

# *Wake Union Baptist Church Constitution*

## *Wake Forest, North Carolina*

### **Preamble**

We declare and establish this constitution to:

1. Preserve and secure the principles of our faith.
2. Govern the body in an orderly manner.
3. Preserve the liberties of each individual church member.
4. Preserve the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches.

### **I. Name**

This body shall be known as the *Wake Union Baptist Church* of the Raleigh Baptist Association located at Wake Forest, North Carolina.

### **II. Objectives**

To be a spiritual body empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with people in our church community and world. To be a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing him and responding in his leadership. To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers. To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man. To be a church that ministers lovingly and unselfishly to persons in our community, nation and world in Jesus name. To be a church whose purpose is to be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

### **III. Ordinances**

The ordinances of this church are as follows:

1. Baptism by immersion.
2. The Lords Supper.

### **IV. Relationships**

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is not governed by any other church body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual cooperation which are common among Baptist Churches. Insofar as it is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Raleigh Baptist Association, and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

### **V. Statement of Faith**

#### **1. The Scriptures**

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

Ex. 24:4; Deut. 4:1-2; 17:19; Josh. 8:34; Psalm 19:7-10; 119:11, 89, 105, 140; Isa. 34:16; 40:8; Jer. 15:16; 36; Matt. 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16 13Ñ15-; 17:17; Acts 2:16 ff.; 17:11; Rom. 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19Ñ21

## 2. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

### A. God the Father

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

Gen. 1:1; 2:7; Ex. 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11 ff.; 20:1 ff.; Lev. 22:2; Deut. 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chron. 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isa. 43:3, 15; 64:8; Jer. 10:10; 17:13; Matt. 6:9 ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Rom. 8:14-15; 1 Cor. 8:6; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 4:6; Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; Heb. 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7

### B. God the Son

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

Gen. 18:1 ff.; Psalm 2:7 ff.; 110:1 ff.; Isa. 7:14; 53; Matt. 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16, 27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6, 19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18, 29; 10:30, 38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16, 28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20, 28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5, 20; Rom. 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3, 34; 10:4; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8, 24-28; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Eph. 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thess. 4:14-18; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Heb. 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15, 24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Rev. 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16

### C. God the Holy Spirit

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

Gen 1:2; Judg. 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalm 51:11; 139:7 ff.; Isa. 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matt. 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10, 12; Luke 1:35; 4:1, 18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17, 39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Rom. 8:9-11, 14-16, 26-27; 1 Cor. 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thess. 5:19; 1 Tim. 3:16; 4:1; 2 Tim. 1:14; 3:16; Heb. 9:8, 14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Rev. 1:10; 22:17

## 3. Man

Man was created by the special act of God, in His own image, and is the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by His Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence;

whereby his posterity inherited a nature and an environment inclined toward sin, and as soon as they are capable of moral action become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore every man possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Gen. 1:26-30, 2:5, 7; 18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalm 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isa. 6:5; Jer. 17:5; Matt. 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Rom. 1:19-32; 3:10-18, 23; 5:6, 12, 19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18, 29; 1 Cor. 1:21-31; 15:19, 21-22; Eph. 2:1-22; Col. 1:21-22; 3:9-11

#### **4. Salvation**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, sanctification, and glorification.

**A.** Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.

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

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

Gen. 3:15; Ex. 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matt. 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22 to 28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14, 29; 3:3-21, 36; 5:24; 10:9, 28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Rom. 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3 ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18, 29-39; 10:9-10, 13; 13:11-14; 1 Cor. 1:18, 30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Cor. 5:17-20; Gal. 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Phil. 2:12-13; Col. 1:9-22; 3:1 ff.; 1 Thess. 5:23-24; 2 Tim. 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Heb. 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1 to 12:8, 14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6 to 2:11; Rev. 3:20; 21:1 to 22:5.

#### **5. God's Purpose of Grace**

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the cause of Christ, and temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Gen. 12:1-3; Ex. 19:5-8; 1 Sam. 8:4-7, 19-22; Isa. 5:1-7; Jer. 31:31 ff.; Matt. 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22, 31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45, 65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6, 12, 17-18; Acts 20:32; Rom. 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7, 26-36; 1 Cor. 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Eph. 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Col. 1:12-14; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; 2 Tim. 1:12; 2:10, 19; Heb. 11:39 to 12:2; 1 Peter 1:2-5, 13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2

## 6. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ, committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

This church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation members are equally responsible. Its Scriptural officers are pastors and deacons.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages.

