

Constitution and Bylaws of Faith Community Church  
A Georgia Nonprofit Religious Corporation

Revised and Adopted  
January 16, 2024  
Faith Community Church  
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# Constitution and Bylaws

## Faith Community Church

### Article I – Name

The name of the church is Faith Community Church. It is a member of the Georgia Baptist Convention, and is under the tax exemption of the Executive Committee of the Georgia Baptist Convention. The principle location of Faith Community Church is at 1100 Woodstock Parkway, Woodstock, GA 30188.

### Article II – Purpose

Faith Community Church exists to glorify God the Father as believers united in life in Jesus Christ who participate in the mission of His Church by the power of the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:18–20; Acts 1:8).

### Article III – Doctrinal Statement

#### The Holy Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. Thus the sixty-six books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God.<sup>1</sup> The Word of God is verbally inspired in every word, absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed.<sup>2</sup> God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship.<sup>3</sup> The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man<sup>4</sup> without error in the whole or in the part<sup>5</sup>. The single, true interpretation of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation, taking account of its literary forms and devices.<sup>6</sup> This interpretation can only be found in dependence on the enlightenment given by the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup> The truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.<sup>8</sup> Being infallible, the Bible is sufficient to make the believer complete, equipped for all things related to life and godliness.<sup>9</sup> The Scripture will remain unchanged in its authority and efficacy forever.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup>2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20–21 <sup>2</sup>2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 6:18 <sup>3</sup>John 16:12-13 <sup>4</sup>2 Peter 1:20–21 <sup>5</sup>Matthew 5:18 <sup>6</sup>2 Timothy 2:15 <sup>7</sup>1 John 2:27 <sup>8</sup>John 12:47-48; Hebrews 4:12 <sup>9</sup>2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3; Psalm 19:7-10 <sup>10</sup>Matthew 24:35; 1 Peter 1:23-25

#### God

There is one and only one living and true God<sup>1</sup>. He is an intelligent,<sup>2</sup> spiritual,<sup>3</sup> and personal Being,<sup>4</sup> the Creator,<sup>5</sup> Redeemer,<sup>6</sup> Preserver,<sup>7</sup> and Ruler of the universe.<sup>8</sup> God is infinite in holiness<sup>9</sup> and perfect in all His attributes.<sup>10</sup> To Him is owed the highest love,<sup>1</sup> reverence,<sup>12</sup> and obedience.<sup>13</sup> The eternal God is one in essence,<sup>14</sup> eternally existing in the Trinity (three Persons as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>1</sup>1 Corinthians 8:4 <sup>2</sup>Romans 11:33-34 <sup>3</sup>John 4:24 <sup>4</sup>Exodus 3:14 <sup>5</sup>Revelation 4:11 <sup>6</sup>Colossians 1:13-14 <sup>7</sup>Colossians 1:14 <sup>8</sup>Isaiah 66:1; Ephesians 1:20-22; Philippians 2:9-11 <sup>9</sup>1 Peter 1:16 <sup>10</sup>Matthew 5:48 <sup>11</sup>Matthew 22:37 <sup>12</sup>Psalm 33:8 <sup>13</sup>John 3:36; 2 Thessalonians 1:8 <sup>14</sup>Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5–7 <sup>15</sup>Matthew 28:19

#### *God the Father*

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the course of human history disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace. He is all powerful, all loving, and all wise.<sup>2</sup> He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption.<sup>3</sup> God is Father in both His designation in the Trinity<sup>4</sup> and in truth to those who become children of God through faith

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in Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup> As creator He is Father to all men<sup>6</sup> but He is Spiritual Father only to believers.<sup>7</sup> He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass and He works all things after the counsel of His own will.<sup>8</sup> He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events.<sup>9</sup> In His sovereignty He is neither author nor approver of sin,<sup>10</sup> nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures.<sup>11</sup> He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own;<sup>12</sup> He saves from sin all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption Father to His own.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 104; 1 Corinthians 8:6 <sup>2</sup>Psalm 62:11; 1 John 4:8; Psalm 36:7; Psalm 147:5 <sup>3</sup>Genesis 1:1-31; Psalm 103:19; Ephesians 3:9; Romans 11:36 <sup>4</sup>John 5: 17-26; 8:54; 14:12-13 <sup>5</sup>1 John 3:1; Matthew 6:6-15; Romans 8:16 <sup>6</sup>Ephesians 3:14-15, 4:6; <sup>7</sup>Romans 8:14; 2Corinthians 6:18 <sup>8</sup>Ephesians 1:11; 3:15 <sup>9</sup>1 Chronicles 29:11 <sup>10</sup>Habakkuk 1:13; Job 34:10 <sup>11</sup>1 Peter 1:17; Matthew 16:27 <sup>12</sup>Ephesians 1:4-6 <sup>13</sup>John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5

### *God the Son*

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God<sup>1</sup>, possessing all the fullness of the divine nature and attributes<sup>2</sup>. In these, He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father<sup>3</sup>. God the Father created all things according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup> In Christ, all things continue in existence and in operation<sup>5</sup>.

In His incarnation, Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary<sup>6</sup>. In the incarnation, Christ willingly surrendered only the prerogatives of deity<sup>7</sup> but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind<sup>8</sup>. In His incarnation, Christ took upon Himself the demands and necessities of human nature and identified Himself completely with mankind<sup>9</sup> yet without sin<sup>10</sup>. Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness<sup>11</sup>.

Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God<sup>12</sup>. In His death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin.<sup>13</sup> His death was voluntary<sup>14</sup>, vicarious<sup>15</sup>, substitutionary<sup>16</sup>, propitiatory<sup>17</sup>, and redemptive.<sup>18</sup>

He was raised from the dead<sup>19</sup> with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion<sup>20</sup>. Our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead.<sup>21</sup> In the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son<sup>22</sup> and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross<sup>23</sup>. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers<sup>24</sup>.

