

The
Constitution of the



*“Behold, I have set before you an **open door**,
which no one is able to shut.”*

Revelation 3:8

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PREAMBLE

By the Grace of God, our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, and our faith in Him, we the members of the Open Door Bible Church, being completely dependent on the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit, in order to establish rules and procedures with which to administer this independent, local New Testament church, do ordain and establish the following Constitution and By-Laws to which we voluntarily submit ourselves for the mutual encouragement of believers, for the defense of the faith, and for a more effective means to carry forth the work of the Lord.

ARTICLE I – The Name

The name of this local church corporation is the Open Door Bible Church.

ARTICLE II – Purpose

The purpose of this Church shall be to disseminate the Gospel, to proclaim the whole counsel of God, to teach and preach the Holy Scriptures, to operate a Christian School, providing and maintaining the highest standard of education and theological instruction based upon the inerrant authority of the Scriptures, to send forth missionaries so that the Word of the Lord might be sounded forth in every place, to the end that souls might be saved, believers edified, and Christ exalted. (*Acts 1:8-11; Colossians 1:18; 2 Timothy 4:2,5*) One supreme emphasis shall be given in all its endeavors, namely, that God's saving grace expressed in the shed blood and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary is alone the basis of salvation.

ARTICLE III - Covenant

Having become partakers of the divine nature through the new birth by the Word of God and the Spirit of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ according to the provisions of the abounding grace of God, and being justified on the grounds of the shed blood of Jesus Christ and acknowledging our willingness to confess Him as our Saviour before men, we do now in the presence of God, the Holy Angels, and this Assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the power of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this local assembly within the body of Christ, in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, disciplines and doctrines; and to contribute cheerfully, scripturally 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 private devotions; to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and to seek the salvation of our kindred, our acquaintances, our enemies, and all children and adults within the area of this Assembly.

Through the provision that God has made for victorious Christian living, it shall be our desire to abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul, and to live a life of separation from sinful and worldly practices, with a desire to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Through the love of Christ, we will put away from us all bitterness and wrath, and anger and clamor, and evil speaking, and be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.

We recognize that one of the outstanding evidences of Christianity is love, according to the words of our blessed Lord when He said: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love and to remember each other in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; and to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Saviour to secure it without delay. And this we do depending entirely upon the aid of our Heavenly Father, Who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son for our salvation, and of Jesus Christ our Saviour, Who hath redeemed us with His own precious blood, and the indwelling Holy Spirit, our Comforter, Teacher, and Guide.

ARTICLE IV – Statement of Faith

A. Doctrine

1. The Scriptures

We believe that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God," by which we understand the whole Bible is inspired in the sense that holy men of God "were moved by the Holy Spirit" to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings--historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic--as appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe that all the Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming, and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read, or understood, until it leads to Him. We also believe that all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction. (*Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2, 3; 18:28; 26:22, 23; 28:23; Romans. 15:4; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21*)

2. The Godhead

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit--and that these three are one God; having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence, and obedience. (*Matthew 28:18, 19; Mark 12:29; John 1:14;*

Acts 5:3, 4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4-6)

3. Angels, Fallen, and Unfallen

- a. We believe that God created an innumerable company of sinless, spiritual beings, known as angels; that one, "Lucifer, son of the morning"--the highest in rank--sinned through pride, thereby becoming Satan; that a great company of the angels followed him in his moral fall, some of whom became demons and are active as his agents and associates in the prosecution of his unholy purposes, while others who fell are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." (*Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; 1 Timothy 3:6; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6*)
- b. We believe that Satan is the originator of sin, and that, under the permission of God, he, through subtlety, led our first parents into transgression, thereby accomplishing their moral fall and subjecting them and their posterity to his own power; that he is the enemy of God and the people of God, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; and that he who in the beginning said, "I will be like the most High," in his warfare appears as an angel of light, even counterfeiting the works of God by fostering religious movements and systems of doctrine, which systems in every case are characterized by a denial of the efficacy of the blood of Christ and of salvation by grace alone. (*Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 5:12-14; 2 Corinthians 4:3,4; 11:13-15; Ephesians 6:10-12; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; 1 Timothy 4:1-3*)
- c. We believe that Satan was judged at the cross, though not then executed and that he, a usurper, now rules as the "god of this world;" that, at the second coming of Christ, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years, and after the thousand years he will be loosed for a little season and then "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," where he "shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." (*Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:1-3, 10*)
- d. We believe that a great company of angels kept their holy state and are before the throne of God, from whence they are sent forth as ministering spirits to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. (*Luke 15:10; Ephesians 1:21; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 7:12*)
- e. We believe that man was made lower than the angels; and that, in His incarnation, Christ took for a little time this lower place that He might lift the believer to His own sphere above the angels. (*Hebrews 2:6-10*)

4. Man Created and Fallen

We believe that man was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, and that he fell through sin, and, as a consequence of his sin, lost his spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and that he became subject to the power of the devil. We also believe that this spiritual death, or total depravity of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted; and hence, that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad, apart from divine grace. (*Genesis 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Psalms 14:1-3; 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:6; 5:40; 6:53; Romans 3:10-19; 8:6,7; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 5:16; 1 John 3:8*)

