



The Constitution

of

Fredericktowne Baptist Church

Walkersville, MD

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Approved on Sunday September 20, 2009, at a special Congregational Meeting held at Fredericktowne Baptist Church.

NOTE: Portions or all of the following provisions of this constitution are not intended to be permanent as they are established solely for the transitional purposes stated therein: Article IV, 1.4. Tenure in Office; Section 2.3. Tenure and Number of Elders; Section 4.2. Tenure and Number of Deacons; Section 5.2. Tenure and Number of Missions Board members; Section 6.2. Tenure and Number of Trustees. Upon the accomplishment of the stated purposes of these transitional provisions, subsequent printings of this constitution shall drop these transitional provisions from the constitution. Furthermore, inasmuch as the present pastor search and calling process was initiated under the 2005 constitution’s “Calling a Pastor” provisions (Art IV, Sec 2.1) those provisions shall, as transitional provisions, continue to apply to the current process, vote (held on September 20, 2009) and any related calling notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this constitution (to include Article IX).

The Constitution of Fredericktowne Baptist Church

Preamble

We, the members of Fredericktowne Baptist Church (FBC) do hereby establish this Constitution by which we mutually agree to be governed in the affairs of our local church. The FBC Constitution consists of Part I - The Church Covenant, Part II -The Doctrinal Statement and Part III - The By-Laws which parts are collectively referred to herein as “The Constitution.”

I. The Church Covenant

Having been led by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, and on the public profession of our faith and in obedience to Scriptural baptism, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into this Covenant with one another, as one Body in Christ.

We, therefore, agree by the controlling power of the Holy Spirit to walk in love and strive for the advancement of this local church in scriptural knowledge and holiness and to give regularly to the support of its many and diverse ministries. We further agree to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure that reconciliation without delay.

We also agree to maintain family and personal devotion; and to bring up our children in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord. We further agree to seek the salvation of our family and friends; to be an example in behavior and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the cause of Christ. We also agree that if we move from this place, we will promptly unite with a church of like faith and practice. Humbly acknowledging our own personal sinfulness, we acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence and power in our lives as more than sufficient to keep this Covenant in letter and in spirit to the glory of God.

II. The Doctrinal Statement

The Constitution of the Fredericktowne Baptist Church includes this statement of our Scriptural beliefs. This doctrinal statement comprises those teachings that we consider to be the fundamental foundation for our faith.

II.1. The Scriptures.

We believe that the whole Bible, consisting of 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, is verbally inspired of God and inerrant in the original writings, and the Bible is the supreme, complete and final authority in faith and life (Psalm 119:89; Isaiah 40:8, Matt. 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Rev. 22:18-19; 2 Peter 1:3).

II.2. The True God.

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe that they are equal in every divine perfection and execute distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (Deut. 6:4-5; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; 1 Timothy 1:17; Mat. 28:19; John 15:16-17, 26).

II.2.1. God the Father

We believe that God is the Father of creation. We believe that He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God did not become the Father of Jesus Christ at Christ's incarnation, but the Father/Son relationship has existed from all eternity. We believe that God is the Father of all who believe (Matt. 5:16; 1 Cor. 8:6; John 17:5; 20:17; Col. 1:17; Eph. 1:5; 1 John 3:1-2; Rom. 8:15,23,29).

II 2.2 God the Son: Jesus Christ

We believe that the eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ, came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the redeemer of the lost world. To this end, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit in a

miraculous manner and born of a virgin, having received a human body and a sinless human nature (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25; John 1:14; Gal. 4:4; 1 John 5:20).

We believe that He remained a perfect sinless man, yet retained His absolute deity, being at the same time fully God and fully man. We believe that He voluntarily accepted His Father's will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb who took away the sin of the world, bearing the holy judgment against sin which the righteousness of God must impose (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 10:5-14, 1 Peter 3:18). We believe that, according to the Word of God, He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, and that His resurrection body is the pattern of that body which all believers shall inherit (John 20:20, 1 Cor. 15:3-5, Phil. 3:20-21).

We believe that in His ascension to Heaven He became the Head over all things to the Church which is His body, and in this ministry He does not cease to intercede for believers (Acts 1:9, Eph. 1:22-23, Heb. 7:25, 1 John 2:1, Luke 24:51, Rev. 3:21, Heb. 12:2).

II.2.3. God the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with God the Father and God the Son, and of the same nature. It is He who convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He is the restrainer of the Evil One until God's purpose is fulfilled. He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel and is the agent in the new birth. He is the Comforter sent by the Father to minister to the believer. We believe that the baptism and indwelling of the Holy Spirit occurs immediately upon saving faith. The Holy Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance and seals us until the day of redemption. We believe that there are gifts of the Holy Spirit which are given by His sovereign will to assist the body of Christ in its divine growth. We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit, commonly referred to as the sign gifts, were temporary in nature and limited to the apostolic age (John 14:16-17; John 16:7-11; Matt. 28:19; Heb. 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; 2 Thess. 2:7; 1 Cor. 12:4,11; Acts 4:8,31; Romans 8:23; 1 Cor. 13:8).

II.3. The Devil or Satan.

We believe that Satan was once holy and enjoyed heavenly honors, but, through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, he fell and drew after him a host of angels; that he is the malignant prince of the power of the air and the unholy god of this world system We hold him to be man's great tempter, the enemy of God and Christ, the accuser of the saints, the author of all false religions, the chief power behind apostasy. He is the lord of the Anti-Christ, and the author of all the powers of darkness; destined, however, to final judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire, a place prepared for the Devil and his angels. (Isa. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:14-17; Matt. 25:41; Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4; 1 Thess. 3:5; 1 Peter 5:8; 2 Cor.11:13-15; 2 Thess. 2:8-11; Rev. 19:11,20).

II.4. Creation.

We believe in the Genesis account of the creation and that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively; and that man was created directly in God's own image and likeness (Gen. 1:1; Gen. 1:26-27; John 1:1-4; Col. 1:16-17).

II.5. The Fall of Man.

We believe that man was originally created in the image and likeness of God, and that by voluntary transgression, being under no constraint and able to obey, he fell from his sinless state. As a consequence of his sin, man's fellowship with God was severed and he became spiritually dead in trespasses and sins. We believe that this spiritual death has been transmitted to the entire human race, the Man Christ Jesus being the lone exception, and therefore every child of Adam is born into the world with a sin nature and is essentially and unchangeably wicked apart from divine grace, when appropriated by the one who, after exercising faith in Christ, is then resurrected from this spiritual death into spiritual life, we call this regeneration. (Gen. 1:26; 2:17; 3:1-6, 24; Psalm 14:1-3; 51:5; Jer. 17:9; John 3:6; 5:40; 6:53; 12:32; 16:8; Rom. 3:10-19; 5:12,19; 8:6-7; Eph. 2:1,3; Gal. 3:22; 1 Timothy 5:6; 1 John 3:8).

While we believe that by reason of this spiritual death the lost cannot move toward God unaided, we understand the scriptures teach all men are aided, unless rejected by man, in turning toward God a) by being convicted of their sin of

unbelief by the Holy Spirit b) by being drawn unto and turning towards the cross by the lifted up Savior c) by hearing the word from whence faith comes d) by the calling of the Gospel e) by the power of the word that's sharper than any two-edged sword and able to pierce soul and spirit f) by the true Light that enlightens every man coming into the world that all men might believe and g) by the appearance to all men God's saving grace. We believe the scriptures teach that all men must fulfill the responsibility to obey the Gospel and not resist the truth and that their failure and refusal to do so is the sin of unbelief which, if continued in, deserves condemnation. (John 12:32; John 16:8; John 3; 14.15; Romans 10:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:8, 2:10, 2:14; Hebrews 4:12; Titus 2:11; Hebrews 5:8-9; 2 Timothy 3:8, 9)

We believe the existence of God has been manifested in every person in his unregenerate (unsaved) state by the attributes of God clearly seen in all of His creation so that no one has an excuse for rejecting the eternal Godhead (Romans 1:18) and that every man, knowing good from evil and right from wrong, has a conscience passed on by Adam and Eve. (Genesis 3:22)

II.6. Salvation

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of God's grace when received through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. By His substitutionary death, Jesus Christ made a full and vicarious unlimited atonement for all – past, present and future – sin to include our sins. No degree of works can provide the sinner with the new life that makes him a son of God through faith. This redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who bore the penalty of man's sin on the cross. The one who exercises faith in Christ, after hearing and accepting the word and placing their trust in Christ in obedience to the Gospel, is immediately resurrected from spiritual death into spiritual life, pardoned of all sin, declared righteous before God, and given the gift of eternal life. Rom. 3:24-25; Rom. 5:6-9; 1 Peter 1:18,19,23; John 1:12; John 3:5; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 5:1; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 1:3; Ephesians 1:13, Romans 10:17, John 20:30-31, Acts 15:7, Mark 4:20, Acts 17:11-12, 2 Tim 3:15; 2 Thessalonians 1:8).