He ascended into heaven<sup>25</sup> and is now exalted at the right hand of God.<sup>26</sup> In heaven, He is now our sole Mediator and Advocate, making intercession for those who draw near to God.<sup>27</sup>

Jesus Christ will return to receive the church unto Himself at the rapture.<sup>28</sup> Returning in glory, He will establish His kingdom on earth and reign for 1000 years.<sup>29</sup> The Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind<sup>30</sup>. As the mediator between God and man<sup>31</sup>, the head of His body the church<sup>32</sup>, and the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David<sup>33</sup>, He is the final judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior.<sup>34</sup>

Jesus Christ now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord<sup>35</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>John 1:9, 17:5, 24 <sup>2</sup>Colossians 1:19, 2:9 <sup>3</sup>Psalm 110:1; John 10:30-33, 14:9; Philippians 2:6 <sup>4</sup>John 1:3; 1 Corinthians 8:6 <sup>5</sup>Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3 <sup>6</sup>Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:34-35 <sup>7</sup>Philippians 2:8 <sup>8</sup>Colossians 1:19, 2:9 <sup>9</sup>Hebrews 2:17-18 <sup>10</sup>Hebrews 4:15 <sup>11</sup>Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2; John 10:30, 14:9 <sup>12</sup>John 5:30, 8:28-29 <sup>13</sup>Romans 3:24; Hebrews 7:25-27; 1 Peter 1:18-19, 3:18 <sup>14</sup>John 10:14-15, 17-18 <sup>15</sup>Romans 5:8, 6:4; Galatians 2:20 <sup>16</sup>2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18 <sup>17</sup>Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2 <sup>18</sup>Romans 3:24; Titus 2:14 <sup>19</sup>Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:6-7 <sup>20</sup>John 20:16, 19-20, 26; 1 Corinthians 15:5-8 <sup>21</sup>Romans 4:23-25, 5:10, 18 <sup>22</sup>Romans 4:25 <sup>23</sup>Acts 2:32-36 <sup>24</sup>John 5:25-29; Romans 4:25, 6:3-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23 <sup>25</sup>Acts 1:9 <sup>26</sup>Acts 2:34; Hebrews 1:3, 10:12 <sup>27</sup>Hebrews 7:25, 9:15, 24; 1 John 2:1 <sup>28</sup>Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 <sup>29</sup>Revelation 20:6 <sup>30</sup>Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:22-23; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:11-15 <sup>31</sup>1 Timothy 2:5 <sup>32</sup>Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18 <sup>33</sup>Isaiah 9:6-7; Luke 1:31-33 <sup>34</sup>Matthew 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-3; Revelation 20:11-15 <sup>35</sup>Romans 8:10; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 1:27

### *God the Holy Spirit*

The Holy Spirit is a divine person possessing all the attributes of deity including personality,<sup>1</sup> intellect,<sup>2</sup> emotions,<sup>3</sup> will,<sup>4</sup> eternity,<sup>5</sup> omnipresence,<sup>6</sup> omniscience,<sup>7</sup> omnipotence,<sup>8</sup>

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and truthfulness.<sup>9</sup> In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son.<sup>10</sup>

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind.<sup>11</sup> His sovereign activity is displayed in creation,<sup>12</sup> the incarnation,<sup>13</sup> the written revelation,<sup>14</sup> and the work of salvation.<sup>15</sup>

A unique work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost<sup>16</sup> when He came from the Father as promised by Christ<sup>17</sup> to initiate<sup>18</sup> the building of the body of Christ.<sup>19</sup> The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor those He gifts by ostentatious displays,<sup>20</sup> but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith.<sup>21</sup> He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment,<sup>22</sup> effects regeneration,<sup>23</sup> and baptizes all believers into the body of Christ.<sup>24</sup> His presence in the Christian is the assurance of God to bring the believer into full redemption of his body.<sup>25</sup>

The Holy Spirit bestows the spiritual gifts<sup>26</sup> by which believers serve God through His church<sup>27</sup> for the perfecting of the saints today.<sup>28</sup> Gifts such as speaking in tongues, prophecy and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles and prophets as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers.<sup>29</sup> The Holy Spirit is the divine teacher who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible.<sup>30</sup> Through illumination, He enables men to understand truth.<sup>31</sup> He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship,<sup>32</sup> evangelism,<sup>33</sup> and service.<sup>34</sup>

The Holy Spirit permanently indwells the believer.<sup>35</sup> He sanctifies,<sup>36</sup> instructs,<sup>37</sup> empowers him for service,<sup>38</sup> and seals him unto the day of redemption.<sup>39</sup> It is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled by the Spirit.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>1</sup>John 14:26, 16:13 <sup>2</sup>1 Corinthians 2:10-13 <sup>3</sup>Ephesians 4:30 <sup>4</sup>1 Corinthians 12:11 <sup>5</sup>Hebrews 9:14 <sup>6</sup>Psalms 139:7-10 <sup>7</sup>Isaiah 40:13-14  
<sup>8</sup>Romans 15:13 <sup>9</sup>John 16:13 <sup>10</sup>Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 16:6-7; 28:25-26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 10:15-17 <sup>11</sup>John 16:8-11 <sup>12</sup>Genesis 1:2, 26 <sup>13</sup>Matthew 1:18 <sup>14</sup>2 Peter 1:20-21 <sup>15</sup>John 3:5-7 <sup>16</sup>Acts 2:4 <sup>17</sup>John 14:16-17; 15:26 <sup>18</sup>John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8 <sup>19</sup>Ephesians 2:22 <sup>20</sup>1 Corinthians 12:4-11 <sup>21</sup>2 Corinthians 3:18 <sup>22</sup>John 16:8 <sup>23</sup>Titus 3:5 <sup>24</sup>1 Corinthians 12:13  
<sup>25</sup>Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 John 4:13 <sup>26</sup>1 Corinthians 12:4-11 <sup>27</sup>Acts 2:4; Ephesians 2:22 <sup>28</sup>Ephesians 4:7-16 <sup>29</sup>1 Corinthians 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 2:19-20; 3:4-5; Hebrews 2:1-4 <sup>30</sup>John 16:13; 2 Peter 1:20-21 <sup>31</sup>1 Corinthians 2:14-16 <sup>32</sup>Ephesians 5:18-20 <sup>33</sup>1 Peter 4:10-11 <sup>34</sup>Acts 1:8 <sup>35</sup>Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16 <sup>36</sup>Galatians 4:6 <sup>37</sup>1 John 2:27 <sup>38</sup>2 Corinthians 3:6 <sup>39</sup>Ephesians 1:13  
<sup>40</sup>Ephesians 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19

### Creation

God created the universe and everything *ex-nihilo* (out of nothing) in it in six, consecutive, 24-hour days.<sup>1</sup> The Triune God (The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) actively, fully, and harmoniously created all things by Himself and for His glory.<sup>2</sup> God acted freely in creating all things and all of creation is dependent on the sovereign word of God.<sup>3</sup> God created the earth and the entire universe with all systems in mature operation and appearance.<sup>4</sup>

