent, the Pastor and Ministerial Staff. By the second Sunday of August a written list of all church elected officers, workers, church committees, and special dates shall be presented to the church body for approval (by vote of the church) to take office the first Sunday of September.

Section 6. Finance Committee

A. Membership

- a) The Finance Committee shall be composed of five (5) members.
- b) The chairman and vice chairman of the Deacon Fellowship shall serve as ex-officio members.
- c) The Deacon Fellowship will also select a third person other than the chairman and vice chairman to serve on the Finance Committee.
- d) The Church Treasurer shall serve as an ex-officio member.
- e) The Nominating Committee shall select one (1) layman at large from the membership to serve as a member of the Finance Committee.
- f) The Pastor and Ministerial Staff shall serve as ex-officio members of the Finance Committee.

B. Duties

- a) The Finance Committee shall have the responsibility of preparing an annual budget each year. The prepared budget will be voted on prior to the beginning of the new upcoming fiscal year at the regular quarterly business meeting.
- b) The Finance Committee shall administer disbursement of funds in accordance with the church approved budget.
- c) The Finance Committee shall make recommendations to the church concerning any disbursements not included in the church budget.
- d) The Finance Committee shall review periodically the expenditures in terms of the budget allocations.
- e) Select and develop activities that will communicate the stewardship message to the church body.

Article IV. Church Meetings

Section 1. Worship Services

The regular worship services of the church shall be on Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and on Wednesday evening (prayer and Bible Study). Bible Study shall be held each Sunday Morning. Special services may be held as directed.

Section 2. Business Meetings

- A. Regular business meetings of the church shall be held quarterly.
- B. Special business meetings of the church for transactions of business may be called by the Pastor, the ministerial staff, the Chairman of the Deacon Fellowship, or from any standing committee upon written request from that committee. At least one week's notice shall be given for all special meetings.
- C. The business of the church will be conducted according to Roberts' Rules of Order. In the absence of the Pastor, an Associate Pastor shall serve as moderator of the meeting. The Holy Word of God shall always supersede Roberts' Rules of Order whenever applicable.
- D. Business meetings will be conducted as follows:
 - a) Church business meetings shall be conducted by an agenda.
 - b) All agenda items shall be submitted in writing two weeks prior to the regular business meeting to the church office.
- E. Quorums

All regular and special business meetings shall require ten percent (10) of the resident membership to be present to constitute a quorum.
- F. Voting Members

All voting members must be age fifteen (15) and above to be eligible to vote in regular business meetings and special business meetings.

Article V. Licensing and Ordaining Ministers

- A. Any male member giving evidence of being led by God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, to preach the Gospel, and after having shown scriptural gifts and having shown proof in personal interest, through individual effort toward the unsaved can be licensed by a two thirds majority of the church quorum. Before licensing, a committee shall be appointed for the purpose of close investigation. Following the committee's report, the licensing must await a period of one week before any action can be taken.

- B. The church shall ordain any male person who has been called by another Baptist church of like faith, a parachurch ministry, or into mission work. Following his call to ministry and upon the written request for ordination, the church shall call an ordination council together consisting of the Pastor, ministerial staff, the Deacon Fellowship, and various pastors of like faith for the purpose of examining the candidate for ordination. Following the report of the ordination council a period of one week must take place between the examination and the ordination service itself.

Article VI. Amendments

This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended at any regular business meeting of the church by a two thirds vote of the members present, provided such amendment has been presented to the church in writing at the previous business meeting.

This Constitution and By-Laws as written here supersedes all others that have previously existed. Prepared by the elected committee and approved by the vote of the church in regular business meeting on this _____ day of _____ 2010.

Article VII. The Baptist Faith And Message

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-

11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing

the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

VIII. 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 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.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; 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; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all

nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Article VIII. The Church Covenant

Church Covenant

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

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love ; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; To promote its prosperity and spirituality ; to sustain its worship, ordinance, discipline, and doctrines; To contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations. We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; To walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; To avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; To abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

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

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