We believe in God's election which is according to foreknowledge; that He chose the believer before the foundation of the world and; that He predestined the believer to be adopted as sons and daughters, joint heirs with Christ, which is in accord with His will. We believe Jesus came to seek and save the lost; all of whom He desires, without exception, to come to the knowledge of the truth and to be saved. We believe that the offer of salvation is made freely available to all sinners by the gospel. We believe the scriptures teach that all men must fulfill their responsibility to obey the Gospel and not resist the truth. The only hindrance to salvation of any sinner is his own inherent depravity and unbelief which, if continued in, merits the just condemnation of a holy God. (Eph. 1:3-12; 1 Thess. 1:4; Col. 3:12; 1 Peter 1:2; Titus 1:1; Rom. 8:28-30; John 3:18,36; Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 2:4; Hebrews 5:8-9; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 3:8,9).

We believe that the salvation of the believer is eternal. The believer is kept by the power of God and is eternally secure in Christ. We believe that salvation is through faith and, being undeserved, is by grace alone and that the believer once saved is kept saved by grace alone (John 5:24; 6:39; John 10:28, Rom. 8:29, 38-39; Eph. 1:5; Heb. 7:25; 1 Peter 1:5).

II.7. Justification

We believe that justification includes the pardon for sin and the gift of eternal life. We believe that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but, solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us (Acts 13:39; Rom. 8:1; Rom. 5:1; Titus 3:5-7; Rom. 1:17; Rom. 4:1-8).

II.8. Sanctification

We believe that God calls all believers in Jesus Christ to sanctification, a life set apart to God. Sanctification is the process from salvation by which God conforms the believers' life and character to the life and character of Jesus Christ. We believe that this is a call to walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. The life that is empowered by the Spirit does not fulfill the desires of the flesh (Rom. 6:11-13; 8:2,4, 12-13; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 2:1-10; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 2:11; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 1:4-7; 3:5-9).

II.9. The Church

We believe that the universal church, the body of Christ, is composed of all born-again believers of this age and that Christ is the only head of that church. We believe that the local church of Christ is an assembly of believers associated by faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ and governed by His laws. We believe the true mission of the church is to follow the great commission, Matt. 28:19-20, to make individual disciples, to build up the church and, to instruct and teach as He has commanded (Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22-23; Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-24).

II.10. The Two Ordinances of the Church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that the ordinance of baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Believer's baptism is a solemn and beautiful emblem of our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life. We believe that the ordinance of the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of the death of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We believe that the elements of the Lord's Supper' the bread and the cup, symbolize the broken body and shed blood of our Lord. The believer is to avail himself of the opportunity to remember the Lord at the communion table (Acts 8:36-39; Rom. 6:4-5; Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor. 11:23-24).

II.11. The Resurrection of the Saved and the Unsaved

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the just to everlasting blessedness, and the unjust to everlasting conscious punishment (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:22-23; 1 Thess. 4:14-17; Rev. 20:4,11-13).

We believe that at death the souls of those who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain until the resurrection of the body to glorification, when Christ comes for His own, at which time soul and body are reunited and shall be with Him forever in Glory. The souls of the unbelieving remain after death in a state of conscious condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the Great White Throne Judgment which occurs at the close of the Millennium. At this time the soul and body of the eternally lost are reunited and cast into the lake of fire to be punished with everlasting torment (Luke 16:19-26, 2 Cor. 5:8, Rev. 20:11-15, Phil. 3:20-21).

II.12. The Second Coming of Christ.

We believe that the return of the Lord will be two-fold. First, He shall appear, prior to the Tribulation, in bodily form in the air to call up to be with Himself the believing church. Believers will then, as the bride of Christ, go into the marriage of the Lamb. The judgment of the believers' walk at the judgment seat of Christ will then follow (1 Thess.4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15; 1 Cor. 3:9-15; 2 Cor. 5:10). The second part of the return of the Lord will be His return to the earth with His church to establish His earthly kingdom, known as the Millennium (Zech. 14:34; 1 Thess. 3:13; Col. 3:4; 2 Thess. 1:7-8).

II.13. Biblical Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality *(Revised 06/26/23)*

We joyfully believe in the created order of God; that he created, in his image, male and female as distinct but complementary creatures; that marriage, human sexuality, and biological gender are unchangeable; that human gender is given by God at conception and not assigned at birth; that no person, government, society, or ecclesiastical body can or should attempt to redefine marriage or sexuality, or to change one's biological gender; and that marriage and human sexuality are to be enjoyed only and entirely within the confines of a one-flesh union between one man and one woman. As such, we will not knowingly support any effort to reverse, subvert, or change God's holy order in creation. Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:15; Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 6:9-11, 18-20; 7:1-16; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:5-6; 1 Timothy 1:8-10; Hebrews 13:4; Revelation 21:8.

III. The By-Laws

Article I. Identification of the Church

The name of this church shall be Fredericktowne Baptist Church.

Section 1. Purpose of the Church

The purpose of this church¹ is modeled after the ministry of Jesus Christ² and shall be for worship³, fellowship⁴, prayer⁵, edification⁶ and evangelism.⁷ In accordance with its purpose, this church is to make disciples of Christ, assisting its members toward spiritual maturity, encouraging its believers in ministry, and equipping Christians for evangelism of our World for Christ to the glory of God.

Section 2. Independence of the Church

Though always submitting to the headship of Christ, this church is independent so far as relates to its internal organization and the regulation of its affairs, doctrine, and including but not limited to approval, discipline, and removal of its members according to its own understanding of the Word of God.

Article II. Church Membership

Section 1. Introduction including Qualifications/Requirements

The Fredericktowne Baptist Church believes that membership is a privilege with attendant responsibilities. FBC believes that congregational members who confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior (being believers) are priests among the priesthood of believers⁸ with direct access to our Lord and Savior. Any person 18 or older professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving testimony of their new birth experience, having adopted the doctrinal statement and consenting to the procedures and practices of this Church established by this Constitution, having been baptized by immersion (unless hindered by some physical condition), and who have been recommended by the Elder Board, may be received into active membership of the Fredericktowne Baptist Church by a simple majority vote of FBC members present at the time of the vote per Article V. The application for membership acknowledges a willing consent to abide by and be subject to the Constitution upon attaining membership. All requests for membership shall be made to any pastor or Elder. The term "member" shall mean only "an active member" unless specifically stated otherwise throughout this constitution.

Section 2. Responsibilities of Membership

Each member, in accordance with his covenant obligation, shall solemnly engage by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the edification of this church in Biblical knowledge and holiness; to promote its spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry and the spread of the Gospel throughout all nations to save all of the lost. All members are encouraged to regularly seek out areas for service in some capacity at FBC. All active members in good standing are eligible to vote on issues brought before the church in accordance with this constitution and are expected to participate in such matters. Continuing adherence to this constitution (and amendments) is a requirement for maintaining and continuing membership.

In addition to membership, Fredericktowne Baptist Church makes provision for associate membership. This designation is for people who cannot regularly attend FBC but who wish to continue their relationship with the church. This designation is reserved for members who have gone to the mission field, for those in the military who become stationed outside of the area, for members who go off to college outside of the area, and for those who suffer a long-term illness keeping them from attending services. Associate members are not eligible to vote on any issue within the church.

Section 3. Church Membership for Pastor and Pastoral Staff

The Pastor; all pastoral staff; and their spouses, if married, shall be members of the church. Throughout these By-Laws, the term Pastor refers to the Senior Pastor. The term "pastoral staff" refers to pastors that support the senior Pastor.

Section 4. Attendance

Those members who have absented themselves from the worship services of this church for a period of three months without reasonable excuse shall be declared inactive by the Elders. Inactive members shall have no vote in congregational meetings, nor shall they hold any church office. The Board of Elders together with the entire body will strive to increase attendance of worship and participation in church ministries and will demonstrate care and attention to those whose attendance has declined.

Section 5. Disapproval of Application

If the Board of Elders or the congregation determines that the applicant does not confess Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, are not willingly submitting to and in full agreement with the constitution or has a lifestyle inconsistent with this constitution, membership shall be disapproved. The decision made by the Elder Board or the congregation shall be final and there shall be no appeal to any court from that decision. Re-application may occur but the issues that resulted in disapproval have to be completely resolved with adequate time elapsed to confirm new behavior or views.