God created humanity as the culminating work of His creation, consisting of two genders (male and female). All of humanity, both male and female, are created in the image and likeness of God.<sup>5</sup> Each of these two distinct, complementary genders reflects the image of God.<sup>6</sup> God created only one race of mankind, and all people alive today are the descendants of Adam and Eve and subsequently Noah.<sup>7</sup> God created Adam and Eve to govern and rule the earth for him.<sup>8</sup> God also created and established marriage to be a life-long covenant relationship between one man and one woman.<sup>9</sup>

Creation has been subjected to futility by the curse of sin<sup>10</sup> and will be redeemed, along with all of the children of God, at the return of Jesus Christ.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Genesis 1:1-2:3; Exodus 20:11, 31:17; Psalm 33:6, 9; Isaiah 45:18; Nehemiah 9:6; Hebrews 11:3 <sup>2</sup>Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13, 33:4; Psalm 104:30; John 1:3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:10; Revelation 4:11 <sup>3</sup>Ephesians 1:11; Hebrews 1:3; Revelation 4:11 <sup>4</sup>Genesis 1:12-30 <sup>5</sup>Genesis 1:26-27; 2:21-23 <sup>6</sup>Genesis 1:27, 5:2, 9:6; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9 <sup>7</sup>Genesis 1:26-27, 3:20, 10:1, 10:32; Romans 5:12; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5 <sup>8</sup>Genesis 1:27-31; Genesis 2:15, 18 <sup>9</sup>Genesis 2:18-24; Matthew 19:8-9; Mark 10:6-9 <sup>10</sup>Genesis 3:14-19 <sup>11</sup>Romans 5:12-21; 8:18-25

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### Man

God created man for His own glory.<sup>1</sup> Man was directly and immediately created by the special act of God, in His own image and likeness, and is the crowning work of His creation.<sup>2</sup> In the beginning man was innocent of sin<sup>3</sup> and was endowed by his Creator with intelligence,<sup>4</sup> volition,<sup>5</sup> and moral responsibility to God.<sup>6</sup> God provided everything necessary for man to glorify God enjoy God's fellowship and live his life in the will of God.<sup>7</sup>

By his free choice man sinned against God<sup>8</sup> and brought sin into the human race.<sup>9</sup> In Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God,<sup>10</sup> man lost his innocence;<sup>11</sup> incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death;<sup>12</sup> became subject to the wrath of God;<sup>13</sup> and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God.<sup>14</sup> All men are sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration.<sup>15</sup> Man is spiritually dead in his sins and is incapable of saving himself; therefore salvation is wholly of God's grace.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 43:7 <sup>2</sup>Genesis 1:26-31; Genesis 2:7; Psalm 8:5; James 3:9 <sup>3</sup>Genesis 1:27; Ecclesiastes 7:29 <sup>4</sup>Genesis 2:19-20 <sup>5</sup>Genesis 2:16-17, 3:6 <sup>6</sup>Romans 1: 18-20 <sup>7</sup>Genesis 1:31 <sup>8</sup>Genesis 3:6 <sup>9</sup>Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 <sup>10</sup>Genesis 2:16-17 <sup>11</sup>Genesis 3:7-8; Romans 5:18-19 <sup>12</sup>Genesis 2:16-17; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1 <sup>13</sup>Genesis 3: 16-24; John 3:36; Ephesians 2:3 <sup>14</sup>Genesis 6:5; Job 14:4; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:19, 6:44 <sup>15</sup>Psalm 14:1-3; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:3 <sup>16</sup>Ephesians 2:1-9

### Salvation

Salvation is the redemption of the whole man, involving both his immaterial soul<sup>1</sup> and material body.<sup>2</sup> Salvation is offered freely<sup>3</sup> to all who believe in Jesus Christ,<sup>4</sup> who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer.<sup>5</sup> Salvation is wholly of God by grace and not on the basis of human merit or works.<sup>6</sup> In its broadest sense, salvation includes regeneration,<sup>7</sup> sanctification,<sup>8</sup> and glorification.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup>James 1:21, 5:20 <sup>2</sup>1 Corinthians 15:51-53, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 <sup>3</sup>Romans 5:15-17, Ephesians 2:8 <sup>4</sup>John 1:12, Acts 16:31 <sup>5</sup>Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 9:12, 1 Peter 1:18-19 <sup>6</sup>Romans 3:28, Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:9 <sup>7</sup>Ephesians 2:5 <sup>8</sup>1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 1 Peter 1:1-2 <sup>9</sup>Romans 8:30, 2 Timothy 2:10

### Election

Election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies.<sup>1</sup>

Sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust in Christ.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines.<sup>3</sup> All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith and all who come in faith the Father will receive.<sup>4</sup>

The unmerited favor that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part nor to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will,<sup>5</sup> but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy.<sup>6</sup>

Election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love.<sup>7</sup> This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>8</sup> God's sovereign election excludes boasting<sup>9</sup> and promotes humility.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 25:34, Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1-2 <sup>2</sup>Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19; 5:40; Romans 9:22-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 22:17 <sup>3</sup>Ephesians 1:5, Philippians 2:13, Colossians 1:19-20 <sup>4</sup>John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48 <sup>5</sup>John 1:12-13; Ephesians 1:4-7; 1 Peter 1:2 <sup>6</sup>Titus 3:4-7 <sup>7</sup>Romans 9:11-16 <sup>8</sup>Matthew 11:25-28; John 5:19-20; 2 Timothy 1:9 <sup>9</sup>1 Corinthians 1:29-31; Ephesians 1:9 <sup>10</sup>Romans 9:20-21

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### *Justification*

Justification before God is an act of God<sup>1</sup> by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins<sup>2</sup> and confess Him as sovereign Lord.<sup>3</sup> This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man,<sup>4</sup> it's a gift of God's grace,<sup>5</sup> and involves the placing of our sins on Christ<sup>6</sup> and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us.<sup>7</sup> By this means God is enabled to be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.<sup>8</sup> Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Romans 8:33 <sup>2</sup>Acts 2:38; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6-7 <sup>3</sup>Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:3 <sup>4</sup>Galatians 2:16; Titus 3:5  
<sup>5</sup>Romans 3:25 <sup>6</sup>Isaiah 53:6; Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24 <sup>7</sup>Romans 4:5-8; 2 Corinthians 5:21 <sup>8</sup>Romans 3:26 <sup>9</sup>Isaiah 61:10; Romans 5:1

