

OUR CONSTITUTION

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**ARTICLE I
NAME**

This church shall be known as the ***Faith Missionary Baptist Church***, located at 8075 E. Hoxie Rd, Traverse City, Michigan.

1. We use the term “Faith” because the membership of the _____ Church are saved people and salvation is by Grace through Faith, (Ro.1:16-17; 10:17; Ep.2:8-9; Tit.3:5).

2. We use the term “Missionary” because it is our mission to _____ preach the gospel to every creature as our LORD commanded, (Mt.28:19-20; Mk.16:15; Jn 20:21).

3. We use the term “Baptist” to signify that we are doctrinally _____ related to the Church of the New Testament and to an early group of saints by this name. We hold and seek to practice the following _____ beliefs which make our Baptist position distinctive:

- a. The Bible is the only authority for faith and _____ practice.
- b. Salvation is by grace.
- c. Regenerate (born again) church membership.
- d. Believers baptism by immersion.
- e. LORD’S Supper is symbolic only.
- f. Priesthood of believers.
- g. Separation of Church and State.
- h. Religious liberty for all.
- i. Each Church is self-governing and democratic _____ under the command of its head, Jesus Christ.
- j. Total depravity of man.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

The ultimate purpose of the Church shall be to glorify God our Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, our LORD and Saviour. To this end we shall endeavor to walk in holiness ourselves, and to seek for the spiritual enrichment of every believer, and for the conversion to God of unsaved men everywhere.

ARTICLE III CHURCH GOVERNMENT

The Church shall be a self-governing body with Christ as the Head, and no person or persons shall ever have any authority over its actions. The will of Christ will be supreme and the New Testament shall be the only law of the Church.

Any member of the Church in good standing shall be eligible to vote in the business meetings of the Church. Those members in good standing present at a duly called business meeting shall constitute a quorum. All business legally binding the Deacons or trustees is to be voted on by the members 18 years of age and older.

ARTICLE IV ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. OF THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible as originally written was verbally inspired and the product of Spirit-controlled men and therefore is

truth without any admixture of error for its matter and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction (2S.23:2; Ps.119:111; Pr.30:5-6; Lu.16:29-31; Jn.17:17; Ac.1:16; Ro.3:1-4; 2Ti.3:16-17; 2Pe.1:21; Re.22:18-19). It has the Holy Spirit for its author, and salvation for its end (Mk.16:1,6; Jn.5:38-39; Ac.11:14; Ro.1:16; 2Ti.3:15; 1Pe.1:10-12). It reveals the principles by which the Son will judge us (Lu.10:10-16; 12:47-48; Jn.12:47-48; Ro.2:12; 1Co. 4:3-4), and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world the true center of Christian union (1Co.1:10; Ep. 4:3-6; Ph. 2:1-2; 3:16; 1Pe. 4:11) and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be tried (Ps.119:59-60; Is.8:20; Ac.17:11; 2Co.13:5; Ep.6:17; Ph.1:9-11; Jude 3).

2. OF THE TRUE GOD

We believe there is one, and only one living and true God; an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is Jehovah, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth (Ge.1:1; Ps.83:18; 147:5; Je.10:10; Jn.4:24; Ro.1:20; He.3:4; 11:6); inexpressibly glorious in Holiness (Ex.15:11; Is.6:3; 1Pe.1:15-16; Re.4:6-8), and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love (Je.2:12-13; Mt.10:37; Mk.12:30; Re.4:11).

In the unity of the God-Head, there are three persons; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Mt.28:19; Jn.15:26; 1Co.12:4-6; 2Co.13:14; 1Jn.5:7); equal in every divine perfection, (Jn.5:17; 10:30; 14:23; 17:5; Ac. 5:3-4; 2Co.2:10-11; Ph.2:5-6) and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (2Co.13:14; Ep.2:18; Re.1:4-5, comp.2:7).

a. We believe the Father is God; a perfect merciful, holy and righteous being (Mt.5:48; Lu. 6:36; Jn.17:1-3, 11, 25). He sent the Son to earth (Jn.5:30, 36, 37; 20:21; 1Jn.4:14). He delivers all things to the Son, including the lost sheep of the human race, and draws these men to Christ (Mt.11:27; Jn.3:35; 6:37, 44; 10:29). He answers prayer, and commits all judgment to the Son (Mt.6:6; Jn.5:22).

b. We believe the LORD Jesus Christ is God the Son (He.1:8). He was before all things and creator of all things (Col.1:16-17). He was born of a virgin (without a human father) and took on Himself human nature (being made in the likeness of man and in fashion as a man) yet without sin! He was very God, and very man, yet one Christ! He was crucified for sinners, was buried, and arose the third day according to the scriptures (Ro.5:8; 8:3; 9:5; 1Co.15:3-4; Ph.2:7-8; He.2:14-17; 4:15) thereby purchasing an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven for all those whom the Father had given Him. He is the only mediator between God and man (Jn.17:2; 1Ti.2:5; He.9:15). He is head of His church and the judge of the world (Ac.10:42; Col.1:18).

c. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person; equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature (Mt.28:19; Lu.1:35). He was active in the creation (Ge.1:1-3). He, in relation to the unbelieving world, restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled (2Th.2:7-8). He convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment (Jn.16:8-11). He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching the testimony (Ac.5:30-32). He is

the agent in the new-birth (Jn.3:5-6). He seals, indwells, guides, comforts, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer (Jn.14:16-17, 26).

3. OF THE DEVIL, OR SATAN

We believe in the person of Satan; he is the unholy god of this age, and the author and prince of all the powers of darkness, and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire (Is.14:12; Eze.28; Mt. 4:1-2; Jn. 8:44; 2Co.4:4; Ep.2:2; 6:11-12; Re.20:10).

4. OF THE CREATION

We accept the Genesis account of creation and believe that man came by direct creation of God and not by evolution (Genesis Chapters 1 and 2; Jn.1:3; Col.1:16-17).

5. OF THE FALL OF MAN

We believe man was created in holiness under the law of his Maker (Ge.1:27; 2:16-17; Ec. 7:29; Ac.17:26-29), but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy estate (Ge.3:6-24; Ro.5:12), in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners (Ps.51:5; Jn.3:6; Ro.5:15-19); not by constraint, but by choice (Ge.6:12; Is.53:6; Ro.3:9-18), being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil, and under just condemnation to eternal ruin (Mt.20:15; Ro.1:32; 2:1-16; Ga.3:10; Eph.2:1-3), without defense or excuse (Ez.18:19-20; Ro.1:20; 3:19; Ga.3:22).

6. OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH

We believe Jesus Christ was begotten of the Father, by the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner; born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man has ever been born or ever can be born of woman. He is **both** the Son of God, and God the Son (Ge.3:15; Mt.1:18-25; Lu.1:34-35; Jn.1:14).

7. OF THE WAY OF SALVATION

We believe the way of salvation of sinners is wholly by grace (Mt.18:11; Ac.15:11; 1Co.3:5, 7; Ep.2:8; 1Jn.4:10), through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God (Jn.1:1-14; 3:16; He.4:14; 12:24), who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin (2Co.5:21; Ph.2:6-7; He.2:9, 14). He honored the divine law by His personal obedience (Is.42:21; Ro.3:21; Ga.4:4-5; Ph.2:8), and by His death made full atonement for our sins (Is.53:4-5; Mt.20:28; Ro.3:21-26; 4:25; 1Co.15:1-3; He.9:13-15; 1Jn.2:2; 4:10); that having risen from the dead He is now enthroned in heaven (Col.3:1-4; He.1:3; 8:1), and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections. He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate, and all sufficient Saviour (Ps.34; 89:19; He.7:25-26).

8. OF GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE

We believe election is the eternal purpose of God according to which He graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners (Jn.15:16; Ro.11:5-6; Ep.1:3-14; 2Ti.1:8-9; 1Pe.1:1-2; 1Jn. 4:19). It is perfectly consistent with the free agency of man and comprehends all the means in connection with the end (Mt.20:16; Jn.10:16; Ac.13:48; 15:14; 2Th.2:13-14).

It is the most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness; being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable (Ex.33:18-19; Je.31:3; Ro.9:23-24; 11:28,32-36; Ep.1:11; 2Ti.1:9; Ja.1:17-18). It utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of His free mercy (Lu.18:7; Ro.3:27; 4:16; 1Co.1:26-27; 4:7; 15:10; Col.3:12; 1Th.2:12-13; 1Pe.2:9; 5:10).

It encourages the use of means in the highest degree (Jn.6:37-40; 1Co.9:22; 2Ti.2:10; 2Pe.1:10). It may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel (1Th.1:4-10). It is the foundation of Christian assurance (Is.42:16; Ro.8:28-31; 11:29), and to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence (Ph.3:12; He.6:11; 2Pe.1:10-11).

9. OF GRACE IN REGENERATION

We believe in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again (Jn.3:3; 1Co.2:14; Tit 3:5; Re.21:27). Regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind (De.30:6; Ez.36:26; Ro.2:28-29; 5:5; 2Co.5:17; 1Jn.4:7-8); that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension, by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth (Jn.1:13; 3:8; 1Co.1:30; Ph.2:13; Ja.1:16-18), so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel (Ep.4:20-24; Col.3:9-11; 1Pe.1:22-25; 1Jn.5:1). The proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life (Mt.3:8-10; 7:20; Ro.8:9; Ga.5:16-23; Ep.2:14-21; 5:9; 1Jn.5:4, 18).