Section 6. Discipline, Reconciliation and Restoration of Members

6.1. Foundational Principles

In church discipline members and regular attenders (who are professing believers) understand that all members of the church, especially Elders⁹, have a responsibility to encourage holiness by spurring one another on toward love and good deeds¹⁰ and discourage unGodly behavior in each member and in the church as a whole by following and abiding by Galatians 6:1-2 for restoration and Matthew 18:15-17 for reconciliation. Each member of this church consents to submitting one to another in the fear of God¹¹ under the reconciliation, restoration, and disciplinary procedures of this constitution

6.2. Church Discipline

The purpose of church discipline is to restore a member or regular attender engaged in sin to a right relationship with the Lord and His church and to protect the purity of the church in doctrine and practice. It shall be the practice of this church to pursue every reasonable measure for peace and reconciliation. Should a member or regular attender become an offense to the church and its dignity by reason of immoral conduct, un-Christian conduct, or promoting false doctrine they shall be subject, consistent with this constitution, to the discipline of the Church. Grounds for discipline that may result in admonishment, removal from office, loss of fellowship, loss of membership, expulsion or other discipline include:

1. Unrepentant sin to include engaging in or advocating immorality, such as, fornication, adultery, homosexuality (including lesbianism), dishonesty, contentiousness, and idolatry. (See 1 Corinthians 5 (especially verses 11-13); Leviticus 18:22; 1 Corinthians 6:9; Romans 1:24-27);
2. Persistently holding heretical doctrinal beliefs falling beyond the pale of orthodoxy known to Christendom (such as denying or questioning Jesus Christ's deity or the virgin birth). (1 Timothy 1:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:17b-18);
3. Persistently refusing to abide by and adopt the biblical doctrines this local assembly holds to be truth by communicating beliefs that, while not necessarily heretical, are contrary to the doctrinal statement of this church and therefore a breach of the solemn covenant and accord entered into and required for membership. (Numbers 30:2, James 4:17);
4. Refusing to listen to and hear the church, reconcile an offense or repent of sin. (Matthew 18:15-18¹²; Galatians 6:1¹³);
5. Maintaining a divisive spirit (Titus 3:10) which results in rebellion to God's Word or justly exercised Godly authority (1 Corinthians 1:10; Romans 16:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-14; 2 Thess. 3:6-7, 3:11, 3:14-15).

6.3. Procedures for Reconciliation, Discipline and Restoration.

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins.” (1 Peter 4:8)

When we love each other deeply, listen first (Proverbs 18:13), with gentleness softly answer (Proverbs 15:1) and call upon the Lord, strife, disputes and sin among us ought to flee. And yet, in the rare circumstance where reconciliation and restoration efforts of believers require other believers or the body to come along side, the scriptures provide a procedure for the believer to follow.

In seeking reconciliation and restoration each step described below is to be lovingly and gently taken by the offended believer to include, if necessary, the believer (or their designee) telling it to the church unless the Elder board unanimously finds proceeding to the Fourth Step is beyond the pale of all that is rational and reasonable. As a part of the Fourth Step, the Elder Board’s recommendation shall, after faithful efforts of the body to gain reconciliation or restoration as needed, be carried out upon ratification by congregational vote.

First Step – Private Confrontation and Reconciliation Effort - *If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone and if he hears you, you have gained your brother.* (Matthew 18:15)

Second Step - Confrontation and Reconciliation Efforts before Witnesses - *But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.* (Matthew 18:16)

Third Step - Confrontation and Reconciliation Efforts before the Elder Board. - If there is still no reconciliation or repentance, the offended believer shall bring the matter to the Elder Board, who will deal with the individual. At this meeting the member shall be given the opportunity to be heard and to face his or her accusers. Faithful efforts must also be made on the part of the Elder Board and /or other members, in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, to secure reconciliation or restore him or her to repentance.

Fourth Step – Confrontation, Reconciliation and Restoration Discipline before and by the Church - *And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. (Matthew 18:17a) But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”* (Matthew 18:17-18)

6.4 Sins and offenses not directed against a Believer

Brethren, if one of you is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Galatians 6:1

Brethren Overtaken by Sin. Galatians 6:1 teaches mature spiritual believers have a responsibility to confront sin in general in the life of other believers and not just when it is an offense against one’s person. (See also Hebrews 12:14-16; 1 Corinthians 5:2, 4-5, 7, 12-13). Galatians 6:1-2 states this is to be done by one that is spiritual (i.e., members that are not “babes in Christ” – 1 Cor 3:1-4) with the objective of restoring one in a spirit of gentleness, with self-reflection (Matthew 7:13) so that you too will not be tempted. Therefore, each member shall, in the spirit of the *FBC By-Laws Guidelines*, apply the Matthew 18:16-17 principles in a similar manner as specified in Section 6.3 when members are overtaken by sin (See Article II, 6.2).

6.5. Consent and Confidentiality

Each member of this Church agrees to submit to discipline and participate in the discipline by the church and consent to the Church’s jurisdiction as established by this constitution and the Holy Scriptures. Each church officer, employee and all church members acknowledge that by seeking or continuing church membership after this constitution (or any amendment) has been approved, they have consented to being governed by this constitution.

Article III. Church Finances

We believe in the practice of regular giving¹⁴ as one of our acts of worship. Giving is a free will offering made cheerfully, neither under compulsion nor grudgingly.¹⁵ We are to give God the first part of our income¹⁶, showing that God takes first place; our resources belong to Him. This helps us properly manage God's resources. We believe that the principle of proportionate giving encourages tithing as the beginning place of giving and is a reminder that all belongs to our Lord.¹⁷ We should strive to give sacrificially out of love for fellow believers and the joy of helping those in need.¹⁸ We should support those who minister to us;¹⁹ the local church is the first priority (principal beneficiary) in giving.

Article IV. Church Governance and Offices

Section 1. Church Governance

1.1. The Governing Body

The Head Shepherd of the Church is Jesus Christ. Through its members and its elected officers to which spiritual, operational and oversight responsibilities are delegated, the congregation shall be the governing body of the Church. This is based on: 1 Cor. 5:1-13, 2 Cor. 2:5-8, Matthew 18:15-18, Acts 6:1-6, Galatians 3:23-28, 1 Peter 2:9, Revelation 5:10, and Revelation 1:6. The congregation holds overall responsibility pursuant to its voting responsibilities for membership, leadership, doctrine, worship, missions, conduct, discipline, budget, property and other church affairs. Following the election of officers, the congregation shall be subject to the authority of these elected officials who serve well in accordance with this constitution.

1.2. Permanent and Temporary Offices

Permanent offices are those of: Pastor, Associate/Assistant Pastors, Elders, Deacons, Trustees, Mission Board, Treasurer, and Directors/Ministers of Youth Ministries, Adult Ministries, and Worship & Music Ministry. Officers shall be elected by ballot at the annual church business meeting in accordance with the tenure of office as provided herein, and, except for the Pastor (and associate and assistant pastors), will be filled from the membership of the Church. Officers elected at special elections to fill a vacancy do so for its remaining term.

With the approval of the Elder Board, temporary offices and organizations may be created as needed to assist in the efficient execution of the work of the church or to promote the ministries and legitimate interests of the church subject to budgetary approvals as applicable. Only members of FBC can be employees of FBC unless there is no qualified member willing to perform the job.

The key duties for FBC offices are enumerated in this constitution. Position Descriptions shall be established by the Elder Board. Position Descriptions shall detail all constitutional duties for each elected office and supplement, or add new duties not addressed by, nor in conflict with the constitutionally enumerated duties for each office or any other part of the constitution.

1.3. Nomination, Election, and Installation of Officers and Directors

In nominating and electing people to serve as officers and Directors, the congregational members, being priests among the priesthood of believers, giving careful attention and critical examination of all applicable scriptural qualifications and this constitution, shall humbly determine, discern and recognize, based upon their prayerful consideration and through their direct access to our Father, Lord and Savior, each person the Holy Spirit has called out for the congregation to set before itself with delegated authority to perform the duties upon election to and installation in office. Members shall, upon electing and installing these officers, appreciate their diligent labors and respect those who serve well in exercising constitutional duties. (See Section 2 which addresses the nomination/election of Elders and Section 3 which addresses the calling and election of pastors).

1.3.1. Nomination. Nominations for officers and Directors shall be in accordance with the nomination process in Article IV, Section 9.

1.3.2. Election. In accordance with Article IV, section 9 an election ballot shall be prepared and cast by members at the annual church meeting called in accordance with Article V of the By-Laws. If a two-thirds majority of the congregational members voting approve the candidate, the Elders and the rest of the congregation shall prayerfully surround the elected officer or Director and install them into office.

1.4. Tenure in Office

A Board member (excluding the Pastor) cannot serve more than six consecutive years on that Board. Following six years of service, after a minimum of a 1-year sabbatical, it is permissible that a person be re-elected to serve as a member of that Board. In the case of Board members who were not elected for a specific term, those members cannot serve more than 4 more consecutive years after the adoption of this constitutional change.

Section 2. The Elders

The Elders shall be the spiritual leaders of the church and shall execute the duties of their office being accountable to God and to the priesthood of believers that are members of FBC. The Pastor is a member of the Elder Board.

2.1. Qualifications of Elders

An Elder must be a member of the church, a man²⁰ of mature spiritual experience and understanding, capable of exhorting and convincing with sound doctrine and demonstrated ability to teach, formally or informally, doctrine and the Word. He must meet the scriptural qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4. An Elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. He must be blameless, not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must be above reproach, peaceable, free from the love of money. No one shall serve on the Board of Elders who has not first demonstrated the qualifications at FBC, such as serving as a Deacon, as a Sunday School teacher or equivalent demonstrated capabilities, and having been a member for at least 24 months, and a Christian for at least five years.