### *Sanctification*

Through justification, every believer is declared to be just and holy and thus is sanctified (set apart from sin) unto God.<sup>1</sup> By this sanctification, the believer is identified as a "saint," and that identification has to do with the believer's position in God's eyes, not with his present walk.<sup>2</sup>

This instantaneous work of sanctification should not be confused with the Holy Spirit's work of progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the obedience to the Word of God.<sup>3</sup> By the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is enabled to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, any person who shows no evidence of the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work in their life has no claim to genuine faith.<sup>5</sup>

Every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.<sup>6</sup> It is the believer's responsibility to actively appropriate the resources provided by God's Spirit through God's Word in order to overcome the sinful patterns in their lives.<sup>7</sup> The struggle with the sinful flesh will stay with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, all claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Acts 20:32; Hebrews 10:10 <sup>2</sup>1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11 <sup>3</sup>John 17:17; Romans 6:17-22 <sup>4</sup>2 Corinthians 3:18 <sup>5</sup>Romans 8:12-14; 1 John 3:5-9 <sup>6</sup>Galatians 5:16-24 <sup>7</sup>John 17:17; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16 <sup>8</sup>Colossians 3:3-4; 1 John 3:2-3 <sup>9</sup>1 John 1:8-2:1

### *Regeneration*

Regeneration, or new birth, is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit whereby man, who is dead in sin, is made alive and becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus.<sup>1</sup> Regeneration is a work of God's grace by which the divine nature is given.<sup>2</sup> It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God.<sup>3</sup> As a result of the Spirit's work, the sinner repents and responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation.<sup>4</sup> Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct.<sup>5</sup> Good works will be its proper evidence and fruit.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:5 <sup>2</sup>Titus 3:5; 2 Peter 1:4 <sup>3</sup>John 3:3-7; 1 Peter 1:23 <sup>4</sup>Ezekiel 11:19; John 1:13 <sup>5</sup>Luke 3:8; Galatians 5:22-23 <sup>6</sup>Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:14

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### *Repentance*

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God.<sup>1</sup> Faith is the response to the call of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.<sup>2</sup> Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 45:22; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 <sup>2</sup>2 Chronicles 7:14; James 4:9-10 <sup>3</sup>John 3:36, 5:24; Acts 3:19; 2 Corinthians 7:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:25-26

### *Preservation*

Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit,<sup>1</sup> will progress in sanctification<sup>2</sup> and shall persevere to the end.<sup>3</sup> Although believers may fall into sin,<sup>4</sup> whereby they grieve the Spirit,<sup>5</sup> impair their graces and comforts,<sup>6</sup> bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal chastisements on themselves,<sup>7</sup> they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>1 Corinthians 6:11 <sup>2</sup>2 Corinthians 7:1 <sup>3</sup>John 6:37-40; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Philippians 1:6 <sup>4</sup>1 John 2:1 <sup>5</sup>Ephesians 4:30 <sup>6</sup>1 Corinthians 3:9-15 <sup>7</sup>Hebrews 12:1-6 <sup>8</sup>John 10:27-29; Romans 5:9-10; Hebrews 7:25; 1 Peter 1:3-5

### *Glorification*

Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed when they will be separated from the presence and the power of sin forever.<sup>1</sup> The souls of believers who have already died are alive with Christ in heaven.<sup>2</sup> They will receive new bodies at the resurrection and rapture of the church, when those alive on earth will have their bodies transformed.<sup>3</sup> The believer's new body will be like Christ's after His resurrection, and will be redesigned and adapted for heaven.<sup>4</sup> All believers will receive a glorified body after the likeness of Christ's resurrected body<sup>5</sup> at the time of their resurrection<sup>6</sup> or at the rapture of the church.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Romans 8:30; Philippians 3:20-21 <sup>2</sup>Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8 <sup>3</sup>Romans 8: 18-23; 1 Corinthians 15: 51 - 54; 1 Thessalonians 4:16 <sup>4</sup>1 Corinthians 15:42 -43; 1 John 3:2 <sup>5</sup>1 Corinthians 15:42-54; 1 John 3:2 <sup>6</sup>1 Corinthians 15:22-24; Revelation 20:4-5 <sup>7</sup>1 Thessalonians 4:16

## **The Church**

All who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately baptized, that is placed, by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the church,<sup>1</sup> the bride of Christ,<sup>2</sup> of which Christ is the head.<sup>3</sup>

The formation of the church, which brought Jews and Gentiles into one body under Christ, constitutes one "new" man in Christ, a work of God that began after the coming of Christ.<sup>4</sup> That formation began on the Day of Pentecost<sup>5</sup> and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture.<sup>6</sup>

The church is thus a unique spiritual organism, distinct from Israel,<sup>7</sup> a mystery not revealed until this age.<sup>8</sup>

The establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures.<sup>9</sup> The members of the one scriptural body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies.<sup>10</sup>

The one supreme authority for the church is Christ and the church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures.<sup>11</sup> The biblically designated leadership under Christ and over the assembly are elders (who are also called overseers, bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers).<sup>12</sup> God's design is that these elders be males<sup>13</sup> and that each church be lead by a plurality of these men.<sup>14</sup>

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These leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ<sup>15</sup> and have His authority in directing the church.<sup>16</sup> The congregation is to submit to their leadership.<sup>17</sup> These elders alone are entrusted with authority but are joined in service to the church by deacons. Both elders and deacons must be tested in order to validate their biblical qualifications.<sup>18</sup>

An importance is to be placed in the church on discipleship.<sup>19</sup> This discipleship encompasses mutual accountability within the body and discipline for sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture.<sup>20</sup>

The local church is autonomous, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations.<sup>21</sup> It is scriptural for true churches, under the oversight of their elders, to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith.<sup>22</sup>

The purpose of the church is to glorify God.<sup>23</sup> It accomplishes that purpose as it fulfills God's will by building itself up in the faith,<sup>24</sup> by instruction of the Word,<sup>25</sup> by maintaining unity in fellowship,<sup>26</sup> by keeping the ordinances,<sup>27</sup> by the ministry of their individual gifts,<sup>28</sup> and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world.<sup>29</sup>

It is God Who, by His Spirit, gives the church spiritual gifts to accomplish His purpose in the world.<sup>30</sup> First, He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry<sup>31</sup> and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the body of Christ.<sup>32</sup>