5. The Dispensations

- a. We believe that the dispensations are stewardships by which God administers His purpose on the earth, through man, under varying responsibilities. We believe that the changes in the dispensational dealings of God with man depend upon changed conditions or situations in which man is successively found with relation to God, and that these changes are the result of the failures of man and the judgments of God. We believe that different administrative responsibilities of this character are manifest in the Biblical record, that they span the entire history of mankind, and that each ends in the failure of man under the respective test and in an ensuing judgment from God. We believe in seven dispensations, chronologically: Innocence (*Genesis 1:28*), Conscience or Moral Responsibility (*Genesis 3:7*), Human Government (*Genesis 8:15*), Promise (*Genesis 12:1*), Law (*Exodus 19:1*), Church (*Acts 2:1*), and Kingdom (*Revelation 20:4*).
- b. We believe that three of these dispensations or rules of life are the object of extended revelation in the Scripture, that is: the dispensation of the Mosaic Law, the present dispensation of Grace, and the future dispensation of the Millennial Kingdom. We believe that these are distinct and are not to be intermingled or confused, as they are chronologically successive.
- c. We believe that the dispensations are neither ways of salvation nor different methods of administering the so-called Covenant of Grace. They are not in themselves dependent on covenant relationships but are ways of life and responsibility to God which test the submission of man to His revealed will during a particular time. We believe that, if man does trust in his own efforts to gain the favor of God or salvation under any dispensational test, because of inherent sin, his failure to satisfy fully the just requirements of God is inevitable and his condemnation sure.

- d. We believe that, according to the "eternal purpose" of God (*Ephesians 3:11*), salvation in the divine reckoning is always "by grace, through faith," and rests upon the basis of the shed blood of Christ. We believe that God has always been gracious, regardless of the ruling dispensation, but that man has not at all times been under an administration or stewardship of grace as is true in the present dispensation. (*1 Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 3:2; 3:9; Colossians 1:25; 1 Timothy 1:4*)
- e. We believe that it has always been true that "without faith it is impossible to please God," (*Hebrews 11:6*) and that the principle of faith was prevalent in the lives of all the Old Testament saints. However, we believe that it was historically impossible that they should have had as the conscious object of their faith the incarnate, crucified Son, the Lamb of God (*John 1:29*), and that it is evident that they did not comprehend as we do that the sacrifices depicted the person and work of Christ. We believe also that they did not understand the redemptive significance of the prophecies or types concerning the sufferings of Christ (*1 Peter 1:10-12*); therefore, we believe that their faith toward God was manifested in other ways as is shown by the long record in *Hebrews 11:1-40*. We believe further that their faith, thus manifested, was counted unto them for righteousness (*cf. Romans. 4:3 with Genesis 15:6; Romans. 4:5-8; Hebrews 11:7*).

6. The First Advent

- a. We believe that, as provided and proposed by God and as preannounced in the prophecies of the Scriptures, the eternal Son of God came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end He was born of the virgin, and received a human body and a sinless human nature. (*Luke 1:30-35; John 1:18; 3:16; Hebrews 4:15*)
- b. We believe that, on the human side, He became and remained a perfect man, but sinless throughout His life; yet He retained His absolute deity, being at the same time very God and very man, and that His earth-life sometimes functioned within the sphere of that which was human and sometimes within the sphere of that which was divine. (*Luke 2:40; John 1:1,2; Philippians 2:5-8*)
- c. We believe that, in fulfillment of prophecy, He came first to Israel as her Messiah-King, and that, being rejected of that nation, He, according to the eternal counsels of God, gave His life as a ransom for all. (*John 1:11; Acts 2:22-24; 1 Timothy 2:6*)
- d. We believe that, in infinite love for the lost, he voluntarily accepted His Father's will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb and took away the sin of the world; bearing the holy judgments against sin which the righteousness of God must impose. His death was, therefore, substitutionary in the most absolute

sense--the just for the unjust--and by His death He became the Saviour of the lost. (*John 1:29; Romans 3:25, 26; 2 Corinthians 5:14, Hebrews 10:5-14; 1 Peter 3:18*)

- e. We believe that, according to the Scriptures, He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He had lived and died, and that His resurrection body is the pattern of that body which ultimately will be given to all believers. (*John 20:20, Philippians 3:20*)
 - f. We believe that, on departing from the earth, He was accepted of His Father and that His acceptance is a final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished. (*Hebrews 1:3*)
 - g. We believe that He became Head over all things to the church, which is His body, and in this ministry, He ceases not to intercede and advocate for the saved. (*Ephesians 1:22,23; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1*)
7. Salvation Only Through Christ
- a. We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless born again; and that no degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven; but a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation, and only those thus saved are sons of God. We believe, also, that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying for our sake and in our place; and that no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, or all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles, can add in the very least degree to the value of the blood, or to the merit of the finished work wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper deity with perfect and sinless humanity. (*Leviticus 17:11; Isaiah 64:6; Matthew 26:28; John 3:5,18; Romans 5:6-9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; Philippians 3:4-9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:18, 19, 23*)
 - b. We believe that the new birth of the believer comes only through faith in Christ and that repentance is a vital part of believing, and is in no way, in itself, a separate and independent condition of salvation; nor are any other acts, such as confession, baptism, prayer, or faithful service, to be added to believing as a condition of salvation. (*John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24, 6:29, Acts 13:39; 16:31; Romans 1:16-17; 3:22, 26; 4:5; 10:4; Galatians 3:22*)

8. The Extent of Salvation

We believe that when an unregenerate person exercises that faith in Christ, which is illustrated and described as such in the New Testament, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life, and from the old creation into the new; being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according as Christ, His Son, is accepted, loved as Christ is loved, having his place and portion as linked to Him and one with Him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ, and is, therefore, in no way required by God to seek a so-called "second blessing," or a "second work of grace." (*John 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23; Ephesians 1:3; Colossians 2:10; 1 John 4:17; 5:11-12*)

