

**The Covenant, Articles of Faith,
and By-laws
of
The Slater Baptist Church
of
Slater, Iowa**

Approved January 19, 2020

CHURCH COVENANT

Having trusted in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the only sure hope of eternal life and way to be godly before the Father and having been baptized by immersion on the basis of such faith, by the aid of the Holy Spirit we covenant with God and with one another to strive after the following:

- To daily and purposefully remind ourselves of the grace of God shown to us in the Gospel of Christ.
Psalm 77:12
- To be diligent in prayer and personal study of the Word of God, as well as personal obedience, faithfully trusting God and obeying His commands both privately and publicly.
2 Timothy 2:15
- To raise our children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, faithfully teaching them the grace of God.
Ephesians 6:4
- To avoid sinful and addicting behaviors that harm our bodies and growth and hinder our testimonies.
1 Corinthians 6:12
- To passionately share the Good News of Jesus with our unsaved friends, family, and acquaintances and maintain godly testimonies so as not to discredit the message we share.
Matthew 28:19
- To financially support the work of the ministry.
2 Corinthians 7-8
- To actively attend and serve this Local Church with the gifts, talents, and resources God has entrusted.
Romans 12
- To encourage and challenge each other towards personal holiness and faithfulness.
Galatians 6:1-2
- To put the needs of others before our own, using our Christian freedom to serve others rather than serving ourselves.
Galatians 5:13

Moreover, we commit that when we remove from this church, we will as soon as possible unite with some other Church of like faith where we can live out the spirit of this covenant and the principles and practices of the New Testament.

CONSTITUTION
of
THE SLATER BAPTIST CHURCH
of
Slater, Iowa

PREAMBLE

As a body of baptized believers, we place our faith wholly in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation. Having bound ourselves together in fellowship and believing it necessary to govern ourselves in an orderly and efficient manner, we do hereby adopt the provisions of the Church Covenant, the Constitution and the Articles of Faith contained in this booklet.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be: Slater Baptist Church, of Slater, Iowa.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The purpose of this church is to exalt God by

1. Leading the lost to **know** Christ as Lord and Savior.
2. Teaching believers to **grow** in their love for God and love for others.
3. Equipping disciples to **go** and share the gospel and make a difference in their communities.

ARTICLE III: CHARACTER

(This was switched around to be before the articles of faith as it seemed to fit here better)

This church is an autonomous, independent Baptist church which is pastor led, deacon served, and congregationally responsible in its decision-making practices and in its ministry philosophy. The polity and practices of this church are patterned after the churches of the New Testament.

ARTICLE IV: STATEMENT OF FAITH

The statement of faith of this church shall be in conformity with the teachings set forth in the New Testament and as expressed in the following:

ARTICLES OF FAITH:

I. OF THE SCRIPTURES: We believe that the Holy Bible as originally written was verbally inspired and the product of Spirit-controlled men, and therefore, is truth without any admixture of error for its matter. We believe the Bible to be the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions shall be tried. II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:19-21

II. OF THE TRUE GOD: We believe that there is one and only one living and true God, an infinite Spirit, the Maker and supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. Exodus 20:2, 3; I Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11

III. OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST: We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the eternally existing Son of God and promised Messiah who became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. We believe that He accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice and that our redemption is made sure by His physical resurrection from the dead. We further believe He is now in heaven, exalted at the right hand of God, where, as the High Priest for His people, He fulfills the ministries of representative, intercessor, and advocate until He comes again. Luke 1:35; John 1:1, 2, 14; Romans 3:24, 25; 4:25; Romans 8:34; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Hebrews 9:24; 7:25; I Peter 1:3-5; I John 2:1, 2

IV. OF 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; that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; that He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the Agent in the new birth; that He seals, endures, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer. John 14:16, 17; Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Genesis 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5, 6; Ephesians 1:13, 14
Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:29; Romans 8:14, 16, 26, 27

V: OF ANGELS AND SATAN: We believe that angels are real personalities created by God. Some angels, the elect ones, serve God, encourage and help believers, and administer God's judgment. Other angels, whom the Bible calls "demons," seeks to thwart the plan of God. We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, the Devil. He was created by God as an angel, but, through rebellion, became the enemy of God and of all humans. He became the unholy god of this age, the ruler of all the powers of darkness, and is destined to eternal judgment in the Lake of Fire. Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:13; II Corinthians. 4:4; Colossians 1:6; Hebrews 1:6-14; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Revelation 12:9; 20:10