10. OF REPENTANCE AND FAITH

We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God (Mk.1:15; Ac.11:18; Ep.2:8; 1Jn.5:1); whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and the way of salvation by Christ (Jn.16:8; Ac.2:37-38; 16:30-31), we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy (Ps.51; Lu.18:13; 15:18-21; Ro.10:12-13; Ja.4:7-10; 2Co.7: 9-11). We heartily receive the LORD Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and rely on Him alone as the only and all sufficient Saviour (Ps.2:6; Ac.3:22-23; Ro.10:9-11; 2Ti.1:12; He.1:8; 4:14; 7:25).

11. OF THE FREENESS OF SALVATION

We believe the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel (Is.55:1; Lu.14:17; Re.22:17); that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith (Mk.1:15; Ro.1:15-17; 16:25-26), and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel (Pr.1:24; Mt.23:37; Jn.5:40; Ac.13:46; Ro.9:32-33). This rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation (Mt.11:20; Lu.19:27; Jn.3:19; 2Th.1:8).

12. OF JUSTIFICATION

We believe the great gospel blessing which Christ (Jn.1:16; Ep.3:8) secures to such as believe in Him is justification (Is.53:11-12; Ac.13:39; Ro.8:1); that justification includes the pardon of sin (Zec.13:1; Mt.9:6; Ac.10:43; Ro.5:9), and the promise of eternal life on the principles of righteousness (Ro.5:17,21; Tit.3:5-7; 1Pe.3:7; 1Jn.2:25). It is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness

which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood (Ro.4:4-5; 5:21; 6:23; Ph.3:7-9).by virtue of faith, His perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God (Ro.3:24-26; 4:23-25; 5:19; 1Jn. 2:12). It brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity (Mt.6:33; Ro.5:1-3, 11; 1Co.1:30; 1Ti.4:8).

13. OF SANCTIFICATION

We believe sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of His holiness (2Co.7:1; 13:9; Ep.1:4, 1Th.4:3; 5:23); that it is a progressive work (Pr.4:18; He.6:1; 2Pe.1:5-8; Ph.3:12-16); that it is begun in regeneration (Jn.3:6; Ro.8:5; Ph.1:9-11; 1Jn.2:29), and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means; especially the Word of God, self examination, self denial, watchfulness, and prayer (Mt.26:41; Lu. 9:23; 11:35; 2Co.13:5; Ep.4:11-12,30; 6:18; Ph.2:12-13; 1Pe.2:2; 2 Pe.3:18).

14. OF PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERENCE

We believe those whom God has accepted in the Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by His Spirit, and given the precious faith, can neither totally or finally fall from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere; seeing the gifts and callings of God are without repentance (Ro.11:29), they shall surely be kept by the power of God unto salvation (1Pe.1:5). They are engraven upon the palms of His hands, and their names have been written in the book of life from all eternity (Is.49:16; Jn.10:28-29; Re.17:8).

We believe such as truly believe in the LORD Jesus, and love Him in sincerity, endeavoring to walk in all good conscience before Him, may in this life be assured they are in a state of grace. We further believe that believers manifest their assurance by good works (2Pe.1:5-11), done in obedience to God's commandments (1Jn.2:3-5,19; 3:14-24); these good works being fruits and evidence of a true and lively faith (Ph.1:6,11; Ja.2:18-22); that by good works they edify their brethren (Mt.5:16), stop the mouths of adversaries (1Pe.2:15), and glorify God, whose workmanship they are; created in Christ Jesus unto good works (Ep.2:10; 2Ti.2:19).

15. OF THE HARMONY OF THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

We believe the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government (Ps.19:7; Mt.5:17; Lu.16:17; Ro.3:20, 31; 4:1-5); that it is holy, just, and good (Ps.119; Ro.7:7, 12-14, 22; Ga.3:21); and that the inability which the scriptures ascribe to fallen man to fulfill its precepts arises entirely from their love of sin (Jos.24:19; Je.13:23; Jn.5:44; 6:44; Ro.8:7-8); to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is the one great end of the gospel, and the means of grace connected with the establishment of the New Testament Church (Ro.8:2-4;10:4; He.8:10; 12:14; Jude 20-21).

16. OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

We believe that a new testament church is a local, visible, congregation of scripturally baptized believers (Mt.28:19; Ac.2:41; 1Co.12:13; Ep.4:5) associated by covenant in the faith and

fellowship of the gospel (Ac.2:42; 1Co.5:12-13; 2Co.8:5); observing the ordinances instituted by Christ (Mt.28:19-20) its only Head (Ep.1:20-23; 5:23); governed by His Laws alone (Ga.6:2; Ja.4:12). Such an assembly is the body of Christ in its locality (1Co.12:27), with which all the regenerated should affiliate, for this is the only kind of true church in the world today. The officers of ordination are pastors and deacons (Ep.4:11; Ph.1:1; 1Ti.3:8-13). Each assembly has the absolute right to self-government as led by the Holy Spirit, free from any interference whatsoever from any organization, group, convention, association or individual; that it is scriptural for assemblies to cooperate with each other for the furtherance of the gospel and the doctrines of the Word of God (Ac.15:1-31; 2Co.8:23-24; 11:8-9; Ph.4:15-16); but that each church is the sole human judge of the measure and method of its co-operation.

We believe only sound New Testament Baptist churches today preserve the essential apostolic faith and practice, and Christ's promise to build His Church has been fulfilled in only one kind of church; the first of which He organized during His earthly ministry (Mt.16:18), and gave to it, and to the others that should descend from it the great commission; that these true churches on earth alone possess the Divine authority (Mt.28:18); therefore, we brand as unscriptural open communion, alien baptism, pulpit affiliation with heretical ministers, mission boards, ecumenical-ism union-ism, modernism, modern convention-ism and association-ism, one church dictatorship, preacher-dictatorship and all kinds of evils arising out of these practices.

17. OF THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM

We believe Bible baptism is the dipping into water (Mt.3:1-17; Jn.4:1-2; Col.2:12) of a penitent believer (Ac.8:36-39) by the Divine authority of a true New Testament Baptist Church (Mt.28:18-20) in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; not in order to obtain the remission of sins, but to declare that the believer has already been saved by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Ro.6:1-11) and to picture in a most solemn emblem his death to sin and resurrection to walk in newness of life.

We believe it is a prerequisite to membership in the church and participation in the LORD'S Supper (Ac.2:41-42); that the ceremonial washing of sins is only pictorial (Ac.22:16; 1Pe.3:20-21); therefore all valid baptism must be administered by the authority of a true New Testament Baptist church, and any so-called Baptist church which knowingly receives alien immersion is not a scriptural Baptist Church and its ordinances are not valid.

18. OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe the LORD'S supper is not a sacrament, but a solemn symbolic ordinance placed in the church by our LORD (Mt.26:26-30); in which the members of the church observing the ordinance (1Co.11:18-23), by the use of unleavened bread and wine, commune not with one another, but with the LORD (1Co.10:16). It shows forth not their love for one another, but their LORD'S death till He comes (1Co.11:24-26). The one loaf of the supper points to the unity of the body observing it (1Co.10:17), which unity is essential to the scriptural observance of the ordinance (1Co.11:18-34).

19. OF THE LORD'S DAY

We believe the first day of the week is the LORD'S Day (Ac.20:7; 1Co.16:1-2; Re.1:10); that it is to be kept sacred to religious purposes (Ex.20:8; Ps.118:24; Re.1:10); that Christians should refrain from all secular labor and worldly recreations (Is.58:13-14); that they should devoutly use all the means of grace, both private and public, by which they may be drawn closer to God and provoked to holier living (He.10:25), and in preparation for the rest which remains for the people of God (He.4:3-11).

20. OF DIVINE HEALING

We believe sickness, together with every other disorder and evil in human life and the world, are the effect of sin. The New Testament clearly teaches that Christ "died for our sins" and that "He was made sin for us." Divine healing is not in the atonement made by Christ in the sense that salvation and the forgiveness of sin are in the atonement. The suffering and death of Christ was substitutionary, penal, and vicarious (1Co.15:3; 2Co.5: 21; 1Pe.2:24; 3:18).

It is nowhere taught in the Scriptures that Christ died for the effects of sin, but for sin. The effects of sin did not need a satisfactory penalty meted out, but sin did, because it was an infringement of His Law and will and an offense against God's Holiness. Christ therefore, bore the penalty of sin in His suffering and death.

We further believe that when Matthew 8:17 quotes Isaiah, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses," it was not that He took them in the sense that He died for them and put them away as He did the sins of the believer, but as the context clearly reveals by "bearing" them, in the sense of sympathetically bearing them, He took them away by healing the sick. The passage clearly refers to what took place during our LORD'S public ministry and not what took place in His death.

In His vicarious death, Christ bore the penalty of sin and accomplished a redemption which covers every possible effect of sin; and will therefore when He brings in full redemption, put an end to all sin and sickness, as well as to every other disorder in the world because of sin.