9. Sanctification

We believe that sanctification, which is a setting-apart unto God, is threefold: it is already complete for every saved person because his position toward God is the same as Christ's position. Since the believer is in Christ, he is set-apart unto God in the measure in which Christ is set-apart unto God. We believe, however, that he retains his sin nature, which cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing of the Christian, in Christ, is perfect, his present state is no more perfect than his experience in daily life. There is, therefore, a progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is to "grow in grace," and to "be changed" by the unhindered power of the Spirit. We believe, also, that the child of God will yet be fully sanctified in his state, as he is now sanctified in his standing in Christ, when he shall see his Lord and shall be "like Him." (*John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 7:1; Ephesians 4:24; 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10, 14; 12:10*)

10. Eternal Security

- a. We believe that, because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love, because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless on the ground of the propitiatory blood of Christ, because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of God, because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, we and all true believers everywhere, once saved, shall be kept saved forever.

- b. We believe, however, that God is a holy and righteous Father and that, since He cannot overlook the sin of His children, He will, when they persistently sin, chasten them and correct them in infinite love; but having undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He, who cannot fail, will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son. (*John 5:24; 10:28; 13:1; 14:16-17; 17:11; Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1,2; 5:13; Jude 1:2*)

11. Assurance

We believe it is the privilege, not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Spirit, through faith in Christ, as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Saviour; and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children filial love, gratitude and obedience. (*Luke 10:20; 21:32; 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-8; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 10:22; 1 John 5:13*)

12. The Holy Spirit

- a. We believe that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the blessed Trinity, though omnipresent from all eternity, took up His abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost according to the divine promise, dwells in every believer, and by His baptism unites all to Christ in one body, and that He, as the Indwelling One, is the source of all power and all acceptable worship and service. We believe that He never takes His departure from the church or from the feeblest of the saints, but is ever present to testify of Christ; seeking to occupy believers with Him and not with themselves nor with their experiences. We believe that His abode in the world in this special sense will cease when Christ comes to receive His own at the completion of the church. (*John 14:16,17; 16:7-15; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 2:22; 2 Thessalonians 2:7*)
- b. We believe that, in this age, certain well-defined ministries are committed to the Holy Spirit, and that it is the duty of every Christian to understand them and to be adjusted to them in his own life and experience. These ministries are: the restraining of evil in the world to the measure of the divine will; the convicting of the world respecting sin, righteousness, and judgment; the regenerating of all believers; the indwelling and anointing of all who are saved, thereby sealing them unto the day of redemption; the baptizing into the one body of Christ of all who are saved; and the continued filling for power, teaching, and service of those among the saved who are yielded to Him and who are subject to His will. (*John 3:6; 16:7-11; Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:30; 5:18;*

2 Thessalonians 2:7; 1 John 2:20-27)

- c. We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healings were temporary. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism nor of the filling of the Spirit, and that the deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection. (*Acts 4:8, 31; Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 13:8*)

13. The Church, A Unity of Believers

- a. We believe that all who are united to the risen and ascended Son of God are members of the church, which is the body and bride of Christ, which began at Pentecost and is completely distinct from Israel. Its members are constituted as such, regardless of membership or non-membership, in the organized churches of earth.
- b. We believe that by the same Spirit all believers in this age are baptized into, and thus become, one body that is Christ's, whether Jews or Gentiles, and having become members one of another, are under solemn duty to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian differences, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently. (*Matthew 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Colossians 3:14-15*)

14. The Sacraments or Ordinances

We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only sacraments and ordinances of the church and that they are a Scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age. (*Matthew 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 10:47-48; 16:32-33; 18:7-8; 1 Corinthians 11:26*)

15. The Christian's Walk

We believe that we are called with a holy calling, to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. But the flesh with its fallen, Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, being with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept, by the Spirit, constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord. (*Romans 6:11-13; 8:2, 4, 12-13; Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 2:1-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 1:4-7; 3:5-9*)

16. The Christian's Service

- a. We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit, and each is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit may will. In the apostolic church there were certain gifted men--apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers--who were appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints unto their work of the ministry. We believe also that today some men are especially called of God to be evangelists, pastors and teachers, and that it is to the fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory that these shall be sustained and encouraged in their service for God. (*Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11*)
- b. We believe that, wholly apart from salvation benefits which are bestowed equally upon all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his service for his Lord, and that these rewards will be bestowed at the Judgment Seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself. (*1 Corinthians 3:9-15; 9:18-27; 2 Corinthians 5:10*)

17. The Great Commission

- a. We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth of His Father into the world.
- b. We believe that, after they are saved they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses, and that their primary purpose in life should be to make Christ known to the whole world. (*Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 16:15; John 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; 1 Peter 1:17; 2:11*)

18. The Blessed Hope

We believe that, according to the Word of God, the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive to Himself, into heaven, both His own who are alive and remain unto His coming, and also all who have fallen asleep in Jesus, and that this event is the blessed hope set before us in the Scripture, and for this we should be constantly looking. (*John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Philipians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14*)

19. The Tribulation

We believe that the translation of the church will be followed by the fulfillment of Israel's seventieth week (*Daniel 9:27; Revelation 6:1-19:21*) during which the

church, the body of Christ, will be in heaven. The whole period of Israel's seventieth week will be a time of judgment on the whole earth, at the end of which the times of the Gentiles will be brought to a close. The latter half of this period will be the time of Jacob's trouble (*Jeremiah 30:7*), which our Lord called the great tribulation (*Matthew 24:15-21*). We believe that universal righteousness will not be realized previous to the second coming of Christ, but that the world is day by day ripening for judgment and that the age will end with a fearful apostasy.