There were two kinds of gifts given the early church: miraculous gifts of divine revelation and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message;<sup>33</sup> and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another.<sup>34</sup> With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message, and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message.<sup>35</sup> Miraculous gifts can even be counterfeited by Satan to deceive even believers.<sup>36</sup> The only gifts in operation today are those non-revelatory equipping gifts given for edification.<sup>37</sup>

No one possesses the gift of healing today but God does hear and answer the prayers of the saints and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>1</sup>1 Corinthians 12:12-13 <sup>2</sup>2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8 <sup>3</sup>Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18  
<sup>4</sup>Ephesians 2:14-20 <sup>5</sup>Acts 1:5; 2:37-47 <sup>6</sup>1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 <sup>7</sup>Romans 11:13-24; 1 Corinthians 10:32 <sup>8</sup>Ephesians 3:1-6  
<sup>9</sup>Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1 <sup>10</sup>Hebrews 10:25 <sup>11</sup>1  
Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18 <sup>12</sup>Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9 <sup>13</sup>1  
Timothy 2:12-3:1 <sup>14</sup>Acts 14:23; 15:2; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1-2 <sup>15</sup>1 Peter 5:1-5 <sup>16</sup>1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:2-3  
<sup>17</sup>Hebrews 13:7, 17 <sup>18</sup>1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9 <sup>19</sup>Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2 <sup>20</sup>Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1  
Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16 <sup>21</sup>Acts 20:28-30 <sup>22</sup>Romans 15:24-26 <sup>23</sup>Ephesians  
3:21 <sup>24</sup>Ephesians 4:13-16 <sup>25</sup>2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-4:2 <sup>26</sup>John 17:20-23; Acts 2:47; Ephesians 4:1-6 <sup>27</sup>Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-  
42; 1 Corinthians 11:26 <sup>28</sup>1 Peter 4:10-11 <sup>29</sup>Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:46-47 <sup>30</sup>1 Corinthians 12:4-7 <sup>31</sup>Ephesians 4:7-12  
<sup>32</sup>Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11 <sup>33</sup>Hebrews 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12 <sup>34</sup>Romans 12:3-8 <sup>35</sup>1  
Corinthians 13:8-12 <sup>36</sup>2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-10; Revelation 13:13-14 <sup>37</sup>Romans 12:6-8 <sup>38</sup>Luke 18:1-6;  
John 5:7-9; 2 Corinthians 12:6-10; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15

## Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Two ordinances have been given to the church: baptism<sup>1</sup> and the Lord's Supper.<sup>2</sup> Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water<sup>3</sup> in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.<sup>4</sup> It is a physical act of obedience symbolizing the spiritual reality of the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus.<sup>5</sup> Baptism is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the body of Christ.<sup>6</sup> The ordinance of water baptism imparts no grace.<sup>7</sup>

The Lord's Supper is an act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize and proclaim the death of the Redeemer

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and anticipate His second coming.<sup>8</sup> It should always be preceded by solemn self-examination.<sup>9</sup> The elements of communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ.<sup>10</sup> When we properly share in communion we spiritually participate in fellowship with Jesus Christ and with other believers.<sup>11</sup> The Lord's Supper is a command from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself to every believer.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16 <sup>2</sup>Matthew 26:26-27; Luke 22:19 <sup>3</sup>Matthew 3:16; Acts 8:38-39 <sup>4</sup>Matthew 28:19  
<sup>5</sup>Acts 8:36-38, 16:31-33; Romans 6:3-5 <sup>6</sup>Acts 2:41-42; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27-28 <sup>7</sup>Acts 2:41, 10:47-48  
<sup>8</sup>1 Corinthians 11:24-26 <sup>9</sup>1 Corinthians 11:28-32 <sup>10</sup>Luke 22:19-20 <sup>11</sup>1 Corinthians 10:16 <sup>12</sup>Matthew 26:26-28

### Angels

#### *Holy Angels*

Angels are created beings<sup>1</sup> and are therefore not to be worshiped.<sup>2</sup> Although they are a higher order of creation than man,<sup>3</sup> they are created to serve God<sup>4</sup> and to worship Him.<sup>5</sup>

#### *Fallen Angels*

Satan is a created angel and the originator of sin.<sup>6</sup> He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator,<sup>7</sup> and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve.<sup>8</sup> He is the leader of the angels which he carried with him in his fall.<sup>9</sup>

Satan is the open and declared enemy of God<sup>10</sup> and man.<sup>11</sup> He is repeatedly called the ruler of this world<sup>12</sup> who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ,<sup>13</sup> and he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Psalms 148:2,5; Colossians 1:16 <sup>2</sup>Colossians 2:18-19; Revelation 19:10; 22:9 <sup>3</sup>Hebrews 2:6-7 <sup>4</sup>Psalms 103:20-21; Matthew 13:39-42  
<sup>5</sup>Nehemiah 9:6; Hebrews 1:6 <sup>6</sup>Genesis 3:1,4; John 8:44; 1 John 3:8 <sup>7</sup>Isaiah 14:12-17; Revelation 20:2,10 <sup>8</sup>Genesis 3:1-15 <sup>9</sup>Matthew 25:41; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6 <sup>10</sup>Isaiah 14:13-14 <sup>11</sup>Revelation 12:9-10 <sup>12</sup>John 12:31; John 14:30; John 16:11 <sup>13</sup>Genesis 3:15; Romans 16:20  
<sup>14</sup>Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10

### Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations,<sup>1</sup> and to pray for others to join the effort.<sup>2</sup> At the heart of all fruitful missionary efforts are workers whose regenerate lives shine forth the light of the gospel into a perverse world.<sup>3</sup> It is the duty of every child of God to make the most of every opportunity to share the gospel of Christ.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 28:18-20; John 20:21 <sup>2</sup>Matthew 9:37-38 <sup>3</sup>Matthew 5:16; 2 Corinthians 4:1-6; Philippians 2:15 <sup>4</sup>Romans 10:14-15; Colossians 4:5-6; 1 Peter 2:9-10, 3:15

### Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; He is the Creator and rightful Owner of all that we have and all that we are.<sup>1</sup> Christians should recognize that their time, talents, and material possessions have been entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others.<sup>2</sup> According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means willingly, cheerfully,<sup>3</sup> systematically,<sup>4</sup> proportionately,<sup>5</sup> and bountifully<sup>6</sup> for the advancement of the gospel on earth.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Deuteronomy 8:18; 1 Chronicles 29:12; Psalm 50:10-12 <sup>2</sup>Luke 16:9-13; 1 Timothy 6:17-18 <sup>3</sup>2 Corinthians 9:7 <sup>4</sup>1 Corinthians 16:2-4  
<sup>5</sup>2 Corinthians 8:11-12 <sup>6</sup>2 Corinthians 9:6 <sup>7</sup>Philippians 4:10-19