We believe that the present dispensation of Grace is distinctly and preeminently the time for spiritual salvation and of spiritual blessing in the heavenlies. During this dispensation the LORD heals the body in answer to believing prayer, but only according to His own sovereign will and for His glory, and not because He is bound to do so because of what He has accomplished on the cross.

The word of God does not make a promise of specific bodily healing to the Christian in the age of Grace, but the child of God can bring his physical needs to God in prayer just as he brings all his other burdens (Ph.4:6-7). Furthermore, the Word of God does not authorize public healing meetings of the Church Age (Ja.5:14).

21. OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment and arrangement, for the best interest and good order of human society (Ge.9:1-7; Ex.18:22; De.16:16; 2S.23:3; Je.30:21; Ro.13: 1-7) and that magistrates are to be prayed for (ITi.2:1-3), conscientiously honored, and obeyed

(Mt.22:21; Tit. 3:1; 1Pe.2:13-21); except in matters opposed to the will of the LORD Jesus Christ (Da.3:15-18; Mt.10:28; Ac.4:18-20; 5:29), who is the only LORD of men's conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth (Ps.72:11; Mt.23:10; Ro.14:4, 9-13; Re.19:16).

22. OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (Ge.18:23; Pr.12:26; Is.5:20; Mal.3:18; Ac.10:34-35; Ro.6:16); that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the LORD Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem (Pr.11:31; Ro.1:17; 6:18-22; 7:6; 1Co.11:32; 1Pe.4:17-18; 1Jn.2:29; 3:7); while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse (Ps.10:4; Is.55:6-7; 57:21; Jn.3:36, Ga.3:10; 1Jn 5:19); and this distinction holds among men both in and after death (Pr.10:24; 14:32; Ec.3:17; Mt.7:13-14 Lu.9:23-26;12:4-5;16:25; Jn.8:21-24;12:25-26).

23. OF GODLY LIVING

We believe born-again believers should abstain from all appearance of evil (1Th.5:22; 2Ti.2:19); that they are to live soberly, righteously in this present evil world (Tit.2:11-13); that they are to be careful to maintain good works (Ep.2:10; Tit.3:8); that they are to seek in every possible way to serve Jesus Christ (Ga.2:20; 2Co.5:15; 1Pe.4:2) and to walk worthy of their high and heavenly calling (Ep.4:1; Ph.3:12-14; He.3:1); that failure to do this will result in chastisement (He.12:5-14); and that continued disobedience proves one is a stranger to the saving grace of God. (Ro.6:11-12, 16-22; 1Jn.3:1-10).

We believe that marriage is God ordained and it is a Covenant (promise) before God, made between a man (male) and woman (female) existing as long as they shall live. Those living together in sexual union without marriage cannot be members of a New Testament Baptist Church (Ge.2:21-25; Mal.2:14; Ro.7:2; 13:12-13; 1Co.5:9-11).

We believe homosexuality (sodomy & lesbianism) are sinful practices described as an abomination before God and that same sex unions are nowhere sanctioned by God. Those guilty of such practices cannot be members of a New Testament Baptist Church (Lev.18:22; 20:13; Ro.1:25-32; 1Co.5:9-11; 6:9-10).

We also believe that euthanasia and abortion is a breaking of the sixth commandment and is a great offense to God. Only God has the authority to take life (Ex.20:13).

24. OF THE RESURRECTIONS

We believe that there will be a resurrection both of the righteous and the wicked (Da.12:2; Jn.5:28-29; Ac.24:15; 26:8); that there will be one thousand years of time intervening between the resurrection of the righteous and of the wicked (Re.20:4-6); that the dead in Christ shall rise first (1Co.15:23; 1Th.4:13-18); and that at the expiration of the one thousand years the wicked will be raised and judged (Re.20:4-11).

25. OF THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe the second coming of Christ to be pre-millennial, bodily, and visible, and that it will consist of two stages; His pre-tribulation appearance in the air, and His post-tribulation coming to earth; that at the rapture all those who sleep in Christ will be raised in glorified bodies, and all saints who live and remain on the earth will be translated that they should not see death, but will be caught up with Him in the air (I Th. 4:13-18).

We believe when He comes to earth (Mt. 24:29-31), He will sit on the throne of His glory for the time (Mt. 25:31; Re. 3:21), judging all men then living on earth (Is. 11:3-4), receiving the righteous into His Kingdom and sending the unrighteous into the everlasting fire (Mt. 25:31-46); that the throne of David is His throne (Is. 9:6-7; Lu. 1:32-33).