20. The Second Coming of Christ

We believe that the period of great tribulation in the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went, in person on the clouds of heaven, and with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age, to bind Satan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, to restore Israel to her own land and to give her the realization of God's covenant promises, and to bring the whole world to the knowledge of God. (*Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 11:9; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Matthew 24:15-25, 46; Acts 15:16-17; Romans 8:19-23; 11:25-27; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Revelation 20:1-3*)

21. The Eternal State

We believe that at death the spirits and souls, of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own, whereupon soul and body, reunited, shall be associated with Him forever in glory; but the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death, conscious of condemnation and in misery, until the final judgment of the Great White Throne at the close of the Millennium when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. (*Luke 16:19-26; 23:42; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 1:6-7; Revelation 20:11-15*)

22. Divergent Doctrine

We believe that the foregoing "Statement of Faith" includes only items in keeping with the Scriptural admonition to "speak those things which become sound doctrine." We are, therefore, unalterably opposed to the inclusion of any item(s) that would be divergent in nature. (*2 Timothy 3:16; 4:2*)

B. Movements Contrary to Faith

We believe that the following movements are out of harmony with the Word of God and the official doctrine and position of this church and are considered detrimental to the work of God:

1. Ecumenism

Ecumenism is that movement which seeks the organizational unity of all Christianity and ultimately of all religions. Its principal advocates are the World Council of Churches and the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

2. Ecumenical Evangelism

Ecumenical Evangelism is that effort to promote the Gospel by bringing fundamentalists into an unequal yoke with theological liberals and/or Roman Catholics and other divergent groups.

3. Neo-Orthodoxy

Neo-Orthodoxy is that theological movement which affirms: the transcendence of God, the finiteness and sinfulness of man, and the necessity of supernatural divine revelation of truth; but, while using evangelical terminology, seriously departs from orthodoxy in accepting the views of destructive higher criticism, in denying the inerrancy of the Bible as historic revelation, in accepting religious experience as the criterion of truth, and in abandoning important fundamentals of the Christian faith.

4. New Evangelicalism (Neo-Evangelicalism, New Conservatism)

These terms refer to that movement within evangelicalism characterized by a toleration of and a dialogue with theological liberalism. Its essence is seen in an emphasis upon the social application of the Gospel and weak or unclear doctrines of the inspiration of Scripture, Biblical creationism, eschatology, dispensationalism, and separation. It is further characterized by an attempt to accommodate Biblical Christianity and make it acceptable to the modern mind.

5. Charismatic Movement

This group is characterized by emphasis on speaking in tongues, healing, prophecy and second blessing. It crosses all social, ethical and religious boundaries (Roman Catholics, Jews, Liberal Protestants, Pagans, etc.) causing association of darkness with light.

ARTICLE V - Membership

Section I - Qualification

Any person who has received Jesus Christ as his or her personal Saviour, who has obediently followed the Lord in the waters of believer's baptism; who gives assurance of a continuing desire to live a consistent Christian life; who willingly agrees to abide by the Constitution and the Statement of Faith; and who is free from membership in oath-bound religious organizations, social secret organizations, or other entangling alliances with unbelievers shall be eligible for membership, providing he or she fulfills the requirement of attendance in membership classes. The Elders retains the right to exempt a person from membership classes under special circumstances. Any person desiring believer's baptism by this Church shall be immersed. Applicants who are divorced may be considered for church membership. However, they are prohibited from serving in the church leadership positions of pastor, elder, or deacon (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:6-9). The Elders reserve the right of final decision concerning the service of anyone involved in divorce or remarriage after divorce. (*Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 19:5-9; Mark 10:1-12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11; 2 Corinthians 6:14*)

Section II – How to Apply

Any person desiring to unite with this Church shall apply for membership to the Elders on an application which shall be supplied by the Church and which must contain an agreement by the applicant to be bound by the Constitution and By-Laws of this Church and the Church Covenant and Statement of Faith, as set forth in Articles III and IV. Following review of said application, the Elders will interview the membership candidate to discuss any matters that need clarification or correction.

Section III – Vote into Membership

Candidates for membership shall appear before the Elders for an interview at a conveniently appointed time. Those candidates who meet with unanimous approval of the Elders shall be recommended to the congregation for membership. Candidates may be voted upon by the Church membership at any designated regular Sunday service(s) where a favorable two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of members present is necessary for reception into the fellowship of this Church. Congregational voting will be conducted by secret ballot and will be controlled by the Church Clerk.

Section IV – Welcome into Fellowship

New members shall be publicly welcomed at the regular Lord's Day service by the members of the Church in the reading of the Church Covenant, and given the right hand of fellowship by the Pastor or acting Pastor, and the Elders. This public recognition will be done in a timely manner.

Section V - Responsibilities

Members are expected to conscientiously strive to live according to the light revealed to them by the Holy Spirit through God's Word, and to wholeheartedly support the services and activities of

the Church by faithful attendance at regularly scheduled worship services, faithful financial giving, and prayer. Open Door Bible Church believes that God's people should be providing for the ministry of the Gospel in their local church through at least a tithe (10%) of their income. While this is not a demand of Open Door Bible Church, it is strongly recommended that God's people begin their giving with a tithe.