Matt. 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42, 47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23, 27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11, 21; 5:22-32, Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:18; 1 Tim. 3:1-15; 4:14; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Rev. 2-3; 21:2-3

## 7. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

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

## 8. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, and by refraining from worldly amusements, and resting from secular employments, work of necessity and mercy only being excepted.

Ex. 20:8-11; Matt. 12:1-12; 28:1 ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3, 33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1; 19-28; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Col. 2:16; 3:16; Rev. 1:10

## 9. The Kingdom

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

Gen. 1:1; Isa. 9:6-7; Jer. 23:5-6; Matt. 3:2; 4:8-10, 23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Rom. 5:17; 8:19; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Col. 1:13; Heb. 11:10, 16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Rev. 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22

## 10. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell,

the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isa. 2:4; 11:9; Matt. 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27, 30, 36, 44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40, 48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 4:5; 15:24-28, 35-58; 2 Cor. 5:10; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thess. 4:14-18; 5:1 ff.; 2 Thess. 1:7 ff.; 2; 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13; Heb. 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7 ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Rev. 1:18; 3:11; 20:1 to 22:13

## 11. Evangelism and Missions

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

Gen. 12:1-3; Ex. 19:5-6; Isa. 6:1-8; Matt. 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8, 16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Rom. 10:13-15; Eph. 3:1-11; 1 Thess. 1:8; 2 Tim. 4:5; Heb. 2:1-3; 11:39 to 12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Rev. 22:17

## 12. Education

The cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian schools is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people. In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deut. 4:1, 5, 9, 14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Neh. 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalm 19:7 ff.; 119:11; Prov. 3:13 ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7, 11; 15:14; Eccl. 7:19; Matt. 5:2; 7:24 ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Cor. 1:18-31; Eph. 4:11-16; Phil. 4:8; Col. 2:3, 8-9; 1 Tim. 1:3-7; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:14-17; Heb. 5:12 to 6:3; James 1:5; 3:17

## 13. Stewardship

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

Gen. 14:20; Lev. 27:30-32; Deut. 8:18; Mal. 3:8-12; Matt. 6:1-4, 19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21, 42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Rom. 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9; 12:15; Phil. 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19

## 14. Cooperation

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

conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Ex. 17:12; 18:17 ff.; Judg. 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Neh. 4; 8:1-5; Matt. 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1 ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1 ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Cor. 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Cor. 8-9; Gal. 1:6-10; Eph. 4:1-16; Phil 1:15-18

### **15. The Christian and the Social Order**

Every Christian is under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in his own life and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus. The Christian should oppose, in the spirit of Christ, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice. He should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Ex. 20:3-17; Lev. 6:2-5; Deut. 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Mic. 6:8; Zech. 8:16; Matt. 5:13-16, 43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3 ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Rom. 12-14; 1 Cor. 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23 to 11:1; Gal. 3:26-28; Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:12-17; 1 Thess. 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8

### **16. Peace and War**

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

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love.

Isa. 2:4; Matt. 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36, 38; Rom. 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Heb. 12:14; James 4:1-2

### **17. Religious Liberty**

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

Gen. 1:27; 2:7, Matt. 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Rom. 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Gal. 5:1, 13; Phil. 3:20; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19

## *Church Covenant*

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

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and the spread of pornography; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

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

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

## *Wake Union Baptist Church, Wake Forest, North Carolina* *By-Laws*

### **I. Membership**

#### **Section 1. General**

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church . The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

[All candidates for membership shall be under the associate/watchcare program. Full membership will be granted after fulfilling the following criteria: “Six months probationary period; and completion of the church orientation plan”.]

#### **Section 2. Candidacy**

##### **1. Qualifications**

The membership of this church shall consist of persons who have made a public profession of their faith in Christ as Savior and Lord who give satisfying evidence that they have been converted who desire to be numbered among His disciples who are in sympathy with and subscribe to the faith and practices of this church who have experienced baptism by immersion; who shall have been received into its fellowship by a majority vote of the congregation at any of its public services.