2.2 Nomination and Election of Elders

In nominating and electing Elders, the congregational members, being priests among the priesthood of believers²¹ with direct access to our Lord and Savior, shall in accordance with the scriptures, giving careful attention and critical examination of all applicable scriptural qualifications for Elder (see Titus 1:6-9, 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Section 2.3.) and based upon their prayerful consideration humbly determine, discern and recognize each man the Holy Spirit²² has called out for the congregation to set before itself with delegated authority to lead, direct and attend to the body upon their election to and installation in office.

Nominations for the office shall be in accordance with the nomination process in Section 9 of Article IV of these By-Laws. If 75 percent of the congregational members voting approve the candidate, the Elders and the rest of the congregation shall prayerfully surround the elected Elder and install him within his office. Upon installation into office, the congregation shall subject itself to their authority,²³ appreciate the Elders diligent labors,²⁴ and give honor²⁵ to Elders who lead well in overseeing this body's spiritual welfare by keeping watch over the souls of those they lead²⁶ and in exercising all other constitutional duties. The Board of Elders shall annually elect its own chairman and secretary.

2.3. Tenure and Number of Elders

The Elder Board shall consist of a minimum of three (3) members and a maximum of nine (9) members, including the Pastor. Members serving indefinite terms based on prior constitutional provisions shall have a minimum term of three (3) years and a maximum of four (4) years from the time of adoption of the constitutional change to term periods. Otherwise, all members shall be elected to this office for a term of three years. Whenever possible there shall be an odd number of Elders serving on the board taking into account the Pastor.

Elders who leave (or have left) their constitutional office in good standing shall be an Elder Emeritus. Consistent with the congregational recognition of the Holy Spirit's call made known to the congregation, an Elder Emeritus who remains above reproach and fulfills his duty of attending to the spiritual well-being of the flock shall, as an Elder Emeritus, retain the standing as a spiritual leader of the congregation but shall have no constitutionally defined Elder duties nor vote at meetings of the Board of Elders. An Elder Emeritus may be called upon to assist the Elder Board in administering church ordinances or other areas of service.

2.4. Authority and Duties of the Elder Board

2.4.1. Scripturally defined Duties

1. The Elders shall have authority to lead, guide, and oversee the matters of the church with special focus on the spiritual interests of the church subject to other constitutional responsibilities and authorities granted, or retained, by the congregation under this constitution.
2. The Elders are to care for the church the way a shepherd cares for his flock (1 Peter 5:1-2).
3. The Elders are to be examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:2-4). The Elders shall serve as overseers, not because they must, but because they are willing as God wants them to be...eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to them.
4. The Elder Board is to lead well in the management of the church affairs given to them by this constitution (1 Timothy 3:5; 5:17).
5. The Elders are to keep watch over the spiritual well-being of individuals within the church (Heb. 13:17).
6. The Elders shall consult together regarding doctrinal questions that arise in the church (Acts 15:4-6).
7. The Elders shall seek to protect the church from those who would teach false doctrine (Acts 20:28-31).
8. The Elders share in the responsibility of all mature believers to confront and restore those who give reason to be disciplined (Gal 6:1; (1 Thess. 5:12).
9. The Elders are to pray for the sick (James 5:14).
10. They shall labor in the Word and periodically demonstrate their ability to teach for it is honorable (1 Tim.5:17, 2 Tim 2:24).

2.4.2. Organizationally defined Duties of the Elder Board

1. The Elders shall have authority to lead, guide, and oversee the matters of the church with special focus on the organizational interests of the church subject to other constitutional responsibilities and authorities granted, or retained, by the congregation under this constitution.
2. The Elder Board shall set goals for the church and plan for their realization. The Elder Board shall hold periodic congregational business meetings at intervals no greater than six months to present status and future plans. Notice of these meetings shall be given in accordance with Article V Section 3.
3. The Elder Board shall work together with the Pastor in establishing tasks and goals for the Pastor that lead to fulfillment of the vision for FBC. The Elder Board shall supervise the Pastor in carrying out his pastoral duties.
4. The Elder Board (without the Pastor) shall provide a written annual review of the Pastor's performance.
5. When it is expedient to do so, the Elder Board may delegate functions to the Deacon Board.
6. The Elder Board shall prepare an annual budget for congregational approval. The Elder Board shall consult with the ministry heads, and the Trustee Board, to prepare the proposed budget. The Elder Board shall allocate a minimum of 10% of the annual church budget to the Mission Board for the Mission Board's allocation and disposition. The Elder Board shall see to the orderly execution of the budget and may authorize expenditures beyond approved budget limits for cases of facility emergencies and staff separations and up to five percent (5%) beyond approved budget limits per budget category without congregational approval. The Elder Board shall notify the congregation in their periodic congregational business meetings approved expenditure increases. The budget and all financial information, including audits, about the Church with the exclusion of detailed information of contributions by individuals shall be available for review by any member upon request.

7. In the case of staff separations severance packages, unless a severance package is precluded by this constitution, each case will be decided on an individual basis by the Elder Board. As to this decision, the Elder Board shall strive to reach a unanimous decision; however, if this is not possible, a 75% majority, excluding the person involved, shall render a decision. The Elder Board shall report the severance package to the members of FBC.
8. The Elder Board shall meet at least monthly, and as often as necessary, to effectively carry out their work. A quorum shall consist of two thirds of the active Elder Board.
9. The chairman shall serve as moderator of the church in absence of the Pastor.
10. The Elder Board shall receive, consider, and recommend to the church all amendments to this Constitution per Article VI except for amendments resulting from an Article V special meeting called by members to amend the constitution.
11. The Elders shall oversee and concur/non-concur with all staff evaluations and salary recommendations. The Elder Board, including the Senior Pastor, shall have the responsibility for the establishment, approval, and changes of the duties within the position description of each elected and staff position. The Pastor is excluded from the development of his evaluation and internal discussions relative to his salary.
12. The Elder Board shall provide strategic guidance to and oversight of the Directors with day-to-day supervision by the Pastor. From time-to-time, at the initiative of the Elder Board or request of a Director(s), the Elder Board together with the Pastor shall meet with Director(s) to review, adjust, assist in setting priorities and provide clarification of goals and policies that are consistent with and contribute to the vision of FBC. The same shall apply to associate or assistant pastors if one fills a Director role.
13. Given that the boards can vary in size, within constitutional constraints the Elder Board shall, after consultation with the board concerned, determine the number of people that shall serve on each board prior to the election.
14. At least one Elder, typically the Pastor, shall meet with people who are interested in being baptized to hear their testimony and ask questions to confirm that the individual has accepted Christ as Lord and Savior. Upon said faith, a baptismal service shall be performed at a future date.
15. The Elder Board should strive to establish quarterly outreach objectives/events and yearly revival objectives/events.
16. The Elder Board should ensure that accounting policies are in place. If a request exceeds budgeted funds, elder approval is required before the expenditure is approved. In the absence of the treasurer an elder is authorized to sign checks. The term elder here would exclude the Pastor from being authorized to sign checks.
17. The Elder Board shall initiate and present any action applicable to section 6.3 with regard to Elder Board oversight of Trustees.

Section 3. The Pastor

3.1. The Call, Election, and Tenure of a Pastor

When filling a vacancy in the pastorate, the congregational members shall, based upon their prayerful consideration, humbly determine, discern and recognize the man the Holy Spirit²⁷ has called out for the congregation to set before itself with delegated authority to lead, teach, shepherd and attend to the body upon his election to and installation in the office of Pastor by the congregation and Elder Board.

3.1.1. The Pulpit Committee. The Elder Board shall initiate the creation of a pulpit committee to search for a candidate suitable for congregational consideration. This committee shall be chaired by an Elder, it shall be the pulpit committee's duty to seek, review, eliminate, identify and investigate candidates for the pastorate. When a man is invited to candidate, he shall be interviewed by this committee and be made familiar with and examined as to his beliefs and views relative to, the Constitution of this church, with emphasis on Bible doctrine, and the church doctrinal statement.

3.1.1.1. In creating the pulpit committee the Elder Board shall appoint an Elder to chair the pulpit committee and the Deacons shall appoint a Deacon to be a member of the pulpit committee both of whom may remain chairman and a member of the pulpit committee even if their term in office has expired. In addition to the Chairman Elder and

Deacon member, the pulpit committee should consist of five (5) members of the church and should consist of a minimum of two women.

3.1.1.2. The candidate who, having been found acceptable by the pulpit committee, is approved by the pulpit committee for further consideration by the church and who has promised to believe and teach in accordance with the doctrinal statement, shall be presented to the Elder Board of the church. A background check shall be performed on all candidates considered for Pastor.

3.1.2. Elder Board and Congregational Review. The Elder Board of the church shall undertake prayerful consideration of the candidate. If at least 75% of the Elders are in agreement that the candidate is worthy of congregational consideration, the candidate will be brought before the church for consideration which shall include no less than two sermons and two public examination sessions. The two sermons and question and answer sessions may be conducted on one weekend (e.g. Friday night or Saturday along with Sunday).