Section VI – Church Discipline, Membership Termination, Reconciliation & Membership Reinstatement

It shall be within the Province of the Elders to order a review of the Church membership whenever they deem it necessary. At this time, members who seem to manifest inconsistency or flagrant sin in their Christian lives, a wrong attitude toward the Statement of Faith, or show indifference toward the life and work of the Church, shall be investigated by the Pastor and Elder(s) for the purpose of remedying any weakness in their Christian lives. It shall be within the province of those investigating to recommend to the Elders what action shall be taken. (*Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:20; 5:19-20; Titus 3:9-11*)

If, after a review of the facts, it is decided that the name(s) of the person(s) in question shall be dropped from the Membership Roll or placed on the Inactive Membership List with loss of voting privileges, they shall be notified of the proposed action. However, opportunity shall be given them to appear before the Elders to show just cause why action should not be taken. When such action is taken, the Church shall be notified by a special Congregational Meeting to be called within thirty (30) days of said action.

Members dropped from the Membership Roll or placed on the Inactive Membership List may be reinstated by the Elders whenever the cause of the disciplinary action has been biblically rectified to the Elder's satisfaction. Those seeking to be reinstated should schedule a meeting with the Elders to discuss reinstatement.

Section VII – Transfer of Membership

Letters transferring membership may be granted by the Church upon recommendation by the Elders only when the Church to which transfer is desired is stated and when such request is made by a member in good standing on the roll of this Church. In special cases where members will be absent for extended periods of time, a written request for a membership leave of absence shall be made to the Elders, who will evaluate the request and take appropriate action. Upon return, members granted leave of absence should make written request to the Elders for immediate reinstatement.

ARTICLE VI – Church Government

This Church shall never come under the authority of any denomination or federation, but shall remain an independent testimony, acknowledging only the Lord Jesus Christ as its Head, the Holy Scriptures as the only infallible Guide and the Holy Spirit as its Teacher.

Section I - Leadership

The government of the Church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit is vested in its membership and facilitated through the officers of the Church.

Section II – Church Officers (Listing)

The officers of the Church:

1. Senior Pastor
2. Elders
3. Deacons
4. Church Treasurer
5. Financial Secretary
6. Church Clerk

Section III – Church Officers

The officers of the Church shall be the executive of the congregation in its dealings with pastors, employees, affiliated organizations, branch works, and any outside denominations and organizations.

The officers of the Church shall be chosen from the membership and shall perform such other duties as may be defined by this Constitution and shall at all times be subject to the majority vote of the congregation. (*Acts 1:15-26; 6:3-6; 1 Peter 5:1-8*)

Section IV - Elders

The Elders shall be recognized by the congregation as the overseers of the Church in all spiritual matters and general oversight of the Church; its members, leadership, organization, and branch works.

The Elders shall direct the examination of applicants for Church membership and recommend for the action of the Church those whom they find eligible according to Article V, Sections I and II.

The teaching ministries of the Church are directed by the Senior Pastor and Elders.

Section V - Deacons

The Deacons shall be recognized as the body vested with the authority to maintain, preserve, and improve all the property of the Church.

The Deacons shall have the supervision over the business transactions and general work of the Church.

The Deacons shall have the management and control of all property belonging to the Church. It shall not encumber with loan, transfer, sell or purchase any real estate for the Church except by express authorization conveyed through a majority vote of the membership present at a Constitutionally called business meeting.

The Deacons shall elect a President each year within four (4) weeks after the Annual Business Meeting.

Section VI – Elder and Deacon Authorities

In those matters which relate to their respective responsibilities and duties, the Elders and the Deacons shall have:

1. Authority to call congregational meetings for the purpose of recommending such actions as call for a vote of the congregation, and for the purpose of receiving advice or instruction from the congregation.
2. Authority to appoint individuals or committees for the transaction of their business. Such individuals or committees shall be answerable to and in subjection to said Bodies.
3. Authority to handle and consider suggestions, recommendations, and grievances upon the part of any member or organization affiliated with the Church.

Section VII- Voting

The deciding factor in any vote taken in a meeting of the Elders and/or Deacons shall be a majority vote of the members present; except as provided in Section III of Article V.

Section VIII - Nomination

The officers shall be nominated by the Elders and chosen by a vote of the membership.

Section IX – Elders

The Senior Pastor shall act as President of the Elders. A Vice-President of the Elders shall be elected at the next Elder meeting after the annual business meeting by and from the membership of said body. The Vice-President shall serve for one (1) year. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the Vice-President shall preside.

The Senior Pastor shall act as moderator of joint meetings held between the Elders and the Deacons. In his absence, the Vice-President of the Elders shall moderate.

Section X – Nominations for Elective Office

The nominees chosen by the Elders for election to fill vacancies in the elective offices of the Church shall be conspicuously posted two Sundays prior to the annual business meeting. It shall be the privilege of the congregation to add other candidates by the following method: when any five (5) members of the Church, in good standing, shall agree upon a candidate for an elective office, they must submit their request in writing to the Elders, whose chairman shall add the name to the

posted slate, providing the proposed candidate shall satisfy the requirements of Section XI. The slate shall be considered closed the Sunday evening prior to the annual business meeting.

Section XI - Qualifications of Nominees

The Elders shall thoroughly consider the scriptural qualifications and capabilities of every person considered for office. The Elders shall also consider the candidate as to their loyalty to the Constitution, their Christian life, and especially their willingness and ability to live in accordance with any standards maintained by the Church. The offices of Pastor, Elder or Deacon are open only to men "of one wife," as is consistent with Scripture. Accordingly, men who are divorced or who have unbiblically married a divorced woman, are prohibited from nomination. (*1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:12; 3:1-13; Titus 1:6*)

No candidate shall be placed in nomination unless he is a member of the Church in good standing for one (1) year or more.