##### **2. Admission of members**

All candidates for membership shall be under the watch care of this church and requested to participate in a membership training program. Candidates may be accepted into membership According to one of the following:

##### **A. By Letter**

By receipt of a letter of recommendation and dismissal from another Church of like faith and order.

##### **B. By Baptism**

By profession of faith in Jesus Christ and for baptism by immersion according to the policies of this church.

##### **C. By Statement of Experience**

By his or her statement that he or she has accepted Christ as his personal Savior and has experienced baptism by immersion in a church of like faith and upon giving satisfying evidence that he has been converted when no letter is obtainable.

##### **D. By Restoration**

By having membership in this church or a church of like faith and being terminated by disciplinary action may be received into full fellowship of this church upon expression of repentance and a demonstration of reformation . Should there be any dissent as to any candidate for restoration, such dissent shall be referred to the Deacons for investigation, prior to any other action. The Deacons shall make its recommendation to the church following the investigation. In such instances a three-fourth ( 3/4) affirmative vote of those members present and voting shall be required to elect candidates for membership by restoration.



### **3. Associate/Watchcare Members**

In order to meet the spiritual needs of those Christians who exhibit a spiritual kinship to our people and wish to participate with our church in Christian worship and service, an associate/watchcare is instituted along the following guidelines:

- A.** That the associate/watchcare members be limited to those who have professed Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
- B.** That the associate/watchcare members be allowed to vote on all matters of church business except those involving doctrinal position, or church policy, particularly the election of deacons, constitutional revisions, or the call of a pastor .
- C.** That the associate/watchcare member be allowed to teach, if nominated and elected by the church.
- D.** That the watchcare member not be elected to serve as a messenger
- E.** That the associate/watchcare member not serve as Sunday School Superintendent, Church Clerk, Church Treasurer, WMU President, or any office requiring ordination .
- F.** That the associate/watchcare member assume the same duties and responsibilities outlined for regular members in the “Constitution By-Laws.”
- G.** That, upon leaving our fellowship, the associate/watchcare member be granted a letter of recommendation and appreciation to his church for service with us, if he so requests.

### **Section 3. Duties and responsibilities of church members**

Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life; and also to attend faithfully the services of this church, to give regularly for its support and its causes, and to share in its organized work. All members are expected to act and vote in the transactions of this church.

### **Section 4. New Member Orientation**

New church members will be [required] to participate in the church orientation plan as prescribed by this church. The [church officers and] pastor will be responsible for this orientation process.

### **Section 5. Voting Rights of Members**

Each member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference provided the member is present at the time of voting. (Exceptions: See By-Laws, I. Membership, Section 2, Subsection 3B)

- 1.** Secret Ballots. Secret ballots shall always be used in the election of deacons, the call of a Pastor and any other time when requested.
- 2.** Quorum. Fifteen members shall constitute a quorum for regular business and thirty members shall constitute a quorum for the call of a pastor and for the election of deacons.
- 3.** Majority. For the call of a pastor, a majority shall require a three fourths yes vote of those voting,

### **Section 6. Termination of Membership**

Termination of membership in this church may be affected in the following ways:

- 1.** By Death
- 2.** By Transfer of Letter

A person's membership in this church may be terminated by a majority vote of the congregation at any of its public services upon receipt of a request for that person's membership letter to be transferred to another church.

## **II. CHURCH OFFICERS**

All church officers must be members of this church in regular attendance at least 6 months.

### **Section 1. Pastor**

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks. The pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in the church. As such he works with the deacons and church staff to:

1. Lead the Church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry and application.
2. Proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers.
3. Care for the Church's members and other persons in the community.

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose of which at least one week's public notice has been given.

A Pastor Selection Committee shall be nominated and approved by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. The committee shall consist of 5 voting members and 2 nonvoting alternates. Two of the 5 voting members shall be the Chairman of the Deacon Board and the Director of Sunday School. The remaining 3 voting members and 2 alternates shall be nominated at large. Members of the committee shall not be of the same immediate family. If a voting member is unable to fulfill responsibilities of voting, an alternate will be substituted to fulfill voting requirements. If more than 2 members are unable to fulfill voting responsibilities, thereby having caused both alternates to be substituted to fulfill voting requirements, the committee should inform the church.

The Pastor Selection Committee shall seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendations will constitute a nomination. Any member has the privilege of making other recommendations to the pastor selection committee for consideration by the committee. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary for a choice.