3.1.3. Election of the Pastor. If after the above examination period the Elder Board still believes the candidate is worthy of congregational consideration for the office of Pastor and that he and his spouse (if any) are qualified for membership and otherwise understand and accept the FBC constitution, a special meeting of the church shall be called for the purpose of voting by secret ballot to determine whether the congregation will call the candidate and vote on membership. The candidates shall be brought before the church for a single vote on his election to the position of Pastor which vote shall also constitute a vote on his, and on his spouse's, church membership. If a 75% majority of those members present submit a favorable vote recognizing him as the man the Holy Spirit has called out for the congregation to set before itself, the congregation's call shall be extended by the Elder Board on behalf of the church. If the call is accepted, at a subsequent meeting, the Elder Board and the rest of the congregation shall surround the elected Pastor and install him within his office as Pastor. Should the candidate not be extended a call by the congregation or, if so called, should the call be refused, the pulpit committee should seek out an acceptable candidate.

3.2. Qualifications

A Pastor must be a man of mature spiritual experience and understanding, capable of shepherding God's people and overseeing God's work. He must meet the scriptural qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4. Some of the qualifications listed in those verses include above reproach, able to teach, self-controlled, respectable, not quarrelsome, hospitable, and gentle. The Pastor must be competent as an administrator, but more importantly he must lead the flock.

3.3. The Duties of the Pastor

The Pastor will shepherd all attenders and members of FBC as a servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, leading His sheep from salvation to spiritual maturity towards an ever-increasing intimacy with our God. The Pastor shall lead the Priesthood of Believers at FBC in regular worship services through praise, prayer, and preaching of the Word; to edify the saints by teaching according to the doctrine of FBC in order to build up the body of Christ for discipleship and to equip it to do the work of ministry and evangelism; to shepherd the flock by tending to their needs by visitation, encouragement, spiritual counseling, admonition, nurturing and administering the ordinances of believer's baptism and the Lords Supper, and by conducting weddings, funerals, baptisms, dedications, and special worship services; to hold meetings open to all within the church for such things as corporate prayer, revival, praise, etc.; to bring about revival in the hearts of believers to seek His face and turn from sin; and the great commission - to seek and save the lost.

The Pastor shall be considered a member of all Boards, committees, and organizations of the church, but shall chair none, except for office staff meetings. It shall be the duty of the Pastor to write a performance appraisal of all church staff members under his direction and to provide these appraisals to the Elder Board for their review. The Pastor shall make recommendations for any annual staff salary adjustments to the Elder Board for their review in time for addition/deletion to FBC's annual budget presented to the congregation for approval. During the Pastor's annual

performance review, it shall be the duty of the Pastor to provide to the Elder Board an unconditional written affirmation of FBC's doctrinal statement.

3.4 Tenure of the Pastor.

3.4.1. The Pastor's term shall be indefinite. The Pastor may resign his office by giving at least one month written notice to the Elders of the church.

3.4.2. Performance. The Pastor may also be removed by the vote of the active members of the church for serious neglect of constitutional Pastor duties. The Elder Board shall provide the Pastor with a written statement of the complaint brought by any Elder, other officer or any member which complaint must first have undergone the first two steps similar to those of Section 6.3, Article II. The Elder Board shall, as a part of a Third Step, allow the Pastor an opportunity to defend against the complaint and, if the Elder Board finds by majority vote that there is a performance problem, give the Pastor a reasonable time to improve in the performance of duties. If there is satisfactory improvement, the matter is ended. However, if there is not satisfactory improvement the Elder Board shall recommend the Pastor's dismissal to the members at a special meeting of the church called for that purpose. A majority vote of the members present at this meeting shall be required for the Pastor's removal.

3.4.3. Discipline. The Pastor may be temporarily relieved of his duties immediately when charges pertaining to Section 6.2, Art. II (e.g., immorality or doctrine) have been brought by any Elder, other officer or any member. In such a case, the Elders shall provide the written statement of the charges after having undergone the first two steps similar to those of Article II, Section 6.3 and, as a part of a Third Step, thoroughly investigate the matter and allow opportunity for him to speak in his own defense. After investigating the matter, the Elder Board's recommendation made to the congregation as a part of a Fourth Step (similar to Article II, Section 6.3) shall be carried out upon ratification by congregational vote unless the Elder board unanimously finds proceeding to the Fourth Step is beyond the pale of all that is rational and reasonable. A majority vote of the members present at this meeting shall be required for the Pastor's removal.

3.4.4. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this constitution under no circumstance shall the Pastor participate in or be a part of any Elder Board review relative to his own performance, misconduct or discipline.

3.5. Selection, Election, and Tenure - Other Pastors

Other permanent or temporary pastoral positions may be created as needed by the church. The creation of a permanent pastoral position, associate pastor or assistant pastor, shall be at the recommendation of the Elder Board and with the approval of 75% of those voting at a specially called congregational meeting. The initial salary shall be set by the Elder Board within the limits of expenditures made under the budget approved by the congregation. All associate/assistant pastors shall serve under the day-to-day supervision of the Pastor with oversight and periodic review of the Elder Board.

The congregation shall be involved in the approval of associate/assistant pastors to include not just the authorization of the position but also the person recommended. The Pastor should select the candidate for associate or assistant pastor and the Elder Board should approve the selection. A background check shall be performed on all candidates considered for associate/assistant pastors. After the congregation has heard the candidate preach and been given an opportunity to ask questions of the candidate the congregation shall vote on the candidate. A 75% majority vote of those voting is required for election to the position and on his, and his spouse's, church membership, if his spouse has completed the membership application, been interviewed and recommended by the Elders.

The tenure of associate/assistant pastors shall be indefinite and the Performance, Discipline, Resignation and Relief of Duties procedures shall be accomplished in accordance with Section 10 of this Article in a like manner as is applicable to the Pastor to include performance issues which shall be based upon the duties specified (along with potential future modifications) for the pastoral position created. At any time, to include upon installation of a new

senior pastor, these duties may be changed in order to achieve optimal office organization and efficiency upon approval by the Elder Board. Qualifications for Associate/Assistant Pastor includes scripture qualifications for an Elder found in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and I Peter 5:1-4. Associate and Assistant Pastors assist the Elders in shepherding the flock. Additionally, qualifications include qualifications established for the specific position.

It is expected that a new senior pastor will bring to his position attributes of leadership and well-honed management skills. Therefore, it is expected that the new senior pastor will use these skills to develop the existing associate/assistant pastors into a cohesive and effective team. Likewise, it is expected that the associate/assistant pastors will make it their priority that the senior pastor will be successful in this endeavor.

3.6. Administrative Office Staff (assisting the Pastor(s))

Office Staff are members of FBC and are selected by the Pastor and approved by the majority of the Elders. The Elders set the initial salary within the limits of expenditures made under the budget approved by the congregation. Office staff will serve under the day-to-day supervision of the Pastor with oversight and periodic review of the Elder Board. Office staff can be terminated by the Pastor with concurrence of a majority of the Elders. Before any termination, the Pastor will communicate issues and work with the staff to resolve them and, if based upon performance of duties, give an opportunity to improve performance. If unsuccessful, termination may result. It is expected that a new senior pastor will bring to his position attributes of leadership and management skills. Therefore, it is expected that the new senior pastor will use these skills to develop the existing administrative staff into a cohesive and effective team. Likewise, the administrative staff is expected to make the senior pastor's success in this endeavor their priority.

Section 4. Deacons

Following the New Testament pattern, Deacons are those who perform various services of a practical, temporal, or material nature to the body of Christ, relieving the Elders of responsibilities that might detract from their ministry of spiritual oversight.

4.1. Qualifications of Deacons

The Deacons of the church shall be comprised of men who are active and faithful members of the church and who meet the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. They shall be men who have consistently demonstrated over the course of time to possess a servant spirit prior to becoming Deacons.

4.2. Tenure and Number of Deacons

The Deacon Board shall consist of a minimum of three (3) members and a maximum of nine (9) members, including the Pastor. Members serving indefinite terms based on prior constitutional provisions shall have a minimum term of three (3) years and a maximum of four (4) years from the time of adoption of the constitutional change to term periods. Otherwise, all members shall be elected to this office for a term of three years. It is preferable to have an odd number of Deacons serving on the board taking into account the Pastor.

4.3. Authority and Duties of the Deacons

Deacon Board is granted the authority and duty to administer benevolence to those members of the church who are in need and to encourage, oversee/follow-up with those who are sick or have disabilities (visit in hospital, meals, etc.). This benevolence will be governed by established Deacon Board policies and procedures. The Board of Deacons shall annually elect its own chairman and secretary within 30 days after the annual church election and shall meet no less than monthly thereafter.

Under the oversight of the Elder Board, the Deacon Board shall:

1. Be responsible for overseeing the ushers and greeters, and parking lot attendants.
2. Assist with baptismal service preparations and administering the church ordinances.
3. Perform additional duties that may be of assistance to the Elder Board.