It shall be impossible for the Elders to place in nomination any candidate who cannot answer in the affirmative and does not subscribe in writing to the following questions:

1. Have you publicly confessed Christ as personal Saviour and experienced the New Birth set forth in John 3:3-6?
2. Are you in hearty agreement with the Doctrinal Statement of this Church and Constitution?
3. Are you living a surrendered, prayerful Christian life, especially as regards loyal obedience to the moral precepts taught in the Word of God for believers, including:
 - a. Separation from the world and worldly amusements. (*Titus 2:11-15; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17*)
 - b. A moral conduct beyond reproach and freedom from carnal indulgence, such as the use of intoxicating liquors, tobacco in all its forms, narcotic drugs, and pornography, all of which are harmful, a stumbling block, and out of harmony with a Spirit filled life, as set forth in *Romans 8:12-13; 12:1-2; 13:14; 14:21; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24, Colossians 3:1-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9; etc.*

Section XII – Requirements

No officer of the Church or any of its affiliated organizations, or Teacher, Song Leader, or employee in the capacity of Administrative Assistant, shall be chosen, elected, appointed or employed who cannot subscribe in writing to Requirements 1, 2, and 3 of Section XI.

Section XIII - Missions

Open Door Bible Church recognizes its responsibility in missions, which is the ministry of evangelization and discipleship, both home and abroad, and seeks to do all it can to promote faithful missions involvement and support. Finances for the missions ministry will be provided through the Annual Budget. The Elders are charged with the responsibility of directing the

missions related work of Open Door Bible Church, including outreach ministry, recommending and supporting missionaries, and coordinating the annual missions conference, providing special missionary projects, mission field trips, and the audio/visual ministry.

Article VII – Pastors and Officers

Section I – Number of Officers

There shall be elected as officers of the Church two (2) or more Elders and three (3) or more Deacons. Based upon continued growth and needs, the Church may elect additional Elders, not to exceed twelve (12) and additional Deacons not to exceed seven (7). A Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and a Church Clerk will also be elected.

Section II – Term of Office

- A. The term of office for the Elders and Deacons shall be three (3) years, and the offices of Church Clerk, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and Sunday School Superintendent shall be reviewed annually. The terms of office for Elders and Deacons shall be so arranged, that each year, one or more shall be replaced to enable other brethren to serve.
- B. After completion of two (2) full terms of office, not exceeding six (6) consecutive years, no Elder or Deacon shall be eligible for re-election until a full year has elapsed.
- C. When a man desires to serve as an Elder or as a Deacon, or is recommended by the Elders due to his apparent spiritual qualifications, he shall be examined by the Elders as to whether or not he is indeed qualified to be nominated as an Elder or Deacon. He should meet the biblical qualifications of an Overseer/Elder. (*1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4*) or Deacon (*Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 1:8-13*)
- D. Any Pastor's or officer's service may be terminated for just cause at any time by vote of the congregation, after a fair and impartial trial, conducted under the supervision of the Elders, at a meeting called in accordance with Section IX of Article IX, or Section VI of Article VI.
 1. If a 2/3rds majority vote of the congregation present favors the dismissal proceedings, instigated by either the Elders or the congregation of the Church, the Pastor or officer shall immediately be removed from office.
 2. If the dismissal proceedings are not sustained by a 2/3rds majority vote of the congregation present, the Pastor or officer shall be retained.
- E. All elected officers shall serve until their successors are elected, except as provided in Paragraph D of Section II.

Section III - Pastors

A Senior Pastor or any Assistant or Associate Pastor may be called by the Elders choosing three men from its number who shall constitute a pulpit committee. If three Elders are not available to

serve in this role other Godly men in the membership can be called upon. Up to three Godly ladies who are members in good standing can be asked to serve in an advisory role with the pulpit committee. It shall be the duty of this committee to arrange for all pulpit supplies until a successor in the office of Pastor has been chosen. The names of the candidates shall be submitted to the congregation, who shall express their convictions by means of a ballot which shall be delivered to them in person. All members in good standing from age 18 and upward shall be eligible to vote. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership must be received by any candidate before he shall be called as the Pastor of the Church.

Insofar as possible, he should meet the qualifications of an Overseer and Elder as set forth in God's Word. (*1 Timothy 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-4*)

He should be able to give a clear testimony as to his conversion. That he has experienced the meaning of our Lord's words, "Ye must be born again."

He must fully endorse and declare he will defend the Biblical doctrines as set forth in our Constitution.

Pastors shall serve until their pastorate is terminated by resignation or by request of the congregation. Pastors shall give a minimum of thirty (30) days' notice before termination of their service. In the event the congregation votes the Pastor's or any Assistant or Associate Pastor's service be terminated abruptly the salary involved shall continue for thirty (30) days.

Section IV - Termination

If, at any time, the personal belief, preaching or teaching of the Senior Pastor or the Assistant or Associate Pastor shall not be in full accord with the Doctrinal Standard and Statement of this Church, or there is a failure to properly attend to his duties, his services as Senior Pastor or as Assistant or Associate Pastor shall be terminated.