VI. OF CREATION: We believe that God is the creator of all things and that He did so in six, twenty-four-hour days as described in Genesis 1-11. We believe that God created the universe from nothing and that He created all basic kinds of living things distinctly and not from previous, lower life forms. We believe all creation testifies to the existence, glory, nature, and power of God. We further believe that He, by His

right as Creator, is the owner, sustainer, and purpose of all creation. Genesis 1-11; Romans 1:18-20; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:3

VII. Of Gender, Sexuality, And The Family: We believe that marriage was divinely ordained to be the lifelong and exclusive union of one man and one woman, and we affirm that the Scriptures command that sexual intimacy be reserved for this Biblical marital relationship alone, condemning all other forms as sexual immorality. We believe that God created both male and female, and that He designed gender distinctions between men and women, including the Biblically-defined and distinctive roles of husband and wife. Since gender distinctions are rooted in divine order, changing or disguising one's inherited sex (and correlated gender) reflective of this order transgresses God's design. We believe in the sanctity of life of all human persons, including the unborn, ailing and aging. Genesis 2:18, 24-25; Matthew 19:4-6; I Corinthians 6:18-20; 7:2; Ephesians 5:22-33; Hebrews 13:4

VIII. OF THE FALL OF MAN: We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but of choice, and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse. Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 3:10-19; Romans 1:18, 32

IX. OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH: We believe that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can be born of woman; and that He is both the son of God and God, the Son. Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14

X. OF THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN: We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, Who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins; that His atonement consisted not just in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust; Christ, the Lord, bearing our sin in His own body on the tree; that, having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in Heaven, and, uniting in His wonderful Person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior. Ephesians 2:8; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24; John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:14; Isaiah 53:4-7; Romans 3:25; I John 4:10; I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21

XI. OF GRACE IN THE NEW CREATION: We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life. John 3:3; II Corinthians 5:17; I John 5:1; John 3:6, 7; Acts 16:30-33; II Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1, 5; II Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 2:13; John 3:8

XII. OF FAITH AND SALVATION: We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation. We believe that the Gospel brings justification, regeneration, adoption, sanctification, the indwelling Holy Spirit, and reconciliation with God to all who believe. We further believe that this gift is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the finished work of Christ by His death and resurrection. Isaiah 53:11; Zechariah 13:1; John 14:6; Acts 16:31; Acts 13:39; Romans 5-8; Ephesians 1:3-14

XIII. OF THE LOCAL CHURCH: We believe that a local church is a congregation of immersed believers, associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed

by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its officers are pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures. We believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity. We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it is Scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel; that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; and that on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final. Acts 2:41, 42; I Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 4:11; Acts 20:17-28; I Timothy 3:1-7; Acts 15:13-18; Matthew 18:17; Philemon 1-3; II Corinthians 8: 1, 2; I Corinthians 14:28, 34

XIV. OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH: We believe in the unity of all true believers in the church, which is the Body of Christ, which was established on the Day of Pentecost, and that all believers, from Pentecost to the Rapture, both Jews and Gentiles, are added to this church by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 1:22,23; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:22-32; I Corinthians 12:12, 13

XV. OF BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER: We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem his faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effect in his death to sin and resurrection to a new life, and that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation. We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His Death until He come, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. Acts 8:36, 38, 39; John 3:23; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 3:16; Colossians 2:12; I Corinthians 11:23-28

XVI. OF THE SECURITY OF THE SAINTS: We believe that all who are truly born again are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6; John 10:28,29; Romans 8:35-39; I Peter 1:5; Jude 1

XVII. OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED: We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost. Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17, 18; I John 5:19; Romans 7:6; Romans 6:23; Proverbs 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matthew 25:34-41; John 8:21

XVIII. OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT: We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed; except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ Who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth. Romans 13:1-7; II Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21, 22; Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:29; Acts 4:19; Daniel 3:17, 18

XIX. OF THE RESURRECTION; THE PERSONAL, VISIBLE, PRE-TRIBULATIONAL, PREMILLENNIAL RETURN OF CHRIST AND RELATED EVENTS: We believe the return of Christ can happen at any time and will happen before the Tribulation and before the Millennium. When it does, the dead in Christ will be raised in glorified bodies and the living in Christ will be given glorified bodies without dying. Together they will be taken up to meet the Lord in the air. Following the seven year Tribulation, Christ will return to earth in power and great glory to sit on the throne of David and establish the Millennial Kingdom. We believe in the everlasting happiness of believers with God in the new heaven and new earth and the everlasting, conscious suffering of unbelievers in the lake of fire. Zechariah 14:4-11; Malachi 3:18; I Corinthians 15:51-57; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 3:11; 20:1-15

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this church shall consist of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior who have been baptized by immersion after conversion and have given assent to the Covenant, the Articles of Faith, and the Constitution of this church.

