

**CONSTITUTION**

**12/6/2017**

**OF**

**FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH**

**OF**

**KIRKSVILLE, MISSOURI**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the members of Faith Baptist Church, do hereby establish and adopt the following articles as the constitution to which we and all subsequent members do covenant to submit ourselves.

**ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this local assembly shall be **FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH** which is located in Kirksville, Missouri. The business name **FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH OF KIRKSVILLE (Incorporated)**. Faith Baptist Church is committed to the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27) and thereby “to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24).

**ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

The purpose of this organization as established under the by-laws of this constitution is to facilitate the business activities in the acquiring and holding of real estate, the collecting and disbursing of money and the appointment of authorized Trustees of the church. The foremost purpose of Faith Baptist Church, in love and obedience to her Savior and covenant Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, is to worship the triune God in spirit and truth (John 4:24) by continuing steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in observing the ordinances, and in prayers (Acts 2:42), which require the members to assemble themselves together (Hebs. 10:25) that the saints might be perfected for the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:12) and through this ministry that the elect might be saved (II Tim. 2:10; John 17:2; Matt. 28:18-20) and that the members of this church, both individually and collectively, through a proper exercise of spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 13; Roms. 12:6) sovereignty bestowed at regeneration (1 Cor. 12:13, 18), might be built up in the unity of the faith (Eph. 4:13) unto godliness (Titus 1:1) to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15) so each member, by good works, might glorify the Father who is in heaven (Matt. 5:16).

**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 Spirit, 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 her prosperity and spirituality; to sustain her worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to 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 personal devotion; to educate our children religiously; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger, to be zealous in our efforts to advance the church and kingdom of our Savior.

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 and 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.

### **ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

Anyone professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord, Master and Savior, giving evidence of change of heart and declaring himself in accord with the principles, practices and doctrines of this Church may become a candidate for church membership.

#### **Section 1: Qualifications for Membership**

It is resolved that this church receives into her membership:

- I. Those who profess faith in Christ and come for baptism.
- II. Those who come by letter from a church of like faith and order and baptized by a church of like faith and order.
- III. Upon profession of faith in Christ as their Savior and their statement that they have been scripturally baptized and that it is impossible or impractical to secure a letter.

Their coming by statement must be for a reason acceptable to the Church. Letters of dismissal will be granted only to churches of like faith and order, upon the request of the church.

## Section 2: Termination of Membership

As is the case with receiving members, so the termination of church membership must be governed by biblical principles. Accordingly, membership in Faith Baptist Church will be terminated in one of the following three ways:

- I. Death: Physical death obviously warrants the removal of membership from the church roll.
- II. Transfer of membership to another church: Since the New Testament norm for all Christians is that they be members of true local churches, any person leaving the membership of Faith Baptist Church should seek to transfer membership to another true church as soon as possible. We realize that this process may sometimes require a transitional period, and the elders will take such things into account when dealing with a member's transfer of membership. It will be the duty of the elders to handle transfer of membership in a way that accords with scriptural principles.
- III. Exclusion
  - A. Exclusion, not under discipline: In some cases, a person's membership may need to be terminated for reasons which, in the judgment of the church, may not warrant discipline. Such cases may include the resignation of a member who concludes that he is not a Christian; the resignation of a member who requests to be relieved from his church covenant obligations for reasons that the church or its Elders may deem satisfactory; or the relocation of a member who no longer remains in contact with the church. The church shall exclude such persons from its membership roll, without the exercise of church discipline.
  - B. Exclusion by excommunication: According to the Holy Scripture, a church must exclude from its membership any person who persists in holding or teaching serious doctrinal heresies, or who persists in conduct which is either publicly scandalous, or blatantly inconsistent with his Christian profession, or who persists in disturbing the unity and peace of the church, or who fail to attend the worship services without just cause (Matt. 18:15ff; 1 Cor. 5:1ff; Rom. 16:17; Tit. 3:10, 11; Heb. 10:25).
    1. Excommunication should ordinarily be a last resort of the church, and often should not be exercised until milder forms of biblical discipline have been meekly, lovingly and prayerfully utilized in a sincere effort to restore the offending member. Such restorative efforts may include public verbal reproof (Matt. 18:17; 1 Tim. 5:20), and temporary suspension of certain privileges of church membership, such as the right to vote or participate in the Lord's Supper (Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:9-11; 2 Thess. 3:6,14).
    2. When other scriptural means of restoring an offender have failed, the church must be willing to excommunicate an offending member

(Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor. 5:13). Persons may be excommunicated only by a majority vote of the church (2 Cor. 2:6). As stated above, excommunication should ordinarily be a last resort. However, since some cases of sin (either moral or doctrinal) are so scandalous, gross and heinous in their nature, the church has a scriptural right and mandate to immediately excommunicate those guilty of such sins if the honor of Christ and His church necessitate this.