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### Gender, Marriage, and Family

God created Adam and Eve, the first human beings, in his own image, equal before God as persons, and distinct in gender as male and female.<sup>1</sup> As those who bear the image of God, both men and women have dignity and value as human beings and should be treated as such. Gender distinctions between male and female reflect God's original creation design and are meant for human good and human flourishing. The genetic differences between male and female, resulting in different reproductive structures, are integral to God's design for self-conception as male or female. Therefore, self-conception as male or female should be defined by God's holy purposes in creation and redemption as revealed in Scripture

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society.<sup>2</sup> It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman, exclusively to one another, in covenant commitment for a lifetime.<sup>3</sup> It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church,<sup>4</sup> and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel for sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.<sup>5</sup> Sin distorts sexual desires by directing them away from the marriage covenant and toward sexual immorality—a distortion that includes both heterosexual and homosexual immorality.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, it is sinful to approve of homosexual immorality or transgenderism and that such approval constitutes an essential departure from Christian faithfulness and witness.

The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people.<sup>7</sup> A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church.<sup>7</sup> He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family.<sup>8</sup> A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ.<sup>9</sup> She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him<sup>10</sup>, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.<sup>11</sup>

Children, from the moment of conception<sup>12</sup>, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord.<sup>13</sup> Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage.<sup>14</sup> Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them<sup>15</sup>, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth.<sup>16</sup> Children are to honor and obey their parents.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25 <sup>2</sup>Genesis 2:18-25; Proverbs 18:22 <sup>3</sup>Matthew 19:3-6 <sup>4</sup>Ephesians. 5:32 <sup>5</sup>Genesis 1:28, 2:25; Proverbs: 5:18-19; Hebrews 13:4 <sup>6</sup> Exodus 20:14; 20:17; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:18, 21; 22:5 <sup>7</sup> Ephesians 5:22-23 <sup>8</sup>Ephesians 5:25 <sup>9</sup>Ephesians 5:33; 1 Peter 3:7 <sup>10</sup>Ephesians 5:22-23; 1 Peter 3:1 <sup>11</sup>Genesis 2:23-24; 1 Corinthians 7:3-4; 1 Peter 3:8-9 <sup>12</sup>Psalms 128:3; Proverbs 31:10-31; Titus 2:3-5 <sup>13</sup>Psalms 139:13-16 <sup>14</sup>Psalms 127:3-5 <sup>15</sup>Colossians 3:18-21 <sup>16</sup>Proverbs 6:20-23 <sup>17</sup>Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Psalms 78:1-8 <sup>18</sup>Exodus 20:12; Colossians 3:20; Ephesians 6:1-3

### Last Things

#### *Death*

Physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness<sup>1</sup>. At death, the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ,<sup>2</sup> but the soul of the unredeemed passes immediately into Hades.<sup>3</sup>

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All of the dead will be bodily resurrected, some unto everlasting life and some unto everlasting punishment.<sup>4</sup> The saved will be resurrected to eternal life in two separate events;<sup>5</sup> the first for those who died after Christ's resurrection and ascension<sup>6</sup> and the second for those who died before Christ's ascension and during the tribulation.<sup>7</sup> The unsaved will be resurrected to appear at the Great White Throne for judgment and everlasting punishment in which they will be cast into the lake of fire.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Luke 16:22, Revelation 6:9-11 <sup>2</sup>Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23 <sup>3</sup>Matthew 11:23, Luke 16:19-23  
<sup>4</sup>Daniel 12:2, Matthew 25:31-34, 41; John 5:28-29 <sup>5</sup>1 Corinthians 15:23-24 <sup>6</sup>1 Corinthians 15:23, 52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16  
<sup>7</sup>Revelation 20:4-6 <sup>8</sup>Revelation 20:11-15

### *The Rapture of the Church*

Before the seven-year tribulation<sup>1</sup> and immediately after the resurrection from the dead of those true believers who died after the ascension of Christ, there will be a personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>2</sup> to translate His church from this earth.<sup>3</sup> Between this event and His glorious return to establish His earthly kingdom, Christ will reward believers according to their works.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 3:10, 4:10-5:2 <sup>2</sup>John 14:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16 <sup>3</sup>1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17  
<sup>4</sup>1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 4:10

### *The Tribulation Period*

This is the period explained to Daniel by Gabriel as the seventieth week in the ancient prophecy.<sup>1</sup> Immediately following the removal of the church from the earth<sup>2</sup> the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world.<sup>3</sup> These judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth to destroy the antichrist and the false prophet and the armies of the earth gathered together to make war with Him.<sup>4</sup> After Christ destroys His enemies, Satan is also bound and thrown into the abyss for 1000 years.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24:15 <sup>2</sup>1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; Revelation 3:10, 4:10-5:2 <sup>3</sup>Daniel 9:27; 12:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12; Revelation 16 <sup>4</sup>Matthew 24:27-31; Revelation 19:11-21 <sup>5</sup>Revelation 20:1-3

### *The Second Coming and the Millennial Reign*

After the tribulation period, Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David<sup>1</sup> and establish His Messianic kingdom for a thousand years on the earth.<sup>2</sup> At this time the Old Testament and tribulation saints will be resurrected to reign with Christ<sup>3</sup> along with His previously resurrected and raptured saints.<sup>4</sup>

The kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel<sup>5</sup> to restore them to the land which they forfeited through their disobedience.<sup>6</sup> The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside<sup>7</sup> but will again be awakened through repentance to enter into the land of blessing.<sup>8</sup>

This time of our Lord's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life,<sup>9</sup> and will be brought to an end by God when He releases Satan.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:10-11; 2:29-31 <sup>2</sup>Revelation 20:1-7 <sup>3</sup>Revelation 20:4-6 <sup>4</sup>Revelation 5:10  
<sup>5</sup>Isaiah 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:1-17 <sup>6</sup>Deuteronomy 28:15-68 <sup>7</sup>Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:1-26  
<sup>8</sup>Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-32; Romans 11:25-29 <sup>9</sup>Isaiah 11; 65:17-25; Ezekiel 36:33-38 <sup>10</sup>Revelation 20:7