Section 5. The Missions Board

The Missions Board shall be responsible for all church Mission related activities. The Missions Board's responsibility shall be to determine various missionaries of the church and the annual budget to go before the church for amounts to be sent to the church missionaries.

5.1. Qualifications of the Missions Board Members

The Missions Board shall be comprised of faithful members (male or female) of the church who are at least 18 years of age. They shall possess a deep love for missions and a desire to see the work of global ministry promoted within the church and a desire to see everyone in the world, without exception, brought to salvation by spreading the gospel to all. It shall be the duties of the board to strengthen and promote the missionary interest of the church and to encourage the church to pray for the Church missions program.

5.2. Tenure and Number of Missions Board members

The Missions Board should consist of a minimum of six (6) members not counting the Pastor's membership. Initially, the Missions Board shall be elected as follows: 2 members for 3 years; 2 members for 2 years; 2 members for 1 year. Thereafter all members shall be elected to three-year terms.

5.3. Authority and Duties of the Missions Board

The Missions Board is granted the authority and duty to: (1) determine the various missionaries of the church, (2) determine the individual allocations among the various missionaries and missionary organizations of the church based on the total budgetary missions allocation provided by the Elder Board which shall be voted upon by the congregation at the annual budget business meeting and (3) determine Missions Board allocations of funds from a specifically budgeted amount of funds allocated in the annual budget and approved by the congregation expressly set aside for the Missions Board to allocate among the church missionaries as it deems appropriate. The Missions Board shall annually elect its own chairman (male) and secretary within 30 days after the annual church election and shall meet no less than monthly thereafter.

Under the oversight of the Elder Board, the Mission Board shall also:

1. Strengthen and promote the church's interest in missions to encourage the giving and pray for the Church missions program.
2. Hold mission's conferences sponsoring several missionaries that present their accomplishments, challenges, and needs.
3. Keep the congregation apprised of the current status of missionaries and their support. An annual report shall be given by the Missions Board to the congregation at the annual congregational business meeting.
Recommend changes within the fiscal year to congregationally approved annual budget amounts for church missionaries and implement those recommendations upon approval by the Elder Board.

Section 6. The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for church business advice and the proper execution of decisions and documents related to church personal property, real property, contracts, binding investment commitments and financial audits.²⁸

6.1. Qualifications of Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall be comprised of faithful members (male or female) of the church who are at least 30 years of age. A Trustee shall be knowledgeable of and experienced with financial, business or real property matters. A trustee shall have knowledge of and ability to apply Biblical principles to their duties and have demonstrated spiritual maturity through service at FBC.

6.2. Tenure and Number of Trustees

Maryland law requires there to be a minimum of 4 Trustees. The FBC Trustee Board shall consist of a minimum of four (4) members not including the Pastor. The FBC Trustee Board shall have perpetual existence and serve as the legal representatives of FBC. As a transition, the initial election shall call for the election of the appropriate number of Trustees to a one-year term, a two-year term, and to a three-year term. Thereafter, all members shall be elected to this office for a term of three years.

6.3. Authority and Duties of the Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall annually elect its own chairman (male) and secretary within 30 days after the annual church election and shall meet no less than monthly thereafter. In execution of Elder Board and congregational decisions, the Board of Trustees is granted the power to:

1. Perform and comply with all applicable duties under Maryland (Section 5-306 and section 5-307 of the Maryland Code) and Federal law with regard to real estate purchases/acquisitions, church building construction and audits. However, as is consistent with Maryland law, their powers are further restricted as follows:
 - (a) No real estate belonging to the church shall ever be expanded by construction, sold, leased, mortgaged, or in any manner encumbered with, or made liable for, any debt or obligation to pay money, nor shall any contract calling for the same not conditioned upon congregational approval be made, except upon the majority of the Trustee Board's concurrence with the business case initiated and presented by the Elder Board and the approval of the congregation at an annual meeting of the church or special meeting called for that purpose. Such recommendation shall have been read and posted on at least two Sundays prior to the time of the congregational meeting. A majority vote of 75 percent of members present shall be required for acceptance of such recommendations including the maximum amount of debt undertaken.
 - (b) No real estate to be purchased by the church may be purchased or mortgaged, nor shall any contract calling for the same not conditioned upon congregational approval be made, except upon the majority of the Trustee Board's concurrence with the business case initiated and presented by the Elder Board and the approval of the congregation at an annual meeting of the church or special meeting called for that purpose. Such recommendation shall have been read and posted on at least two Sundays prior to the time of the congregational meeting. A majority vote of 75 percent of members present shall be required for acceptance of such recommendations including the maximum amount of debt undertaken.
2. Execute all contracts entered into by the church. Subject to the restriction imposed by these By-Laws, any contracts relinquishing or acquiring interests in real property must be executed by a majority of the Trustees. In all other cases, any member of the Board of Trustees may sign any contract applicable to their duties or initiated by another ministry of the church, provided that a majority of the board approves the terms, determines the fair and reasonable price and finds the contractor to be reputable, responsible, if applicable, licensed and bonded.

The Trustees shall, under the oversight of the Elder Board, perform the following duties.

1. Provide for the needs of the church plant and see that the church property, of whatever kind, is cared for and rendered in every way the most serviceable to the church and congregation. In coordination with the Elder Board, the Trustees shall administer and coordinate use of the facility to include outreach ministry activities.
2. Obtain the services of an independent auditor to perform an audit of the Church financial records once every two years. The results of each audit shall be obtained by the Trustees and reported to the Pastor, Board of Elders and the Treasurer for communication to the congregation.
3. Negotiate new contracts.
4. Make recommendations concerning financial investments to and approved by the Elder Board and then execute decisions made.
5. Secure financial instruments necessary to meet financial obligations.

Section 7. The Church Treasurer

The Church Treasurer shall be entrusted with the fiscal management and the maintenance of accurate records of all financial and budgeting matters of the church.

7.1. Qualifications of Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be a faithful member (male or female) of FBC who has demonstrated a high degree of integrity and spiritual maturity. The Treasurer shall be knowledgeable of and experienced with financial matters

7.2 Tenure of Treasurer

The Church Treasurer shall be elected to this office for a term of three years and may be reelected to serve consecutive terms.

Pending the election of a new Treasurer the position may be filled temporarily by the Elder Board.

7.3. Duties of the Treasurer

The Church Treasurer or his/her assistants/trustees shall receive and count all monies. The Church Treasurer shall be responsible for the banking of such funds each week in a bank designated by the Board of Trustees. The money shall be deposited to the account of the Fredericktowne Baptist Church.

The Church Treasurer shall execute all checks in coordination with the bookkeeper and in accordance with the church accounting procedures. A written financial report shall be given to the Elder Board and the Trustees by the Treasurer each month. A written financial report shall be given to the church at the annual congregational business meeting. The Church Treasurer shall be responsible for preparing and submitting to the Elder Board the recommended annual giving figure to use for allocation to the church budget each year.

Section 8. Directors of Youth Ministries, Adult Ministries, and Worship & Music Ministry

FBC believes that Youth Ministries (ages 0 through 18), Adult Ministries, and Worship & Music are key ministries vital to the spiritual health of its members and their family. As such, Director positions are hereby established. Each Director shall establish an organizational structure and select leaders as required to facilitate the realization of the purpose and vision of the ministry according to this constitution. The adults identified by each Director shall be brought before the Elder Board for approval before installation. The Elder Board shall provide strategic guidance to and oversight of each Director with day-to-day supervision by the Pastor. A background check shall be performed on all candidates considered for the Director position. The following qualifications, selection, election, programs, and key duties are established below.

The positions of Director may be filled by an associate/assistant pastor, in which case the title will be changed to Minister, and the selection, election and tenure will be according to Article IV Section 3.5 of this constitution. Directors may be paid or voluntary and may be full or part time positions, as the elders deem appropriate. If filled by a layman of the church at the time of the constitutional amendment said man shall continue to serve for a period of three years, and thereafter, the Director will be nominated and selected as set forth below. A position may remain vacant until a suitable candidate is found that accepts the position, whether paid or not.

A Director must be a member of the church, a man of mature spiritual experience and understanding, capable of exhorting and convincing with sound doctrine and demonstrated ability to teach, formally or informally, doctrine and the Word. He must be above reproach and peaceable. A Director is to be an example, living a life that is open to inspection, and caring for those under his care the way a shepherd cares for his flock. A Director shall labor in the Word and be equipped to protect the church from those who would teach false doctrine. No one shall serve as Director who has not first demonstrated the required capabilities at FBC, having been a member for at least 18 months and a Christian for at least five years.

8.1. The Director of Worship and Music

There is established the position of Director of Worship and Music Ministries to plan, coordinate, monitor, integrate and provide leadership for worship and music ministries consistent with the purpose and vision of this church.