A. Admission

1. Each candidate for membership will relate his Christian experience to the pastor(s) and deacons. The pastor(s) and deacons, having satisfied themselves that the candidate is eligible for church membership, shall recommend the same to the church, which shall vote upon the candidate's admission to membership. The candidate must give personal testimony at a formal business meeting of the church. This may be done in person or in writing, but must be read during the meeting.
2. Candidates may be received at any regular service or business meeting of the church by a church vote as governed by Article X, section B.

B. Categories Of Membership

1. Active Member: An active member is a member in good standing who regularly attends the services of the church, at least once per year, and who regularly serves and gives financially to the ministry of the church as they are able before God.
2. Non-Resident Member: A non-resident member is a member who, due to sickness, ministry, military service, or educational studies, is unable to regularly attend or serve in the ministry of this church. These members do not have the ability to vote while not fulfilling the responsibilities of membership.
3. Watchcare Member: Watchcare members are college students of reputable character who are members of GARBC or churches of like faith. Upon approval from the pastor(s) and deacons and the vote of the church, such membership will allow them to participate in the various ministries of this local church, including teaching ministries. This does not require transfer of membership from their home church nor grant privileges of voting or holding elective office at this church.

C. Dismissal: Members may be removed from the church membership roll at any regular service or business meeting by letter, broken fellowship, or death by a vote of the church as governed by Article X, section B. All members who are dismissed shall be notified of such dismissal both prior to and after the church vote. A letter may be sent to any church for a member at the church's request.

1. Active Member

- (a) When a member fails to attend the services of the church for a least one Sunday per year or refuses to repent of sin that is worthy of removal by the guidelines of Article V, Section D, upon the recommendation of the pastor(s) and deacons and the vote of the church, his or her name shall be removed from membership.
- (b) All members of the church shall be notified in writing of this individual's removal.

2. Non-Resident Members

- (a) Any non-resident member who wishes to remain a member of this church must contact the church at least once per year to give an update of his or her status. Any non-resident who does not meet such

requirements and who is unable to be reached by the pastor(s) and deacons, shall on the recommendation of the pastor(s) and deacons and the vote of the church be dropped from membership of this church.

(b) Non-Resident members who no longer serve in the reasons for non-residency, but do not relocate to the area, shall, upon the recommendation of the pastor(s) and deacons and the vote of the church, have his or her name shall be removed from membership.

(c) All members of the church shall be notified in writing of this individual's removal.

3. Watchcare Members

(a) Any Watchcare member that graduates from college shall either seek regular membership or be, upon the recommendation of the pastor(s) and deacons and the vote of the church, removed from membership.

(b) All members of the church shall be notified in writing of this individual's removal.

D. Discipline

1. The process of discipline is a biblical command and is necessary to the wellbeing of the membership and the health of the church. Its goal is to glorify God by encouraging and challenging each member to walk with integrity, unity, and godliness in all things and to seek the restoration of all erring members. It includes both the regular ministries of the church and the steps taken when conflict arises or when sin is exposed. The grounds for final church discipline shall be sin that is

a. Clear

b. Willful

c. Public

d. Unrepentant

e. Affecting The Health And Reputation Of The Church

2. The process of discipline is laid down in Matthew 18:15-18, II Thessalonians 3:6-15, and Galatians 6:1 by the Lord Jesus Christ and the New Testament writers of Scripture and to refuse such a process is sin and grounds for removal of the pastor(s) and deacons.

3. Any discipline problem must be presented to the pastor(s) and deacons before bringing it to the church.

4. Where charges are made against a member, the accused shall be notified personally of the nature of the charges and shall be required to appear before the pastor(s) and deacons to make answer to the charges. If the accused person fails to appear on the date agreed upon by the leaders and those involved without reasonable cause for such absence, such failure to appear will be considered rebellious, unrepentant, and divisive and shall be dealt with accordingly.