3. After the church excommunicates an offending member, the congregation will treat the former member as an unbeliever (Matt. 18:17). The elders will encourage disciplined individuals, who are not causing divisions in the body, to continue attending services to hear God's Word so that it would lead to their repentance. If an excommunicated former member continues in unrepentant sin and continues to identify with Christ, church members should have minimal contact with him including refusing to have any meal together that would be perceived as condoning the unrepentant individual's sin. (1 Cor. 5:11)
4. All acts of church discipline, including excommunication, must be lovingly carried out for the glory of Christ, welfare and purity of the church (1 Cor. 5:6), with the goal of eventually restoring the offender to good standing in the church (2 Cor. 2:7).

### **Section 3: Restoration to Membership**

Since full restoration is the goal of all church discipline, all members of the church should unite in its exercise when necessary, praying earnestly for God's gracious, restorative blessing upon those who have been disciplined. It is also both the duty and privilege of the church to forgive and to restore to full membership a disciplined or excommunicated member upon satisfactory evidence of repentance (2 Cor. 2:6-8). Thus any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored upon evidence of his repentance to the elders and restoration by a simple majority vote of the church.

## **ARTICLE IV – WHAT WE BELIEVE**

### **Section 1: General Beliefs**

- The **Bible** is God's verbally inspired Word and therefore our final authority.
- The one and only triune **God** is perfectly holy, infinite in power, knowledge and wisdom, and is full of mercy and grace. He created the world as stated in the Bible and He sustains it. All are accountable to Him and should honor, praise and serve Him.
- All **men** are sinners and are totally depraved. All will be judged by God and punished forever unless they are saved by His grace.

- **Salvation** is of the Lord and comes because of His mercy and grace. The Father planned it, the Son paid for it, and the Holy Spirit provides it.
- **Jesus Christ** is God and man. He was virgin born, without sin, died for our sin, arose again, ascended to Heaven, and will return to the Earth at the set time.
- A person is **saved** when he received Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, he receives Christ when he repents toward God and believes on Christ as his Savior.
- A saved person has been **born again** and will live a new kind of life. He will seek to be like his Savior in life and service.
- A saved person should **join a New Testament Church** by baptism and should support it with his time, talent and money.
- **Baptism** is the immersion of a **believer** by a New Testament Church to picture how Christ died for his (believer's) sin, and rose again for him.
- **A New Testament Baptist Church** is an assembly of baptized believers governed according to the New Testament and seeking to carry out the Great Commission.
- **Jesus is coming again** to take the saved and give them new bodies and reward them, to punish the lost and to set up His perfect kingdom upon the Earth.

Addendum: For a fuller explanation of what we believe see “**The New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith.**” (Copies are available)

## **Section 2: Our Views of Marriage and Sexual Ethics**

The London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 clearly affirms in chapter 25, paragraph 1 that “Marriage is to be between one man and one woman; neither is it lawful for any men to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband.” It seems necessary because of the present widespread degradation of sexual morality in our culture to state our views of this matter more specifically and formally.

- We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning, and that is marriage sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive, covenantal union, as delineated in Scripture.
- We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.
- We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexual conduct, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, any use of pornography or any attempt to

change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

- We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
- We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the church.
- We believe, nevertheless, in spite of the kindness to be shown to sinners, impenitence in the aforementioned sins is inconsistent with membership in Faith Baptist Church and exposes any member to the discipline of the church including ultimately excommunication.
- Therefore as a result of these perspectives marriage ceremonies performed in any facility owned, leased, or rented by this church will only be those ceremonies that are sanctioned by God as reflected in the above perspectives.

Major portions of Scripture from which these beliefs are drawn are as follows: Genesis 1:27-28; Genesis 2:18-25; Exodus 20:14; Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-20; Ephesians 5:22-33; Hebrews 13:4.

For a further explanation, please reference "The Nashville Statement" which the Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood released on August 29, 2017.

### **Section 3: Our Views of the Sanctity of Life**

The London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 clearly affirms the abiding validity of the moral law as summarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments. We are, thus, bound as a church by the Sixth Commandment: "You shall not murder" and the sanctity of life which it enshrines. Nevertheless, because of the abounding ignorance of God's law and its most basic implications in our society, we express our faith in the sanctity of life as follows: We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God. Human life at all stages—including conception, pre-born, and end of life—should be valued and respected (Psalm 51; 139).

### **Section 4: Our Views on Women being Drafted in the Military**

The London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 clearly affirms that God created males and females as equals to live in distinct responsibilities and roles. Based upon the testimony of Scripture, God only had men counted for war (Num. 1:2-3), chosen for war (1 Sam. 8:11), and sent to war (Gen. 14:14-15). In these contexts, women stayed at home with the children (Deut. 3:19-20) to await the men's return from battle (1 Sam. 18:6-7). In response to God's revelation, we stand in opposition to any efforts by the government to require women to register for the military draft or to be drafted into military service.

## **ARTICLE V – PASTORS**

The Pastors are appointed by the church. The Pastors are the overseers, under shepherds, rulers (guides) of the church. Their qualifications and other duties are recorded in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. They are to rule over and superintend the work of the church, without lording over the congregation, as under shepherds, rules by virtue of their spiritual gifts exercised in a love for the church that centers in Christ Jesus, its Lord and Savior. They are to feed the flock over which the Holy Spirit has made them overseers (Acts 20:28-32; Hebs. 13:7, 17; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). They are to teach and preach the whole counsel of God, as gifted by Christ.