The Director of Worship and Music shall understand the doctrinal messages of music literature and be able to determine whether the music is consistent with FBC doctrine. He is to be a man led by the Holy Spirit to communicate God's Word and to touch peoples' hearts through the ministry of music. The Director of Worship and Music must have a desire to minister to all segments of the congregation using as many different musical styles and venues as necessary to reach their hearts. He is to be knowledgeable of and in touch with a constantly growing and changing congregation. He must have a heart that is sensitive to the church leadership, the congregation and the Holy Spirit. Most importantly, his strongest desire shall be to bring honor and glory to God through praise and worship using music.

The Director of Worship and Music shall strive to establish and maintain the following ministry programs: Adult Choir(s); Youth Choir(s); Praise Team; and vocal ensembles; Praise Band and instrumental ensembles; Special worship music; Worship service support: sound, lights, audio-visual (power point, audio/video recording, etc.), decorations; Special presentations by performing artists and external ministries; Seasonal programs: Christmas, Easter, Patriotic, other Community events related to musical outreach.

Duties and responsibilities of the Director of Worship and Music shall include:

1. Lead and integrate the entire congregational worship service.
2. Select music for worship that is consistent with Elder Board guidance concerning the mix of contemporary music, traditional hymns, vocal selections and instrumental music to create a worshipful environment.
3. Prepare an Order of Service for worship in concert with the Pastor and consistent with guidance from the Elder Board that facilitates worship, is appropriate to the content and theme of the service and brings glory and honor to God.

8.2. Director of Youth Ministries

There is established the position of Director of Youth Ministries to plan, coordinate, monitor, integrate and provide leadership for youth ministries consistent with the purpose and vision of this church. The Director of Youth Ministries shall ensure that there is a weekly Christian program for nursery through high school youth. The Director of Youth Ministries shall strive to establish and maintain the following ministries: Nursery Program; Children's Sunday School Program; Sunday Morning Junior Church; Children's mid-week growth and outreach programs (e.g., AWANA); Middle and High School growth and outreach programs and Annual Vacation Bible School.

8.3. Director of Adult Ministries

There is established the position of Director of Adult Ministries to plan, coordinate, monitor, integrate and provide leadership for adult ministries consistent with the purpose and vision of this church. The Elder Board shall provide strategic guidance to and oversight of the Director with day-to-day supervision by the Pastor.

The Director of Adult Ministries shall ensure that there are Christian adult ministries to provide teaching, edification, fellowship, and outreach. Director of Adult Ministries shall strive to establish and maintain the following ministries and programs as a minimum: Adult Sunday School Program; Small Group Bible Studies; Men's Ministry that may include Men's Weekend Retreats, periodic Men's Prayer Breakfasts, and recreational activities; Women's Ministry that may include Weekend Retreats and Women's Luncheons; College and Careers Ministry; Single's Ministry. There should be formal periodic training for the leaders and teachers of the Adult ministries. There shall be a new member's class offered periodically as needed.

8.4. Tenure of Directors *(Revised 11/16/20)*

Directors shall be elected to their office for a term of three years. Whenever a Director is a paid full-time or part-time staff member, the requirement for re-nomination and re-election every three years shall be waived.

Section 9. The Nominating Committee

9.1. Establishment, Composition and Dissolution.

The Church Nominating Committee shall be made up of one representative from each of the following boards: Elder, Deacon, Trustee and Missions Boards to be selected by each respective board. These four committee members shall select four additional committee members from the congregation at large. The four at large members should consist of two women and two men who are discreet, found spiritually mature, have been FBC members of the church at least five years. No Nominating Committee member shall serve whose term of office is expiring. The Elder member shall serve as the chairman and the Deacon member shall serve as vice-chairman and as the recording secretary. The Nominating Committee shall be created no later than 120 days prior to the annual church election. The Nominating Committee shall be dissolved 10 days after the annual church election.

9.2. Duties of the Nominating Committee

It shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to develop the ballot for the annual Church election. Prior to the annual Church election, the Nominating Committee shall make available to all church members a nominating ballot. The ballot shall present all church officers, noting those whose terms are expiring and whether they may be renominated, and any additional positions as permitted by this constitution and proposed by the Elder Board. The ballot shall give instructions on how to nominate individuals. The nominating ballot shall be made available to the church no later than 90 days prior to the annual election date. All nominating ballots shall be returned to Nominating Committee no later than 60 days prior to the annual church election. The ballot shall have a space for the church member to sign before submitting the ballot. All submitted nominating ballots must be signed by church member submitting in order to be considered valid.

All nominating ballots timely submitted shall be reviewed by the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee, together with the Elder Board, shall carefully examine the scriptural qualifications of those nominated and, with the approval of the Elder Board, remove the names of those not so qualified, and, as to the remaining candidates, based upon the prevailing vote of those the congregation nominates to be set before it, prepare the election ballot for the annual church election with one candidate for each opening after confirming the willingness of each candidate to serve. The Nominating Committee shall publicly post the church election ballot no later than 15 days prior to the annual church election.

9.3 Vacancies

In case of a vacancy or vacancies, when necessary or beneficial, a special business meeting may be called to fill the vacancy in accordance with the nominating procedures and other requirements otherwise required for election to such office by this constitution. The Elder Board may make temporary appointments for officers that are not part of a Board (e.g. Director, treasurer, etc.) who have been so relieved.

Section 10. Elected Officers: Performance, Discipline, Resignation and Relief of Duties

10.1. **Resignation of Officers.** An Elected Officer may resign their office by giving written notice to the Elder Board of the church. An Elected Officer's resignation of office while under pending disciplinary matters shall have no impact whatsoever on the completion of the disciplinary process as long as the Elected Officer remains a FBC member.

10.2. **Performance.** An Elected Officer may be temporarily relieved of duties immediately when charges for serious neglect of constitutional duties have been brought by any Elder, other officer or any member. The procedures established under Section 3.4.2 Performance of this Article shall be used for the purposes of this section.

10.3. **Discipline.** An Elected Officer may be temporarily relieved of duties immediately when charges pertaining Section 6.2, Art. II (e.g., immorality or doctrine) have been brought by any Elder, other officer or any member. The procedures established under Section 3.4.3. Discipline of this Article shall be used for the purposes of this section.

10.4 Elected Officers removed under Section 10.2 or 10.3 have not left the office in good standing.

10.5 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this constitution under no circumstance shall any Elected Officer participate in or be a part of any Elder Board review relative to their own performance, misconduct or discipline.

10.6 **Elected Officers.** The following are Elected Officers for purposes of this Section 10: *Elders* (to include the Pastor in his capacity as an Elder), *Deacons, Trustees, Mission Board Members, Associate and Assistant Pastors, Directors and Treasurer.*

Article IV. Church Governance and Offices *(Revised 12/02/16)*

Section 11. Special Nomination Cases

When the church body nominates a candidate for leadership who does not meet the term requirements for the position, the elders may decide to direct the nominations committee to interview him or her. If the candidate is approved by the nominations committee, the elders will propose his or her name to the congregation for approval on a ballot separate from the other candidates who meet all the requirements for leadership. The elders will provide the congregation written notification for the reason(s) why they believe this candidate should be approved although he or she doesn't meet the term requirement. If the congregation affirms the selection of this leader by a 75% majority, he or she will become a new leader in the church.

Nominated for Trustee

Ray Dinterman has been nominated for Trustee. Ray has served two consecutive terms as trustee, and the constitution determines that he cannot serve a third term consecutively. Generally, the elders agree with the wisdom of the two-term limitation as it allows new leadership on our committees and permits needed breaks for those who serve so faithfully in those areas. However, in Ray Dinterman's case, we have a new pastor who has developed a good working relationship with Ray, and it would not be wise to interrupt what they are developing. In addition, Ray has established himself as a key overseer of the building, and there is not another in leadership who can replace him in all he is doing at this time. For these reasons, although Ray has served two terms consecutively, we believe we need to elect him to a third term.

Nominated for Elder

Derrick Perry has been nominated for Elder. Derrick has been our adult Sunday school coordinator for the last year. He also teaches our college students on Friday night. Additionally, Derrick has served as a deacon for the last year. In September, the elders and congregation at FBC ordained Derrick to the pastoral ministry upon completion of his Master's degree in seminary. The Constitution states that a prospective elder must be a member for two years before he can serve in that position. Generally, the elders agree with a significant time frame for membership so that the body of Christ can be fully acquainted with leaders before they take on the role of eldership. In Derrick's case, the elders believe that the time necessary to establish relationships for shepherding has occurred, and while Derrick has only been a member for fourteen months, we believe he and our congregation are ready for him to serve as elder.

Nominated for Directors

Derrick Perry and Kevin Meredith have been nominated for directors of adult ministry and youth ministry respectively. Both men have been acting in leadership over these areas for the past year. They have demonstrated a sincere love for God and His people, and have performed their ministry with great skill in these areas. Therefore, while they do not meet the eighteen-month membership requirement for directors, a time frame which would not be met until February of 2017, the elders believe they have established credibility and relationship sufficient to begin their formal leadership as directors of those ministries now.

Article V. Meetings of the Church

Section 1. Preamble

This article sets minimum requirements for church meetings for worship, business, and leadership boards and committees.