6. If the accused appears before the pastor(s) and deacons, there shall be a full and fair hearing of the case, and the leadership shall be empowered to vote that the accused is innocent of the charges. If, on the other hand, a majority of the leadership present votes that the accused is guilty of the charge preferred,

they shall recommend to the church that the accused be excluded from the membership of the church, or that such other discipline as the case may warrant be required, and the church must either approve the recommendation or hear the case itself.

7. Once the church is made aware of the issue, they shall have ample time to reach out to the erring member themselves before a vote for dismissal shall be taken, in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18.

8. It is understood that this clause shall not be used as an excuse for unnecessary severeness in minor matters, but that the church leadership shall always use kindness, consideration, and Christian love in determining the cases for discipline and the method of procedure in such cases. The church should always respect the decision and recommendation of the leadership and try to carry out such recommendation in the spirit of love for all concerned.

9. The accused shall be able to go before the church and state his case, after meeting with the pastor(s) and deacons, if he is dissatisfied with their decision.

10. Because the church is a voluntary organization, if a person requests to have his or her name removed from membership, the formal discipline process is over and that person will be removed.

E. Restoration

1. Members who were removed by dismissal may be reinstated to membership by going through the same process of new membership as first-time member candidates.

2. Dismissed members shall also be required to give evidence of honest repentance and to make confession of wrong doing before the church, where deemed necessary by the pastor(s) and deacons.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS

The officers of this church shall be: pastor(s) and deacons. These officers shall be expected to formally subscribe yearly to the Covenant and the Articles of Faith.

A. The Pastor

1. His Qualifications

a. He should meet the qualifications according to I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

b. He is given of God to the church. "And He gave some...pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Ephesians 4:11-12

2. His Call

a. The deacons shall constitute the Pulpit Committee of the church.

b. A preliminary investigation shall begin as soon as possible after the resignation, removal, or death of a pastor. It shall be the duty of the Pulpit Committee to fill the pulpit until the new pastor assumes his duties. In the event that the Pulpit Committee would recommend an interim pastor, this recommendation shall be handled in accord with Article VI, A.2.f (Amendment approved, April 1985.)

c. A delegation selected from the Pulpit Committee may investigate a prospective pastor at his home church and bring back a report to this church. Any prospective pastor not pastoring a church shall be investigated as to his background.

d. A prospective pastor, after investigation, shall meet with the Pulpit Committee, then supply the pulpit of this church for a number of meetings specified by the Pulpit Committee.

e. A special business meeting shall be called by the Pulpit Committee to consider a call for the prospective pastor. A three-fourths (3/4) majority of the members present and voting by secret ballot is required to call a pastor.

f. To avoid confusion, only one prospective pastor shall be brought to a vote of the congregation at one time.

g. The result of the special business meeting shall be made known to the pastor under consideration as soon as possible after such meeting. If the vote is favorable and if he accepts the call, he shall become pastor of the church upon his acceptance of the invitation. Details of the call such as: salary, housing, car allowance, vacation time, etc., shall be included in a written invitation, subject to vote of the church at the same meeting before a formal invitation may be given.

h. The pastor and his wife shall automatically become members of the church upon the acceptance of the invitation.

3. His Tenure

a. He is called for an indeterminate period of time and shall continue as long as that relation is mutually agreeable to himself and/or this church.

b. Termination of Office:

(1) By Resignation: The pastor may resign at any time and his duties and salary will be terminated thirty (30) days from the date of his resignation or at another time mutually agreeable to both the pastor and the church.

(2) By Church Action: Any difficulty arising from unsatisfactory service shall be put in writing and signed by the accuser. Then it shall be investigated by the deacons. The pastor shall have the right to defend himself before the deacons and the church. If it is considered by the deacons to be necessary, a special business meeting shall be called. The church shall consider their findings and decide regarding the dismissal of the pastor. A full vote of the members present and voting by showing of hands is necessary to dismiss a pastor, in accordance with 1 Timothy 5:17-21. In such cases, his pastoral duties shall terminate immediately and his salary shall cease thirty (30) days from the date of dismissal.

c. The Pastor's salary, which has been set by the church, shall be reviewed each year by the deacons and recommendation made to the church at the annual business meeting or at any other time deemed advisable.