ARTICLE VIII – Duties of Pastors and Officers

Section I - Pastors

- A. The Senior Pastor shall have the general oversight of the spiritual life, regular services and ministrations of the ordinances of the Church; shall be ex-officio member of all Board and committee meetings connected with the Church or any of its organizations; act as moderator in the meetings of the Church, unless otherwise directed by this Constitution or ordered by vote of the Church; and shall conscientiously perform such duties as may be arranged between the Elders and himself.
- B. The Senior Pastor and the Elders shall consider and decide upon all pulpit supplies and special pulpit features.
- C. The Senior Pastor shall have the control of the music and of the broadcasting of the Church services, subject to the approval of the Elders.

- D. Any Assistant Pastor or Pastors or any employee of this Church shall perform such duties as may be designated by the Senior Pastor, and Elders or the Deacons, or their authorized representatives.

Section II- Elders

The Elders shall be responsible with the Senior Pastor for the spiritual welfare of the Church; they shall assist in ministering the ordinances of the Church and shall make necessary provisions for the same. They shall be expected to visit the sick and the sorrowing membership, investigate delinquents and endeavor to remedy any spiritual weakness in the lives of its members. They shall faithfully perform all other duties designated by this Constitution or pertaining to their office. They shall endeavor by God's grace to live and serve in full conformity with the standards set forth in this Constitution for their particular office, and especially as found in the Word of God. *(1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9)*

Section III - Deacons

The Deacons shall have the care of the physical properties and finances of the Church and shall hold themselves in readiness to assist in guiding the spiritual life of the Church, ministering its ordinances and perform any necessary calling. They shall endeavor by God's grace to live and serve in full conformity with the standards set forth in this Constitution for their particular office, and especially as found in the Word of God. *(1 Timothy 3:8-13)*

Section IV – Church Clerk

The Church Clerk shall keep an accurate record of all congregational business meetings and any other meetings designated by the congregation or Elders upon request of either body. He shall be responsible for the keeping of a record of the Church Membership, admissions, dismissals, deaths, dedications, baptisms, and ordination services. He shall have custody of the Church Seal, shall carry on and maintain a complete record of all correspondence and such other records as may pertain to his office. He shall also have in custody any other papers, records, or other documents as directed by the congregation or Elders.

Section V – Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall, with such other assistants as may be authorized by the Deacons, arrange for the receiving, counting and crediting in their proper form in books provided for this purpose, all offerings and moneys received by the Church and its affiliated organizations, and deliver such funds with reasonable promptness to the Treasurer or other person designated by the Deacons to act as Treasurer. He shall, when requested, furnish receipts in satisfactory form to those on whose behalf he is receiving and crediting funds. His books shall always be available for inspection of the Treasurer, and Deacons, or the Elders. In the event the Financial Secretary is unable to perform his duties, the duties of the Financial Secretary shall devolve upon the Treasurer or acting treasurer until action is taken by the Deacons subject to the approval of the Elders for a substitute.

Section VI - Treasurer

The Treasurer shall receive from the Financial Secretary all funds properly credited and shall be responsible for the banking of such funds each week to the account of the Church, in a bank designated by the Deacons. He shall disperse these funds by check as duly authorized. Expenditures exceeding three thousand five hundred (3,500) dollars shall be paid following congregational approval. There shall be kept, under his direction each month or quarterly, a financial statement showing the true status of the various funds in this account, to be approved by the Deacons. He shall also have prepared in approved form, under his directions a financial statement showing the true status of all funds for the fiscal year of the Church, for presentation at the annual meeting, He shall also have custody of the legal papers pertaining to the property and finances of the Church, such as deeds, abstracts, insurance policies, bonds, notes, etc., which shall be kept in a depository designated by the Deacons; and any access he may have to this depository shall be made under the direction of the Deacons. His books shall at any time be available to the Deacons or Elders and must be submitted to audit at least once a year, as directed by the Deacons.

In the event the Treasurer is unable for perform his duties, or there is a vacancy in this office, the duties of the Treasurer may be taken care of by any person authorized by the Deacons until action is taken by the Deacons subject to the approval of the Elders. The Church Treasurer shall furnish bond at the discretion of the Elders and Deacons, the cost of same to be paid by the Church.

Section VII – Spiritual Qualifications

The Church Clerk, Financial Secretary, and Treasurer shall be capable of performing the duties of their respective offices and their spiritual qualification shall meet the standards as set forth in the Statement of Faith and Constitution of the Church.

ARTICLE IX - Meetings

Section I – Annual Congregational

The fiscal year of this Church shall end on the 31st day of December in each year and the annual meeting shall be held within four (4) weeks thereafter, the date to be determined by the Elders and announced to the congregation at each regular Church service for the two (2) Sundays preceding the said meeting.

Section II - Elders

The Elders shall have a monthly meeting, unless unforeseen conditions in a given month shall make it impossible.

Section III - Deacons

The Deacons shall meet as often as necessary to transact the business of the Church. It shall not be less than once each month.

Section IV – Joint Meetings of Elders and Deacons

At least once each quarter or more often, should they desire, the Elders and the Deacons shall meet jointly to exchange ideas, opinions, criticisms, make suggestions and recommendations, none of which shall be binding upon the other.

Section V - Chairman

The Senior Pastor, or in his absence, the Vice-President of the Elders, shall preside at all congregational meetings.

When required, the Vice-President of the Elders shall also preside at that portion of the congregational meeting which pertains to business associated with the Senior Pastor.

Section VI – Order of Annual Congregational Meeting

At the annual meeting, the minutes of the preceding annual meeting and the report of the Church Clerk shall be read, the Church's yearly financial report rendered and the nominations from the Elders submitted to the membership for action; also, such other business as may be necessary shall be transacted.