The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. He shall preside at meetings of the church, and if so designated may serve as moderator in all business meetings in keeping with the rules of order authorized in these by-laws.

The pastor may resign by giving at least thirty days notice. The church may declare the office of the pastor to be vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the personnel committee and the deacons, or the deacons alone when there is no personnel committee.

The moderator for this meeting shall be designated by the members present by majority vote, and he shall be someone other than the pastor. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret

ballot; an affirmative vote of two thirds of the members present being necessary to declare the office vacant. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor, should the pastor be terminated by the church, the church will compensate the pastor with [two] months' compensation to be paid in [two] monthly installments. The termination will be immediate.

## **Section 2. Church Staff**

This church shall call or employ such staff as the church shall need. A job description may be written when the need for staff members is determined. At least two weeks notice at the time of resignation should be given.

## **Section 3. Moderator**

A moderator and an assistant may be elected annually to preside over business meetings. In the absence of the moderator, the assistant moderator will preside, or in the absence of both, the church clerk shall call to order and an acting moderator shall be elected.

## **Section 4. Deacons**

There should be no less than six deacons for this church congregation and each deacon shall serve no more than fifteen families. Deacons shall be nominated and elected by secret ballot at a regular business meeting of the church. To constitute a nomination for deacon, an individual must have their name submitted by a member of the church at the time of nominations. A member may be permitted to nominate the required number to fill vacancies on the Board. Those nominees receiving 25% or more of the nominations but not to exceed twice the number of vacancies to be filled, shall be placed before the membership for election.

To constitute an election of a deacon, the nominee must receive a two-thirds ( 2/3 ) affirmative vote of those voting. If vacancies are not filled on the first vote, the nominees receiving at least fifty percent (50%) affirmative votes shall be presented to the church for a second vote to fill remaining vacancies. However, if the number of nominees on the first vote, are equal to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled, no second vote will be taken.

The deacons shall serve on a rotational basis. Each year the term of office of one third of the number of deacons shall expire, and elections shall be held to fill the vacancies. In case of death or removal or incapacity to serve, the church may elect a deacon to fill the unexpired term. After serving a term of three years a deacon shall be eligible for re-election only after the lapse of at least one year. There is no obligation to constitute as an active deacon a person who comes to the church from another church where he served as a deacon.

In accordance with the meaning of the work and practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacon is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing pastoral ministries tasks: proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers; care for church members and other persons in the community; lead the church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry, and application; and lead the church in performing its tasks.

## **Section 5. Clerk**

The clerk and assistant clerk shall be elected by the church and shall keep in a suitable book a record of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. They are responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal or death, together with a record of Baptisms. They shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. The church may delegate some of the clerical

responsibilities to a church secretary. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office when an office is maintained, or in an appropriate place if so designated by the church.

### **Section 6. Treasurer**

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer and an assistant treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money, or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at the regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding month. The treasurers report shall be audited annually by the auditing committee or a public accountant. The treasurer shall be bonded.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

### **Section 7. Trustees**

Three trustees elected by the church will hold in trust the church property. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required. Trustees shall serve one-year terms and may succeed themselves if duly elected by the church.

## **III. CHURCH COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1. General**

All church committee members of committees as prescribed by the Constitution and Bylaws shall be recommended by the nominating committee and elected by the church annually unless otherwise indicated in the bylaws of this constitution. Additional regular committees may be added by the amendment procedure prescribed within these by-laws.

### **Section 2. Nominating Committee**

The nominating committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by volunteer workers, unless otherwise specified herein. Persons considered for any such positions shall first be approved by the nominating committee before they are approached for recruitment. The nominating committee shall present to the church for election all who accept the invitation to serve. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church.

### **Section 3. Building and Grounds Committee**

The building and grounds committee assists the church in matters related to buildings and grounds. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church properties for ready use, recommending the use of church property, recommending policies regarding the use of properties, recommending employment of maintenance personnel, and assigning responsibility to appropriate personnel for supervision. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church.

#### **Section 4. Youth Committee**

The youth committee shall be elected by the church on an annual basis. They shall assist the pastor and youth workers in coordinating youth activities and programs. The committee shall consist of both adults and youth (ages thirteen to eighteen years). Twelve year olds enrolled in the seventh grade are also eligible to participate. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church.