4. His Duties

- a. The pastor's duties shall be in fulfillment of I Peter 5:1-4.
- b. The pastor is ex-officio member of all boards and committees.

5. His Privileges

- a. He may call for a meeting of the church or any committee or board thereof at such time as experience proves necessary.
- b. He may take an annual vacation of three weeks, but not exceeding three Sundays, with full pay. These three weeks may be taken at his own discretion. Other absences are to be approved by the deacons.
- c. He may attend family camp for one week. This shall not be considered part of his vacation.
- d. He and his wife may be sent by the church with all expenses paid to the annual meeting of the General Association of Regular Baptist Church and such other meetings as the deacons may approve.

B. The Deacons

1. Qualifications

- a. They shall meet the qualifications set forth in the 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- b. A deacon shall have been a member of this church for at least one year and must have served in some other capacity prior to election.
- c. A deacon shall be not less than twenty-one years of age.
- d. A deacon shall attend all the regular services of the church unless he provides a sufficient reason for a short-term absence.

2. Election

The church shall seek to elect from its members one deacon for each twelve family units in the church membership. Election shall be in accordance with Article VIII of this constitution. However, the church will seek to maintain at least five deacons if such men are able to serve.

3. Term

- a. A term of office shall be for three years, one third of the total number of deacons being elected each year.
- b. A deacon having served two consecutive terms of three years each shall be ineligible for re-election for one year.

4. Duties

The deacons shall assist and work with the pastor(s) in maintaining the spiritual standard and operation of the church. They shall be responsible for:

- the preparation and administration of church ordinances
- the reception, dismissal, or discipline of members (Article V)
- promoting visitation and personal work, both evangelistically and among believers
- providing pulpit supplies and leaders for services in absence of a pastor (s)
- supervising the use of church properties for other than regular church activities
- disbursing funds and making financial recommendations to the church
- spending up to \$1000 per item without special approval.
- giving written report to the church annually of actions taken, recommendations made, etc.
- other duties as deemed regular or necessary to the operation of the church as per the constitution
- the maintenance of the property and the planning of expansions.

5. Chairman

- a. The deacons shall annually elect a chairman who has served a minimum of one year on the board.
- b. The chairman, in the absence of the pastor(s), shall be responsible for the on-going ministries of the church.

6. Meetings

- a. There shall be a stated monthly meeting of the deacons. Other meetings may be called by the pastor or chairman as necessary.
- b. Elections of officers shall be held no later than the first meeting of the new fiscal year. (Retiring officers shall hold office until the new officers begin their terms.)
- c. A majority of deacons shall constitute a quorum.
- d. When a deacon misses three consecutive regular monthly meetings without sufficient reason (prolonged illness, primary employment, etc.), the remainder of the deacons may at its discretion declare his office vacant and proceed with the replacement process according to the constitution.

ARTICLE VII: SUBSIDIARY OFFICERS

These officers shall consist of: the Church Clerk, the Church Treasurer, the Sunday School Superintendent, the Assistant Sunday School Superintendent (Amendment approved January 1976), the Sunday School Secretary (Amendment approved January 1979), and the Head Usher. These shall be elected at the Annual Business Meeting. These officers shall be expected to formally subscribe yearly to the Covenant and Articles of Faith.

A. Their Qualifications

1. These officers must have been members of the church for at least six (6) months.
2. These officers must be an example to others in consistent Christian living.

B. Their Responsibilities

1. The Church Clerk

- a. The church clerk shall be elected annually.
- b. The church clerk shall attend all business meetings possible and keep accurate record of the approved minutes of the church. All records of the church are to be considered the property of and belonging to the church.
- c. The church clerk shall keep a correct and complete mailing list of all members with their proper address, write all letters of commendation, and write for all letters of applicants.
- d. The church clerk, in the interim when a pastor leaves and a new pastor takes over, will write the call to the pastor.

2. The Church Treasurer

- a. The pastor(s) and deacons shall appoint a treasurer from the church membership who shall be voted upon by the congregation. This position will not be elected annually.
- b. The treasurer shall serve as long as there is mutual agreement between the treasurer and the pastor(s) and deacons.
- c. The treasurer shall pay all bills authorized by the deacons, trustees, or church vote. An accurate account of receipts and disbursements shall be kept and a written report of the same shall be made at each quarterly business meeting, at the annual meeting, and when otherwise directed by the church. The treasurer shall assist the financial secretary in counting all offerings received.