### *The Judgment of the Lost*

Following the release of Satan after the thousand year reign of Christ,<sup>1</sup> Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city,<sup>2</sup> at which time Satan and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven.<sup>3</sup> Following this,

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Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone<sup>4</sup> whereupon Christ, who is the judge of all men,<sup>5</sup> will resurrect and judge the great and small at the Great White Throne judgment.<sup>6</sup>

This resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection, whereupon receiving their judgment, they will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 20:7 <sup>2</sup>Revelation 20:8 <sup>3</sup>Revelation 20:9 <sup>4</sup>Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10 <sup>5</sup>John 5:22 <sup>6</sup>Revelation 20:11-13  
<sup>7</sup>Matthew 25:41, 46; Revelation 14:11, 20:14-15

### *Eternity*

After the closing of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers,<sup>1</sup> the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved<sup>2</sup> and replaced with a new earth wherein only righteousness dwells.<sup>3</sup> Following this, the heavenly city will come down out of heaven<sup>4</sup> and will be the dwelling place of the saints,<sup>5</sup> where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another.<sup>6</sup> Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father,<sup>7</sup> that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:7-15 <sup>2</sup>2 Peter 3:10, Revelation 21:1 <sup>3</sup>Revelation: 21-22 <sup>4</sup>Revelation 21:2 <sup>5</sup>John 14:2-3  
<sup>6</sup>John 17:3; Revelation 21, 22 <sup>7</sup>1 Corinthians 15:24-28 <sup>8</sup>1 Corinthians 15:28

## Article IV – Corporate Membership

### **I. Corporate Membership:**

The Corporation shall have no members as the term is defined in the Official Code of Georgia (O.C.G.A.) §14-3-140(22). Any action which would otherwise require approval by a majority of all members shall only require approval of the Board of Elders (also known as the 'Board'). All rights which would otherwise vest in the members shall vest in the Board of Elders.

### **II. Members of the Fellowship:**

Nothing contained in Section I of this Article shall be construed to limit the right of the Corporation to refer to persons associated with the Corporation as “church members” even though such persons are not members of the Corporation as defined by O.C.G.A §14-3-140(22), and no such reference within the Constitution or Bylaws shall constitute anyone being such a member. Additionally, the Corporation may confer or remove, by amendment of its Articles or Bylaws, or by decision of the Board, some or all of the rights of a member, as set forth in O.C.G.A §14-3-140(22).

## Article V – Church Membership

### **I. Purpose and Definition of Church Membership**

Active church membership shall be open to all persons who confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and who have been baptized by immersion. Faith Community Church, not any individual member, retains authority to accept and dismiss individuals from church membership. An explanation of the process is defined in Section III of this Article. Church members shall not receive any proprietary or voting rights of the Corporation, except on those matters which the Board chooses to submit to the members for affirmation.

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### II. Church Member Expectations of Faith Community Church:

The criteria for becoming a member of Faith Community Church is that one must be at least eighteen years of age, have received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord through repentance and faith, and have been baptized by immersion as a believer. (Matthew 28:19; Romans 10:9-10; Acts 2:38; I Peter 3:21). Additionally all church members must agree to the following:

1. To regularly participate in worship both corporately and privately and to faithfully attend the regular gatherings of the church the elders deem necessary for the health of the body unless hindered by providence [Hebrews 10:25]
2. To be accountable to other Christians in an ongoing way of learning and fellowship and to deal Biblically with others in regard to their relationships rather than gossiping or retaliating in an ungodly way [Hebrews 10:24; Ephesians 4:25-32]
3. To Submit to the loving rule of the elders (i.e. Board) [1 Peter 5:1-3; Hebrews 13:17]
4. To exercise one's spiritual gift or gifts for the edifying of the body and the promotion of the gospel as God might lead [1 Corinthians 12:7-11]
5. To be committed in giving money and resources for the work of the Lord carried out by the church [2 Corinthians 9:6-7]
6. To be faithful in witnessing for Jesus Christ while seeking to carry out their "world-sized" part in the kingdom of God [Matthew 28:19]

### III. Membership Process

The process of church membership shall be set by the elders in accordance with any by-laws of the church and with the needs of the ministry

### IV. Resignation of Membership

Members may resign their membership by giving the Board of Elders a minimum of sixty (60) days written notice. The church shall have authority to refuse a Member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline, or for any other reason the Elders deem necessary or prudent.

### V. Church Discipline

1. The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin (1 Timothy 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6: 1).
2. Members of this church and all other professing Christians who regularly attend according to Section 8 of this Article, who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the Board of Elders, shall be subject to church discipline, including dismissal according to Matthew 18:15-18. Before such dismissal, however, (1) it shall be the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of the erring individual's heresy or misconduct to warn and correct such erring individual in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the erring individual does not heed this

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- warning, then (2) the warning member shall again go to the erring individual, seeking his or her repentance, but accompanied by one or two individuals who shall confirm that the sin has occurred or is continuing to occur, and/or that the erring individual has been appropriately confronted and has refused to repent. The first and second warnings may occur with no specified time interval. If the erring individual still refuses to heed this warning, then (3) it shall be brought to the attention of the Board of Elders. If the Board of Elders determines (after thorough investigation in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19) that there is corroborating evidence that the erring individual has sinned or is continuing to sin, that he or she has been appropriately confronted, and that he or she has refused to repent, then the Board of Elders shall inform the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly-scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance. If the erring individual demonstrates repentance, then notice to that effect may be given at a regularly-scheduled worship service.
3. If, however, the erring individual does not repent in response to the church in its collective call to repentance, then (4) he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the fellowship and/or membership of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service. If the erring individual, after such dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement before the Board of Elders, then he or she shall be publicly restored to all the rights, duties, privileges, and responsibilities of fellowship and/or membership.
  4. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the elders in the exercise of their discretion may proceed directly to the third stage of church discipline, (i.e. the informing of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance) or to the fourth stage of church discipline, (i.e. the dismissal from the fellowship and/or membership of the church) when one or more of the following have occurred;
    - (i) Where the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public, i.e. openly and to the offense of the whole Church (1 Corinthians 5:1-5),
    - (ii) Where the disciplined party has taught or otherwise disseminated doctrine deemed false or erroneous by the elders, then chosen to disregard the direction and reproof of the elders (Romans 16:17); or
    - (iii) Where the disciplined party has been warned twice to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning (Titus 3: 10-11).
  5. The members of this church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church, agree that there shall be no appeal to any court because of the dismissal or because of public statements to the congregation at the third or fourth stages of church discipline. Members who are under discipline by the church, as defined in the previous paragraphs, forfeit and waive the right to resign from this church. Resignations from membership are possible only by members who are in good standing and who are not under any disciplinary action.
  6. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the elders, a member, non-member regular attendee, or other individual may be notified that he or she is not to be present upon church premises for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others on church premises. Such required absence may, but need not, be concurrent with church discipline of that person.