We believe the two stages of His coming will be separated by seven-years tribulation period (Da. 9:24-27; Re. 11:1-19); during which the woes depicted in the Book of Revelation will be poured out during the reign of the Antichrist (Re. 6-19); that during the tribulation period on earth, the judgment seat of Christ and the marriage of the Lamb will take place in heaven (Mt. 5:11-12; 1 Co. 3:10-15; 2 Co. 5:9-10; Re. 19:1-9); after which the LORD Jesus Christ will return with all the Saints for the battle of Armageddon (Re. 16:14-16; 19:11-21); that Satan will be bound a thousand years (Re. 20:1-3) while Christ is on the earth (Ps. 149:5-9; Da. 7:18, 27; 2 Ti. 2:12; Re. 1:5-6; 2:26-27; 5:9-10; 20:4-6).

26. OF THE FINAL STATES

We believe the earth will be redeemed from the curse of sin and fitted as the eternal dwelling place of the people of God (Is. 66:17; Mt. 5:5; Ro. 8:20-22); that the fitting of the earth for the eternal home of the redeemed will be by a process of purification by fire (2 Pe. 3:7-13); that finally the impenitent and incorrigibly wicked will be cast, both souls and resurrected bodies (Mt. 10:28; Mk. 9:42-49), into the lake of fire and brimstone (Re. 20:14-15), where they shall be punished forever (Re. 14:10-11). This is the second death!

27. OF THE WORK OF MISSIONS

We believe Jesus Christ gave to the New Testament Church, as an institution, a world-wide and age-lasting commission in Matthew 28:19-20 to make disciples of all nations; that the gospel is to be preached to every creature (Mk. 16:15; Ac. 1:8); that all men everywhere are responsible to repent and believe the gospel (Mk. 1:15); and that no accountable person will be saved without hearing and receiving the gospel (Mk. 16:16; Jn. 3:18-36; Ro. 1:16); that the heathen without the gospel are lost and will be judged by the light of nature and conscience (Ps. 19:1-4; Ro. 2:11-15).

We believe it is the duty of every New Testament Baptist Church to support missionaries who are sent out by the authority of a local church, who meet the Bible qualifications of a missionary (1 Ti. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:6-9), who furnish a doctrinal statement, and a disclosure of how mission funds are used, as they are directed by the Spirit of God and the majority vote of the whole congregation.

ARTICLE V CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the LORD Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and 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, ordinances, 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 devotion; 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 Saviour, 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 VI RULES OF CHURCH ORDER

1. Let all things be done unto edifying (1Co.14:26).
2. Let everything be done decently and in order (1Co.14:40).
3. Let all things be done with charity (1Co.16:14).
4. Do all in the name of the LORD Jesus (Col.3:17).

ARTICLE VII MEMBERSHIP

1. Any person professing faith in the LORD Jesus Christ, giving evidence of a change of heart, and adopting the views of faith and practice held by this church, as set forth in the foregoing Declaration may, upon baptism, be received into membership.

2. Members from other churches holding the same faith may be received by letters of recommendation and dismissing from their respective churches. This church shall not receive excluded members from other Baptist Churches unless the exclusion is proven to be unjustified.
3. By Statement; the Applicant shall state that he has been scripturally baptized as set forth in the articles of faith of this church, upon profession of faith in Christ, and that it is impossible or impractical to secure a letter.
4. Excluded members may be restored to membership on confession of their errors, and giving evidence of repentance.
5. Every person shall be received into membership of this church by a unanimous vote of members present at any regular meeting of the church. In the event of a dissenting vote the dissenter must present his objection to the Pastor and deacons. If it is a valid objection, it shall be taken to the church; if it is not a valid objection he shall be received into membership.
6. Each applicant for membership shall meet with the pastor for the purpose of instruction and encouragement. The deacons will perform this duty in event the pastor is away, sick or resigned.

ARTICLE VIII MEMBERSHIP DISMISSALS

1. By letter, providing the request comes from a recognized New Testament Baptist Church. Persons desiring to unite with a church differing in faith and order from the Faith Missionary Baptist Church may have a statement in regard to their Christian character, and under no circumstances is a person to receive a letter to unite with a church differing in faith and order.
2. Exclusion, losing all rights and privileges, such as voting and The LORD'S Supper. Members who have shown an unrepentant attitude and remain out of fellowship with the LORD and His church are not in good standing. e.g. Those who habitually live lives of sin such as drunkenness, adultery, dishonesty, unfaithfulness to God's cause, trouble making, slander, and opposition to the program of this church. Any member may be excluded for non-attendance as follows:
 - a. Any member of this church (unless providentially hindered) which shall be determined by the church in each case, who has not attended one of the regular services (namely Sunday Morning, Sunday eve, or Midweek prayer service), of this church for the period of three (3) months and given their financial support shall be considered disinterested in the church and shall be charged with non-attendance automatically.
 - b. Any member, after being contacted in person, or by letter, (if possible) by a committee selected by the church, that does not come or contact the church in some way and give suitable reasons for not coming and supporting the church, shall after thirty days be

automatically excluded from fellowship, rights, and privileges of this church, such as voting and observing the LORD'S supper.

c. No member after being charged with non-attendance (even though not yet excluded) shall be granted a letter to transfer membership to another church.