3. The Sunday School Superintendent

- a. The Sunday School superintendent shall be elected annually.
- b. The Sunday School superintendent shall be responsible for the general oversight of the Sunday School. He shall plan and announce all meetings of the teachers and officers of the Sunday School.
- c. The Sunday School superintendent, cooperating with the pastor(s) and deacons, shall appoint all teachers and departmental superintendents in the Sunday School as well as other needed Sunday School personnel, and as far as possible, select members to fill these positions.
- d. At election of subsidiary officers, the person receiving the most votes is elected Sunday School superintendent and the person receiving the second highest votes is elected the Assistant Sunday School superintendent.

4. The Sunday School Secretary

- a. The Sunday School secretary shall be elected annually.
- b. The Sunday School secretary shall keep all records and make these available to the Sunday School superintendent and pastor.

c. In the election of officers, there shall be three names on the voting ballot. The person receiving the most votes will be the Sunday School secretary. The person receiving the second highest votes will be the assistant Sunday School secretary and will fill in during the absence of the Sunday School secretary.

5. The Head Usher

a. The head usher shall be elected annually.

b. The head usher shall appoint all ushers with the approval of the pastor(s) and deacons.

c. The head usher shall have general supervision of the ushers.

6. The Financial Secretary

a. The Financial secretary shall be appointed by the pastor(s) and deacons from among current or former deacons and voted upon by the congregation. This position will not be elected annually.

b. He shall serve as long as there is mutual agreement between him and the pastor(s) and deacons.

c. He shall keep a record of all money received, including a record of individual giving so as to issue receipts (for income tax purposes) to each individual as soon as possible after the close of each year.

ARTICLE VIII: MANNER OF ELECTIONS

A. The nominations for the elective offices shall be made by primary election, which shall be held four weeks before the regular election on the second Sunday of December.

B. The pastor(s) and deacons shall act as an Election Board and shall consider the character and qualifications of all nominees according to the requirements as set forth in the Church Covenant.

C. Primary election ballots shall be distributed by the church clerk to all active members of the church by November 15.

D. The privilege of voting *in absentia* may be granted to active voting members who, for reason of required occupational duties, prolonged confining illness, or seasonal relocation, are unable to vote in person. Written request for an absentee ballot, including the reason for the request, must be made to the church office no later than November 15 for the annual election of officers, or within twenty-four hours of the first announcement of a special business meeting. Absentee ballots must be returned to the church office prior to the meeting to which they pertain.

ARTICLE IX: AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMITTEES

A. Auxiliary Organizations.

1. There shall be such organizations as the most efficient prosecution of our purpose shall demand, but none shall be started without the consent of the pastor(s) and deacons. These organizations shall be self-governing but finally subject to the control of the church leadership through its Constitution and voted church policy.

2. All organizations considered a part of the church activities are required to confer with the pastor(s) from time to time regarding plans and activities, and all matters of importance that affect the church shall be submitted to the pastor(s) and deacons for approval.
3. All officers of auxiliary organizations and all regular teachers must be members of the church in good and regular standing.

B. Committees

1. All committees of a permanent nature shall be recommended by the pastor(s) and deacons and approved by the church and shall work under their supervision.
2. When any member of a committee fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings which his office or position requires him to attend, such office or position may be considered vacant.
3. All committees of a permanent nature shall be reappointed annually. These committees shall be recommended by the pastor(s) and deacons and approved by the church.

ARTICLE X: MEETINGS

A. Meetings for Worship

1. The church shall meet each Sunday for public worship both morning and evening. Occasional changes may be made by at the discretion of the pastor(s) and deacons.
2. The weekday service of Bible study and prayer shall be held on Wednesday evenings. Occasional changes may be made by at the discretion of the pastor(s) and deacons.
3. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed quarterly each year or occasionally at another time a prescribed by the pastor(s) and deacons.

B. Business: *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern in all cases to which they apply. Christian courtesy shall be shown in all deliberations and discussions.