Section VII – Announcement of Congregational Meeting

Any regular or called meeting of the congregation may be constituted a meeting for the transaction of business, provided announcement of said meeting be given from the pulpit at two (2) regular Church services preceding the said meeting. Sunday morning and evening services as well as the mid-week prayer service shall be considered the regular services of the Church.

We recognize that certain uncontrollable situations will demand action to be taken before we can meet the aforementioned two-service notification. In the event that such emergency situations arise, the Elders will be responsible for providing, to each member, personal notification by telephone call or email concerning scheduling of an emergency meeting. This personal notification will be considered satisfactory to meet official notification qualifications.

Section VIII – Voting Age Requirements

Members shall be eighteen (18) years of age or over to possess the power to vote in any of the regular or specially called congregational business meetings.

Section IX – Special Congregational Meetings

The Elders shall call a special congregational business meeting upon the written request of ten percent (10%) of the members with power to vote said meeting and its purpose to be announced as provided in Section VII of Article IX and convened within two (2) weeks after filing request with the Elders.

Section X – Election of Officers

A majority vote of the voting members present at any constitutionally called congregational business meeting shall be required for the selection of officers or to render final decisions in any

matter under consideration, unless otherwise noted in this Constitution.

Section XI - Quorum

The voting members present at any business meeting called in accordance with the requirements of this Constitution shall be considered a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section XII – Parliamentary Procedures

In the conduct of business meetings, any parliamentary questions not covered by this Constitution shall be decided by the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE X - Finance

This organization shall be financed according to the scriptural method, the gifts and offerings of those interested in the furtherance of the Gospel ministry, not through Church suppers, rummage sales, raffles, or through the solicitation of money from unsaved individuals. (*Matthew 10:8, 1 Corinthians 16:22; 2 Corinthians 9:7*)

ARTICLE XI - Ordination

When, in the judgment of the Elders, a man in this membership is called to Occupational Christian Ministry, it shall be within the power of the Elders to call and conduct a council for ordination comprised of Pastors from other likeminded churches. The ordaining council shall thoroughly examine the applicant(s) for ordination as to their call to the Christian Ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation, character doctrinal belief, and demonstrated efficiency in Christian service. Following a 2/3^{rds} recommendation by the ordaining council to the congregation it shall vote to ordain the man. Said vote must receive a 2/3^{rds} approval of the congregation present.

The following shall not be ordained to the ministry:

- A. One who has not served six (6) months as Senior Pastor, Assistant Pastor, or in definite Christian work in such manner as to convey reasonable evidence of God's call to the ministry.
- B. One who is addicted to the use of intoxicating liquor, drugs, tobacco in any form, or pornography; or who brings disrepute upon his ministry through worldly practices and associations. (*Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15*)
- C. One who is divorced or who is married to someone who is divorced.

It shall be within the province of the Elders to discipline, even to revoking the ordination credentials of any Minister, ordained under this Constitution, if the said Minister is found guilty of any of the above practices after an impartial trial conducted in the ministry of I Corinthians 13.

The Minister under trial shall have the privilege of appealing his case to the congregation within sixty (60) days after the decision of the Elders.

ARTICLE XII - Amendments

This Constitution may be amended by a 2/3rds vote of the voting members present and voting at any regular or special meeting, providing the proposed amendment has been distributed in writing to the congregation and conspicuously posted for the four (4) Sundays preceding said meeting.

ARTICLE XIII – Marriage, Divorce, Biblical Manhood & Womanhood

We believe that holy matrimony was instituted of God from the beginning of creation, was sanctioned by our Lord Jesus Christ, and should be held in honor by all. This relationship should be between one man and one woman for life. While we understand that every situation involving divorce is diverse and unique in its own context, we believe that God has commanded His children to never seek or initiate divorce, although a temporary or an extended separation may be encouraged. We believe that divorce is only permissible under two conditions: (1) an unsaved spouse initiates and seeks a divorce from their Christian spouse, although every effort for reconciliation should be made on the part of the Christian spouse, and (2) when unrepentant fornication and immorality is taking place on the part of a spouse. We believe that remarriage after divorce is permissible if one's previously divorced spouse(s) is/are deceased. (*Matthew 5:32; 10:9; 19:3-9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11*)

Homosexuality, bestiality and any other deviations (such as the "LGBTQ" philosophy and agenda) from the Biblical pattern of physical intimacy between a man and a woman within the biblical boundaries of holy matrimony is sin and is perverted, immoral and contrary to God's Word. (*Genesis 2:23-24; Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:18-32; 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 7:39; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4*)

ARTICLE XIV – Civil Government

We believe that all civil government is of divine appointment and for the well-being of human society and that we should pray for those in authority over us and give to them God honoring obedience and submission and that this obedience and submission be consistent with Scriptural exhortation. (*Acts 5:29; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; 1 Peter 2:13-15*)

ARTICLE XV – Asset / Property Disposition Policy

Section I – Non-profit

No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any persons from the assets, holdings, or other

transactions in which this corporation may become involved.

Section II - Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of this corporation, all of its debts shall be fully satisfied. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among the members, but shall be irrevocably dedicated by the Elders and Deacons to such other non-profit religious corporations as are in agreement with the letter and spirit of this constitutional Statement of Faith, and in conformity with the requirements of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Code of 1954 [Section 501(c)3] or any subsequent amendments thereto.

ARTICLE XVI – Perpetuation Policy

Contents of Articles III and IV, Section IV of Article VII and Article XVI of this Constitution shall not be changed or amended.