Section 2. For Divine Worship

2.1. Sunday. The church shall regularly meet every Sunday morning for the public worship of Almighty God.

2.2. Lord's Supper. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly by the church on a schedule developed by the Pastor in association with the Elder Board.

2.3. Sunday School. The Sunday School shall be held each Sunday for the study and teaching of the Bible.

2.4. Prayer. The church shall regularly meet for prayer on a schedule developed by the Pastor together with the Elder Board.

2.5. Other Worship. Special worship services for the purpose of glorifying God, edifying the saints, outreach, missions or conducting special corporate prayer shall be convened upon approval by the Elder Board.

Section 3. For Church Business Meetings

3.1 The church shall meet at least annually to approve a budget for the church fiscal year, and to elect officers as may be necessary. This meeting shall be held no later than the third Sunday evening of November each year. Notification of this meeting to members of FBC and preparation of the proposed budget shall be as provided for in these By-laws. The ballot of nominated officers for congregational review and approval provided for in section 9 of Article IV shall be provided to members and their vote cast. The church fiscal year shall be from January 1 through December 31. The Elder Board, consistent with its quarterly report, may hold a quarterly meeting to keep the congregation informed of activities and plans.

3.2 Special meetings of the church may be called by the Elder Board. Special meetings may also be called by a request signed by 15% of the FBC membership. Prior to the submission of such request, a representative body of the concerned parties shall meet with the Elder Board to discuss the concern. If after such meeting the desire to call a congregational meeting to discuss the concern remains and the requisite number of members request such congregational meeting, within two weeks of the receipt of this request, the Elder Board shall notify the congregation of the meeting date. The meeting shall occur within six weeks of the date of the petition. The congregation shall be notified of the purpose of any special meeting which may include the review of any Elder Board decision, action or inaction relative to reconciliation or discipline matters (e.g., charges of serious neglect of constitutional duties, sin or errant doctrine) of any officer or member except for pending matters excluded under 3.5 below. An Elder shall be the moderator at the meeting but the concerned parties shall fully present the matter to the congregation for discussion and appropriate congregational action approved by vote of 2/3 of the entire congregational membership (not merely 2/3 of those present at the time of the vote) subject to all otherwise applicable provisions and requirements of this constitution.

3.3 Notice for any called business meeting shall be posted and announced no later than two weeks prior to the meeting.

3.4 Fifteen percent of the church members of voting age shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. This number shall be determined from the member's role by the Elder Board prior to the convening of any church meeting where business is to be conducted.

3.5 Under no circumstance shall any church meeting (whether called by the Elder Board, the Pastor or 15% of the membership) entertain or deal with any matter that would (i) deter, interfere with, stymie or precede the completion of pending constitutionally initiated performance or disciplinary procedures under this constitution or (ii) initiate or call for a confidence vote on any officer.

Section 4. For Leadership Meetings

To promote the flow of information to and from the Priesthood of Believers at FBC and to foster transparency, the following provisions shall be made by all boards and committees.

1. Each board or committee will produce a quarterly report summarizing decisions and actions taken during that quarter. Personal or sensitive information will be excluded from these public reports. These reports will be available to the members of FBC. Quarters are defined as follows: January 1 through March 31, April 1 through June 30, July 1 through September 30, October 1 through December 31. Upon review and approval by the members of the respective board or committee, each quarterly report is to be available by the 15th of the following month.
2. All standing Boards shall keep and maintain minutes for all meetings.
3. No Elder Board or congregational meeting may deter, interfere with or stymie with the completion of a constitutionally initiated disciplinary procedure under this constitution.
4. Regularly scheduled meetings of all Boards and Committees of FBC will be published in the church bulletin.
5. Requests by FBC members to meet with a Board or Committee of the church (not just a member of the Board or Committee) shall be granted to discuss a topic of interest or concern. The request may be redirected to a different board or committee, but the item will be addressed with the FBC member present. The Board or Committee will make every effort to include this topic as an agenda item at the next scheduled meeting in which the FBC member is able to attend.

Article VI. Procedure for Amending the Constitution

Section 1. Amending

In accordance with the following amendment procedures this constitution may be altered or amended only by notice of proposed change being given one month previous, in writing, and due notice given from the pulpit of proposed changes on two preceding Sundays. Only members are allowed at the meeting. Any proposed amendment must first be approved by the Elder Board or by the congregation at a special meeting called for that purpose and then be ratified by 75 percent of those voting at a congregational meeting of the church, specifically called for this purpose. Proposed amendments to the Doctrinal Statement shall be clarifying in nature, or address the previously unaddressed, and, upon ratification, are deemed as such.

Article VII. Corporate Provisions

Section 1. Real Estate

No real estate belonging to the church shall ever be sold, mortgaged, or in any manner encumbered with, or made liable for any debt or obligation to pay money except upon the approval of congregation at an annual meeting of the church or special meeting called for that purpose. In case of buying selling, or mortgaging church property, a written notice of such recommendation shall have been read and posted on at least three (3) Sundays prior to the time of the congregational meeting. A majority vote of 75 percent of members present shall be required for acceptance of such recommendations, subject to Article IV Section 6.

Section 2. Dissolution

In the event that the Fredericktowne Baptist Church is dissolved, it will be done in accordance with the laws of the State of Maryland. The assets of the church, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the church's liabilities, will be distributed exclusively for the missions organizations supported by the Fredericktowne Baptist Church. Missionaries and mission organizations will receive distributions based on the percentage of the last mission budget that was allocated to each missionary and mission organization, not to exceed one-half the salary of the FBC Pastor. There is no limit for a mission organization.

Article VIII. By-Laws Guidelines

This article establishes the requirement for the creation and maintenance of non-mandatory guidelines to help in the conduct of church affairs described by, subordinate to, consistent with, and cannot alter the FBC Constitution. The FBC By-Laws guidelines will be improved over time collectively by FBC leadership consisting of elders, pastor(s), directors, trustees and deacons. Any amendments made to the By-Laws Guidelines shall be reflected in a revised By-Laws Guidelines provided to the congregation at the annual Church meeting. At the annual FBC meeting revisions will be summarized. FBC membership can provide comments concerning the guidelines for their consideration. Members at any time can obtain a copy of the guidelines.

Article IX. Final Acceptance

All other Covenants, Doctrinal Statements, or By-Laws that may exist are hereby voided and the foregoing shall replace them.

End Notes

1- Ephesians 4:11-16 - It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

2 - John 17:1-26 - After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

"I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me, and they have obeyed your word. Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me, and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I

have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world." Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

3 - John 4:23-24 - Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.

4 - I John 1:6-7 - If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

5 - Isaiah 56:7 - these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations. Mark 11:17 - And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations. But you have made it a den of robbers.

6 - I Corinthians 14:26 - What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church. Romans 15:2 - Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

7- Matthew 28:19-20 - Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

8 - I Peter 2:9 - But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Revelation 1:5-6 - and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen.

9 - Hebrews 13:17 - Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account.

10 - Hebrews 10:24-25 - And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

11- Ephesians 5:21 - Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

12 - Matthew 18:15-17 - If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

13 - Galatians 6:1-2 - Brethren, if a one of you is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

14 - 1 Corinthians 16:2 - On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

15 - 2 Corinthians 9:7 - Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

16 - Proverbs 3:9 - Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops;

17 - Matthew 23:23 - "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. Malachi 3:8-10 - "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse—the whole nation of you—because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. Leviticus 27:30-32 - A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD. If a man redeems any of his tithe, he must add a fifth of the value to it. The entire tithe of the herd and flock—every tenth animal that passes under the shepherd's rod—will be holy to the LORD. Hebrews 7:4-10 - Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder! Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people—that is, their brothers—even though their brothers are descended from Abraham. This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater. In the one case, the tenth is collected by men who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor. Genesis 14:20 - And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand. Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything. Genesis 28:22 - and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth.

18 - 2 Corinthians 8:1-5, 9 - And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, ⁴they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

19 - 1 Timothy 5:17-18 - The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain", and the worker deserves his wages.

1 Corinthians 9:4-14 - Don't we have the right to food and drink? Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas? Or is it only I and Barnabas who must work for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk? Do I say this merely from a human point of view? Doesn't the Law say the same thing? For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely, he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. Don't you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel. Galatians 6:6 - Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor.

20 - Here, and anywhere else in this constitution (i.e., the text of the By-Laws), where the text of the constitution uses the word "man" or "men" it is deemed to mean "a male" person and not mankind.

21 - 1 Peter 2:9 - But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Revelation 1:5-6 - and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen.

22 - Acts 20:28-28 - Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

23 - 1 Peter 5:5 - Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

24 - 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 - Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.

25 - 1 Timothy 5:17 - The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

26 - Hebrews 13:17 - Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

27 - Acts 20:28 - Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

28 - Maryland law leaves the distribution of control over local church property entirely to the voluntary arrangements entered into by and within each denomination allowing any incorporated local church denominational body to agree among themselves to lodge such degree of control over local church property in such body or bodies as they select. *POLEN v. COX*, 259 Md. 25; 267 A.2d 201, 1969.