#### **Section 5. Finance and Budget Committee**

1. This church shall operate its financial affairs in accordance with a unified budget to be adopted annually. The budget shall be prepared with the aid of the treasurer and presented to the church, in accordance with plans recommended by the finance committee, and adopted by the church. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church.

2. All contributions, for any and all purposes, shall pass through the hands of the treasurer and be properly recorded on the books of the church. The expenses of all organizations, as approved by the church, shall be paid.

3. Special offerings may be sought by the church or by any of its organizations only upon approval of the church. This does not preclude individuals making special offerings at any time or as the Spirit of God may lead them.

#### **Section 6. Cemetery Committee**

The overall purpose of the cemetery committee is to administer the use of our cemetery property according to the church policies. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church. Their work includes the following:

1. To meet on occasions with families or individuals who need assistance in the use of and/or purchase of plots.
2. To inform all concerned persons of our church cemetery policies.
3. To handle the sale of any plots and see that proper documents and funds are properly processed.
4. To provide custodial care when needed.
5. To see that cemetery property is always attractively maintained.
6. To recommend policies governing the use of cemetery plots to the church.

#### **Section 7. Baptism Committee**

The baptism committee shall consist of two men and two women. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church. This committee shall assume responsibility for all details of the service of baptism, including the preparation of the baptistery, provision of robes, and assistant to the candidates in the service.

#### **Section 8. Flower Committee**

The flower committee is responsible for securing, arranging, and disposing of floral arrangements for church services and for providing flowers for deceased members and family: husband, wife, mother, father, child, and grandchild. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the flower committee. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church.

#### **Section 9. Usher/Greeter Committee**

The ushers/greeters are to greet people as they enter and leave the church, seat people at the proper time and provide bulletins and/or other materials at the proper time, and receive the offering. The ushers will be attentive to the needs of the congregation and the pastor. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church.

### **Section 10. Lord's Supper Committee**

The Lord's Supper Committee shall consist of three persons. These three persons shall organize themselves and familiarize themselves with the details of the observance of the Lords Supper, the equipment, and the schedule. It is suggested that each person assume responsibility for preparing the Lords supper and cleaning and replacing the equipment after the service. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church.

### **Section 11. Social/Homecoming Committee**

The social committee shall consist of at least four members. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church. They shall see that proper provisions are made for church and group fellowship which require the use of our facilities. This will include activities related to the church's homecoming on the second Sunday in August. The specific tasks of the social committee include the following:

1. To keep an up-to-date calendar of planned events and to receive requests for the use of our facilities.
2. To see that those using our facilities are aware of and follow church policies number 300 and 400.
3. To maintain an accurate inventory of supplies.
4. To suggest needs to the appropriate groups or persons.
5. To meet periodically (at least quarterly) to discuss plans, problems, etc.
6. To see that refreshments are provided for our regular church fellowships and other announced occasions.

### **Section 12. Recreation Committee**

The recreation committee will serve the church in seeking to meet the recreational needs of members and groups. They will provide recreational activities and provide consultation, leadership assistance, and resources. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church.

### **Section 13. Drama Committee**

This committee shall select, prepare, and promote programs to emphasize the meaning of the Christmas and Easter seasons. They shall solicit participants from within the church family. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church.

### **Section 14. Auditing Committee**

The auditing committee shall consist of no less than three persons. Their duty shall be to audit and review the treasurers books of the church and report its findings to the church by the end of the first quarter of the fiscal year. This committee shall be elected annually. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church.

### **Section 15. Church Council**

1. The primary function of the church council shall be to recommend to the congregation suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate programs recommended by church officers and committees; to recommend a calendar of time and other resources according to priorities; and to evaluate achievements in terms of church goals and objectives.
2. The council, unless otherwise determined by vote of the church shall have as regular members the pastor, Sunday School director, Training Union director, Womans Missionary Union director, Brotherhood director, chairman of the Deacons and music director. Committee chairmen and church-elected officers shall serve as ex officio members.
3. All matters agreed upon by the council, calling for action not already authorized, shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

#### **Section 16. Tithe and Offering Counting Committee**

The tithe and offering counting committee shall consist of the Church Treasurer, Chairman of the Deacon board, Sunday School Superintendent and the chairman of the Usher Committee. At least two members of this committee shall be present at the time of counting all tithes and offerings. If only one committee member is present the pastor or another deacon may fill in the vacancy. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church.