## **ARTICLE VI – DEACONS**

The Deacons shall be appointed as the need arises by the vote of the congregation. They shall be publicly ordained to fulfill their office indefinitely and shall be removed from the office by death, voluntary resignation and upon approval of the church for disciplinary reasons due to unfaithfulness to their duties and responsibilities. The deacons are officially recognized servants in the local church (Acts 6:1-7; I Tim. 3:8-10; 12-13). The function and duties of the deacons are:

- I. To minister to the outward needs of the membership of the church, showing mercy with cheerfulness to those in special need.
- II. To care for the material interest of the church; such as buildings, properties and land, and to recommend action to the church pertaining to their interests when needed.
- III. To superintend the collection and recording of church offerings.
- IV. Can also be a Trustee of the church where legal action is required.
- V. To assist in the spiritual unity and growth of the church the Holy Spirit.

## **ARTICLE VII – TRUSTEES**

The church shall appoint Trustees as required to act on behalf of the church in legal matters concerning the disbursing of funds for property, both buying and selling, and to perform such other business concerns of the church as shall from time to time be assigned to them by the church. The Trustees shall have no authority to sell, lease, give away or dispose of in any manner church property to exceed one hundred dollars in value; or to mortgage or encumber the same with debt to exceed the above amount except as the church shall order by corporate act.

## **ARTICLE VIII – FINANCIAL SECRETARY/TREASURER**

The church shall appoint a Financial Secretary/Treasurer from its membership to receive all monies of the church and apply the same as directed by the church; keep a true and fair record of

accounts and make a full report to the church at each quarterly Business Meeting and when otherwise directed by the church.

## **ARTICLE IX – CHURCH CLERK**

The church shall appoint from its membership a Church Clerk. He shall keep a fair and complete record of the proceedings of the church, have charge of all records, keep a register of all members of the church, and write letters of dismissal.

## **ARTICLE X – BUSINESS MEETING**

- I. Routine Business Meetings – shall be conducted in accordance with this rule on Church order: The regular meetings of the church will be sufficient for both purposes of worship and business. A pastor (or in his absence, any brother whom the church may appoint) shall act a moderator. The moderator will keep order, state and explain all propositions. According to Divine order, the woman is subordinate to the man (Eph. 5:23-24; Gen. 3:16; I Cor. 11:3). In public worship the responsibility for praying speaking, and teaching is not placed upon the woman by upon the man (I Cor. 14:34-35; I Tim. 2:11-12).
- II. Quarterly Business Meetings – shall be held in the months of April, July, October and January.
- III. Special Business Meetings – Special Business Meetings may be called for three reasons. First, the majority of the congregation may call a meeting for the purpose of calling or dismissing a Pastor, which shall be given public notice at a Lord’s Day worship service for one preceding Sunday. Second, a Special Business Meeting may be called by the majority vote of the church for amendments to this Constitution provided that notice of the proposed amendment shall have been given from the pulpit on two Sundays prior to the meeting at which action is desired. Third, without prior notice a Special Business Meeting may be called by the majority vote of the church or by the pastors to vote on church financial matters or to vote to receive new church members.
- IV. Rules of Decorum – A Pastor (or in his absence, any brother whom the Church may appoint) shall act as moderator and decide all votes and rules of order. (1) Any male member who wishes to present any question to the church must address the moderator and be given the floor by the moderator. (2) Any member who does not understand a proposition to be voted upon, may ask a question concerning the proposition at any time. (3) To reconsider a motion that has been passed, someone who voted for the motion must make the motion to reconsider, and must be sustained by majority. This must take place in the same Business Meeting. (4) A motion to adjourn is always in order and takes precedence over all other motions, except when someone is speaking or a vote is being taken is not debatable. (5) Fifty (50) percent of the membership present constitutes a quorum to conduct business meeting.

## **V. Procedure of Business**

- (1) Moderator calls the church to order to take care of the business that comes before the church.
- (2) Clerk to read the minutes of the last business meeting. Ask for correction or approval of the minutes of the last meeting.
- (3) If no corrections to Clerk's report, they will stand approved as the have been read.
- (4) Financial Secretary/Treasurer's report to be read and if no corrections the report will stand approved as read.
- (5) Unfinished Business.
- (6) Correspondence, if any, to be read by Clerk.
- (7) New business. If no other business.
- (8) A motion to adjourn is always in order. The motion to adjourn should be until the regular meeting or by the call of the Pastor or church.

#### **ARTICLE XI – DISSOLUTION**

- I. This church shall have the right to own, buy, or sell tangible properties, both real and personal, in its own name, through properly elected authorized Trustees.
- II. In the event a decision is made by the church to dissolve the corporation known as Faith Baptist Church of Kirksville, Missouri, provision shall be made by vote of the church previous to dissolution: (1) to satisfy all its debts, and (2) then assign all its assets or holdings to the Lord as the church sees fit.
- III. None of the assets or holdings of the church shall be divided among its members or given to any individual.