1. Meetings

- a. Annual – The annual business meeting shall be held on the third Sunday of January unless otherwise designated by pastor(s) and deacons.
- b. Quarterly – Quarterly business meetings shall be held on the third Sunday of April, July, and October unless otherwise designated by the pastor(s) or deacons.
- c. Election/Budget - Election of officers, approval of standing committees, and final budget approval of the upcoming year shall be held on the second Sunday of December unless otherwise designated by the pastor(s) and deacons.
- d. Special – Special business meetings may be called by the pastor(s), deacons, or by written request of five (5) eligible voting members representing five (5) families. The purpose of the meeting shall be published in the church bulletin and/or announced from the pulpit at two public services prior to the meeting. No other business may be transacted.

- e. Other – Incidental business of routine nature (reception of members, messengers to conferences or ordinations, etc.) may be conducted during any service of the church without prior notice.
- 2. Quorum – The quorum for regular of special business meetings shall be twenty-five (25%) of the active voting membership. At incidental business meetings members present shall constitute a quorum.
- 3. Voting
 - a. Three Quarter Vote – A 75% vote of voting members present in favor will constitute a passing vote unless otherwise stated in this constitution or designated by the church.
 - b. Method – Voice vote shall be considered the usual method of voting. Other methods may be called for by the pastor(s), deacons, or any active member.
 - c. Age – The voting age shall be eighteen (18) years and above.

ARTICLE XI: FINANCES

- A. The fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end on the following December 31.
- B. No monies shall be raised by the church or any auxiliary organizations except by free-will giving. Any fundraising endeavors shall remain donation based.
- C. No financial obligation shall be placed upon the church, without church action, except as stated in Article VI, section B, 4.
- D. An auditing committee shall be elected annually by the pastor(s) and deacons at least three (3) months prior to the annual business meeting. This committee shall consist of two (2) members, at least one having knowledge of accounting methods, and may utilize external auditors. They shall audit the books of the church treasurer prior to the annual meeting of the church and present a report of their findings at the annual meeting.

ARTICLE XII: MISSIONS

All mission boards, Christian schools and colleges, ministries, and individuals supported by this church must be approved by vote of the church membership.

ARTICLE XIII: USE OF CHURCH BUILDING

The church's facilities may be used for all activities of church life. The church's facilities have been set apart for God's glory and in this sense should be used only for such activities that honor Him and His Holy Word. The church will gladly offer its facilities and services for weddings and funerals and other events, but only those that are consistent with the church's statement of faith and by-laws, at the discretion of the pastor(s) and deacons. No secret societies will be permitted to hold services or perform their rituals in the facilities.

ARTICLE XIV: LICENSING AND ORDINATION

A. Licensing

1. When a man in this membership is called to the Christian ministry and desires to be licensed, he shall make his desire known to the pastor(s) and deacons. If the pastor(s) and deacons, after having heard him preach, are satisfied concerning his salvation, his call to the ministry and his consistent Christian living, they may recommend to the church that license be granted. The church may act upon this recommendation at any meeting of the church.
2. The duration of the license shall be for one year from the date of issue, but may be renewed annually after a review by the pastor(s) and deacons. No license granted by this church shall be valid after the licensee removes his membership from this church. A license can be annulled or withdrawn at any time should the church in its judgment have sufficient reason for such action.

B. Ordination

1. When, in the judgment of the pastor(s) and deacons, a man in this membership is called to the Christian ministry, it shall be within their authority to recommend to the church that a council composed of the pastor and two messengers from churches of like faith and practice, be called for the purpose of examining the candidate. This council shall be called by church action.
2. The examining council shall thoroughly examine the applicant for ordination as to his call to the Christian ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation, character, doctrinal belief and demonstrated efficiency in Christian Service. After hearing the recommendation, the church may proceed with the ordination at a future date as agreed upon by both the church and the candidate.
3. The following shall not be ordained to the ministry of this church:
 - a. One who has not served at least six months as pastor, assistant pastor, or in definite Christian work in such manner as to convey reasonable evidence of God's call to the ministry.
 - b. One who cannot conform to the qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
4. It shall be within the authority of the church to discipline, even to revoking the ordination credentials of any minister ordained by this church after an impartial trial conducted in the spirit of I Corinthians 13. The minister under trial shall have the privilege of appealing his case to the congregation within sixty (60) days after the decision.

ARTICLE XV: AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by three-fourths (3/4) vote of members present at any annual business meeting, provided that notice of such proposed amendment has been clearly stated and submitted in writing to the church no later than the previous quarterly business meeting. Further, this constitution will be regularly reviewed at least every five years to be updated and adapted.