#### **Section 17. Nursery Committee**

The Nursery committee shall consist of the nursery director and additional church members nominated and elected to keep children in the nursery during worship services and other church events. The nursery director shall serve as chairman of this committee and prepare a schedule for nursery workers.

#### **Section 18. Children's Church Committee**

The Children's Church Committee shall consist of church members who are nominated and elected to conduct activities for children ages 3-5 during the Sunday morning worship service. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church and is responsible for preparing a schedule for children's church workers.

#### **Section 19. Stock Pews Committee**

The Stock Pews Committee is responsible for ensuring that offering envelopes, Bibles, visitor cards, and other necessary items are in pew pockets and that other necessary arrangements are made for church services. The chairman shall be elected by members of the committee, unless designated by the church.

### **IV. PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS**

#### **Section 1. General**

All organizations of the church shall be under church control. All officers are approved by the church and report regularly to the church. All approved officers should be members in regular attendance at least 6 months.

#### **Section 2. Sunday School**

There shall be a Sunday School divided into departments and classes for all ages and conducted under the direction of the Sunday School Superintendent for the study of God's Word. The tasks of the Sunday School shall be to teach the Biblical revelation; to reach persons for Christ and church membership; to perform the functions of the church within its constituency; to provide and to interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

### **Section 3. Training Union**

There should be a church training organization divided into departments for all ages and conducted under the direction of a general director. This organization shall serve as the training organization of the church.

The tasks of the Training Union shall be to orient new church members; to train church members to perform the functions of the church; to train church leaders to teach Christian theology, Christian ethics, Christian history, and church policy and organization; to provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

### **Section 4. Woman's Missionary Union**

There shall be a Woman's Missionary Union with such officers and organization as needed. The tasks of the Woman's Missionary Union shall be to teach missions; to engage in mission action; to support world missions through praying and giving; to provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

### **Section 5. Brotherhood**

There should be a Brotherhood with such organizations as needed. This program shall be directed by a director who shall be elected by the church. The tasks are to teach missions; to engage in mission action; to support world missions through prayer and giving; to provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

### **Section 6. Church Music**

There shall be a church music program under the direction of the choir or music director. Such officers and/or organizations shall be included as needed. The music tasks shall be to teach music; to train persons to lead, to sing, and to play music; to provide music in the church and community; to provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

## **VI. Ordinances**

### **Section 1. Baptism**

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord shall be received for baptism.

1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
2. Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or whomever the church shall authorize. The baptism committee shall assist in the preparation for, and observance of, baptism.
3. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service.
4. A person professing Christ and failing to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff and deacons. If negative interest is ascertained, he shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.

### **Section 2. The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate his second coming.

1. The Lord's Supper shall be observed quarterly, preferably the first Sunday of the quarter, or as otherwise scheduled.



2. The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.
3. The Lord's Supper committee shall be responsible for the physical preparation of the Lord's Supper.

## **VII. Church Meetings**

### **Section 1. Worship Services**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor. Any service may be suspended or moved to a different day or time provided it is agreed upon by the deacons and pastor.

### **Section 2. Special Services**

Revival services and any other church meetings which will be essential in the promotion of the objectives of the church shall be placed on the church calendar.

### **Section 3. Regular Business Meetings**

Regular business meetings shall be held monthly on the second Sunday unless otherwise stipulated by the church.

### **Section 4. Special Business Meetings**

A specially called business meeting may be held to consider special matters of significant nature. A one-week notice of the subject, date, time, and location must be given for the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical.

### **Section 5. Parliamentary Rules**

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliament; rules of procedures for all business meetings of the church.

## **VIII. Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the church year which begins September 1 and ends on August 31.

## **IX. Amendments**

Changes in this constitution and by-laws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments to the constitution shall be by two-thirds vote of all members of the church present and entitled to vote; amendments to the by-laws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the membership present and voting.

## **X. Review**

This constitution and by-laws shall be reviewed, revised, and re-adopted at least every five (5) years.

Adopted July, 1981	Revised December 1986
Revised September 1992	Revised June 2000
Revised October 2005	Revised February 8, 2009 [brackets define changes]
Revised August 2011	Revised March 9, 2014 (By-Laws Article II, Sect. 1, Para. 8)