3. Any member may be excluded for heresy; causing division in the church by teaching or trying to get other members to accept their beliefs contrary to the set doctrines practiced by this church.

4. If a charge (for reasons in 2a, 2b, or 2c) is made against a member, absent or present, he shall, if practical, be cited to appear at the next meeting of the church to speak in his own defense. If a member refuses to appear before the church when cited, he shall be excluded. Every scriptural effort is to be made by the church to instruct and win such members back into fellowship with the LORD Jesus Christ and His church.

5. If any member of the church shall be guilty of any crime or gross impropriety, it shall be the duty of the member knowing the transgression, to see or write to the offender, and inform him of his intention to lay the matter before the church that he may appear in his own defense.

6. When common rumor charges a crime or gross impropriety against a member, it shall be the duty of the member hearing it to visit or write to the accused, and inform him of the reports; and if he has reason to believe they are true, to take the most judicious steps to ascertain the correctness, and lay the charge and the evidence before the church.

7. Any excluded member may be restored to fellowship and all rights, by simply giving evidence to the church of repentance of their waywardness and unfaithfulness and asking to be reinstated by a vote of the church.

ARTICLE IX OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

1. PASTOR

The pastor shall be a recognized, ordained New testament Baptist minister in good standing, who believes without reservation the Articles of faith and Rules of Order adopted by this church; who is the husband of not more than one living wife (neither one being divorced and remarried). He shall be called for an indefinite period of time. Voting shall be by ballot and three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for a call.

Only one pastoral candidate at a time will be heard and called or rejected; if rejected, the church will hear another candidate and will follow the procedure of calling, or rejecting, until the pulpit is filled.

The pastor shall give the church thirty days notice prior to leaving the pastorate of this church. He may or may not, as he sees fit, remain for that thirty day period. Should the church desire a

severance of pastoral relations; after meeting in a called business session duly announced from the pulpit at the regular services, for two weeks in advance of the said business session, he is to be given thirty days notice from that session.

It shall be the duty of the pastor to preach at the services of the church and to administer the ordinances of the church. He shall also be the moderator of the church and a member ex officio of all church committees and boards, and counselor with all church officers in their respective positions.

2. DEACONS

The church shall have as many deacons as it deems necessary. They may be elected as often as the church desires. Candidates may be presented to the church the same as any other matter of business.

The deacon shall be a man of good standing in the church who believes without reservation the Articles of Faith and Rules of Order adopted by this church, who is the husband of not more than one living wife (not either one being divorced and remarried). He shall be elected for an indefinite period of time. Voting shall be by ballot and three-fourths of votes cast shall be required for election.

Only one deacon candidate at a time shall be elected or rejected; if rejected, the church will follow the procedure of electing or rejecting until the quota of deacons is filled.

The deacon shall give the church thirty days notice prior to his leaving the office. Should the church desire to terminate the deacon's services, after meeting in a called business session, duly announced from the pulpit at two regular services in advance of the said business session, he is to be given his notice from the session, forthwith.

It shall be the duty of the deacons to perform those responsibilities as designated by the church; to visit the sick, prepare and distribute the elements of the LORD'S supper, to assume a general supervision of the temporal and spiritual interests of the church, to cooperate with the pastor in the performance of his duties, to serve as the pulpit supply committee and aid in baptismal services.

3. TRUSTEES

It is preferable that the deacons perform this position but in the absence of qualified deacons as many may be needed may be chosen. They should be faithful men who can carry out the business as directed by the church. They may carry out the legal matters required by the church. When without a pastor if there are no deacons the trustees may serve as the pulpit supply committee.

4. CHURCH TREASURER

He shall receive all church money and make the proper disbursements, recording and reporting regularly as to the same. His books shall be audited following the annual business meeting. It is

preferable that a deacon hold this office by the approval of the church. In the absence of a qualified deacon the pastor may appoint one with the approval of the church.

5. CHURCH CLERK

It shall be his duty to attend and keep record of all business meetings of the church, making reports of the same. It shall be his duty to keep the membership record book. It is preferable that a deacon hold this office. In the absence of a qualified deacon the pastor may appoint one with the approval of the church.

6. SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

He shall work, with the cooperation with the pastor, in directing the work of the Sunday school, in training, and choosing teachers, secretaries, curriculum, and departmental superintendents. These must be subject to the approval of the church.

7. OTHER OFFICERS

For the convenience and smooth operating of the church there may be other offices elected or appointed by the pastor and deacons and then their recommendations given to the church for approval.

ARTICLE X BUSINESS OF THE CHURCH

- 1.** All business of the church shall be conducted with the pastor as the moderator. In the pastor's absence, with his knowledge a deacon may moderate if urgent business may require it. When the church has no pastor the church shall elect a moderator until such time as they have acquired a pastor.
- 2.** This church shall conduct business meetings scheduled by the church or any time or service that the business of the church is necessary to be conducted for the orderly function of the church.
- 3.** The fiscal year shall be from January 1 to December 31.
- 4.** The Annual business meeting shall be held the second week of February. All dates and times shall be set by the church and announced at two regular meetings of the church.
- 5.** All new business which is to be brought up from the floor shall first be made known to the pastor and if the church has deacons at least two days before the deacons meeting.
- 6.** The New Directory for Baptist Churches by Hiscox shall be used as to parliamentary procedure and matters of church polity with the fact in mind that as a Baptist Church we are self

governing and may change manner of business to coincide with our own needs or desires as a church.

7. A quorum shall consist of the members present and in good standing; for the transaction of business.

ARTICLE XI RELATIONSHIPS AND ASSOCIATIONS

We believe that a New Testament Baptist church cannot “join” anything, but that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and spreading of the gospel; that each church is the independent judge of the method of cooperation.

This church shall not participate in “Union Meetings” where Baptist and Pedo-Baptist, Calvinists, and Armenians, those who accept believers baptism only as scriptural and infant sprinklers, join together for an evangelistic campaign or other community projects. This is consistent with the historic Baptist contention that their churches were the only true apostolic ones and to unite with others on a common level is to concede the same to others.

This church shall not affiliate with any known apostate Baptist organization such as the American (Northern) Baptist Convention or any other apostate convention. It shall remain a sovereign, independent Baptist Church. The will of the church will be final in declaring or not declaring itself to be in fellowship with any other Baptist organization.

ARTICLE XII FINANCIAL POLICY

The operating expense money shall be raised in public services by receiving tithes and offerings of God’s people. All special solicitations for funds shall be under the directions of the pastor and deacons when sanctioned by the church. The church will not have sales, dinners, raffles, or bazaars to raise money for the church.

ARTICLE XIII MISSIONS

It shall be the policy of this church to support only New Testament Baptist Missions both in faith and order and be Baptist in name as well as policy.

ARTICLE XIV ORGANIZATIONS

1. BIBLE SCHOOL (SUNDAY SCHOOL)

This school shall be considered as the church studying the Bible; it shall be under the direction of the Sunday school Superintendent and control of the church.

2. OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

There shall be such other organizations as the most efficient prosecution of our object shall demand, but none shall be started without the consent of the church upon the recommendation of the pastor and deacons. These organizations shall be subject to the control of the church through its constitution and voted church policy.

3. OFFICERS AND TEACHERS

All officers of these organizations and all regular teachers in the Bible (Sunday) school must be members of the church in good and regular standing.

ARTICLE XV ORDINANCES

1. BAPTISM

This is a local church ordinance.

This may be administered as often as there are proper candidates:

- a.** Repentance and faith shall precede Baptism
- b.** Baptism shall be by immersion only (One time backward).
- c.** Baptism shall be administered by the authority of the church.
- d.** Baptism by the authority of a true Missionary Baptist Church is the only baptism to be recognized when receiving members.

2. THE LORD'S SUPPER

This is to be recognized as a local church ordinance. This ordinance shall be observed every quarter (4x per year), at the discretion of the pastor.

- a.** Only members in good standing of this church shall participate in the observance.
- b.** The elements used are to be unleavened bread and fermented grape wine.

ARTICLE XVI AFFIRMATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Each person being received into membership of Faith Missionary Baptist Church shall publicly affirm to abide by the church's constitution and voted church policy.

**ARTICLE XVII
PREEMINENCE OF CHURCH SERVICES**

Any group composed of members of the church, upon learning of any church meeting to be conducted for the general public, shall cancel any meeting of its own which conflicts with the meeting being sponsored by the church. Special meetings, Bible conferences, mission rallies, etc, planned by the church shall be considered “regular” meetings of the church.

**ARTICLE XVIII
SOCIALS**

The pastor and deacons (or trustees in absence of deacons) shall constitute a censorship committee. It shall be the duty of the censorship committee to investigate the character of any meeting, social or entertainment, given at the church building. Those desiring to hold special meetings in the church must secure permission from the church upon recommendation of the censorship committee. Tickets for social entertainments, etc, shall not be sold in, or around, church property. An offering may be taken.

**ARTICLE XIX
AMENDMENTS**

This constitution may be amended only at the annual business meeting by a two-thirds vote of members present providing the amendments have been presented at two services preceding the annual business meeting.