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7. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the elders, the names of any members who have not attended a worship service or Bible Study class session for a period of six months or longer may be removed from the membership rolls.
8. For the purpose of Church Discipline, any person who attends six (6) or more services and functions of Faith Community Church over a period of at least six (6) months will be considered a “regular attender” and is subject to the Church Discipline process.

(Removed previous Article VI - Affiliation [SBC])

## **Article VI – Governance**

### **I. Eldership**

In its operation, the church will be governed by a group of godly men called Elders. These shall be men in whose lives the working of the Holy Spirit is evident, who have given a worthy witness of the authority of Christ in their lives, and who have met the qualifications given in the Scriptures found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Authority for the day-to-day ministry matters will reside in the hands of the elders whether in full-time compensated service or otherwise delegated.

### **II. Powers**

Subject to the limitations of the Articles and these Bylaws and of pertinent restrictions of the O.C.G.A., all the activities and affairs of the Corporation shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board of Elders, who are responsible for shepherding and having oversight of the flock. Without prejudice to such general powers, but subject to these same limitations, it is hereby expressly declared that the Board shall have the following powers in addition to the other powers enumerated by these Bylaws:

1. To select and remove all the officers, agents, pastors, staff, and employees of the Corporation; prescribe such duties for them consistent with the Scriptures, with the Articles of Incorporation, or with these Bylaws; and fix the terms of their offices and their compensation.
2. To make such disbursements from the funds and properties of the Corporation as are required to fulfill the purposes of this Corporation and generally to conduct, manage, and control the activities and affairs of the Corporation and to make such rules and regulations consistent with the Scriptures, with the Articles of Incorporation, or with these Bylaws, as they may deem best.
3. To adopt, make and use a corporate seal, and to alter the form of such seal from time to time as they may deem best.
4. To establish policies and practices for the church consistent with the purposes of this Corporation.
5. To assist in the administration of the ordinances of baptism and Communion. Each serving Elder is authorized to solemnize marriages and administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

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6. To borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purposes of the Corporation and to cause to be executed and delivered, in the corporate name, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges, hypothecations, or other evidences of debt and securities.
7. To carry on a business and use any such profit that results from the business activity in which it may legally engage for the purposes of the ministry.

### III. Nomination, Number, and Tenure of Office for Elders

The Board of Elders shall determine, according to the needs of the church, the process of nomination and the number of elders necessary to insure the proper oversight of the ministry. Provided an Elder meets all biblical requirements for service in that capacity, there are no required, or defined, limits on an Elder's term of office.

### IV. Qualifications

Each member of the Board of Elders must be an active member of Faith Community Church and possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9. The following comprise the list of biblical expectations for an Elder. The Board shall interpret and evaluate each Elder's qualification based upon the following standards.

1. Male (1 Timothy 2:12, 3:1) members of Faith Community Church
2. Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6–7) (b) Husband of one wife; a one-woman man (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6), (c) Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Timothy 3:2), (d) Sober-minded, prudent (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
3. Of good behavior; orderly, respectable (1 Timothy 3:2)
4. Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
5. Apt to teach; able to teach; he can exhort believers and refute false teaching (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
6. Not given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
7. Not violent; not pugnacious (1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)
8. Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Timothy 3:3)
9. Not a brawler; uncontentious; not soon angry or quick-tempered (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
10. Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy of base gain (1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)
11. Rules well his own house; his children are faithful, not accused of rebellion to God (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:7)
12. Not a novice; not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6)<sup>[§EP]</sup>(o) Has a good report or reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
13. Has a good report or reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
14. Not self-willed (Titus 1:7)<sup>[§EP]</sup>(q) A lover of good men and things (Titus 1:8) (r) Just, fair (Titus 1:8)<sup>[§EP]</sup>(s) Holy, devout (Titus 1:8)<sup>[§EP]</sup>(t) Self-controlled (Titus 1:8)

### VI. Resignation

Subject to the provision of O.C.G.A §14-3-620(a), any Elder may resign effective upon giving written notice to the Board or the Secretary of the Board, unless the notice specifies a later time for the effectiveness of such resignation.

### V. Removal of Elders

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Any Elder may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the Board if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scripture, including 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9), after thorough corroborating investigation by the Elders (or a duly appointed Committee of the Board, at the sole discretion of the Board), in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15–18 and 1 Timothy 5:19.

### **Article VII – Officers and Staff**

#### **I. Officers**

The officers of the Corporation shall be a Chief Executive Officer, a Chief Financial Officer, and a Secretary. The Corporation may also have, at the discretion of the board, other officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section III of this Article.

#### **II. Election**

The officers of the Corporation, except such officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section III or Section V of this Article, shall be chosen annually by, and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Elders. Each officer shall hold his office until he shall resign, be removed, or become otherwise disqualified to serve, or until his successor shall be elected.

#### **III. Removal and Resignation**

Removal and Resignation by Officers shall be in accordance with the removal and resignation of Elders. The removal or resignation of any Officer will result in immediate removal of his duties as an Officer of the Corporation. An Officer may also resign from the duties of an Officer while still retaining his standing as an Elder subsequent to approval by the Board.

### **Article VIII – Other Offices**

#### **I. Deacons and Deaconesses**

The Deacons and Deaconesses (hereafter referred to simply as “Deacons”) shall consist of godly men or women who are members of Faith Community Church, possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8–13 and shall be approved annually by the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders will compile, review and, at its sole discretion, confirm or disapprove a list of deacons and keep a list of active deacons, making this list available to congregation. The Deacons shall assist the Elders in the shepherding of the saints, assist the Elders in administrative functions within the church, aid in the general spiritual care of the church, and perform other duties as assigned by the Board of Elders in an effort to prevent the Elders from neglecting the teaching and preaching of the Word (Acts 6:2–3).

##### **1) Deacon Selection, and Tenure of Office**

- a. A Deacon may be selected by the Board at any time and begin to serve immediately. Provided the Deacon meets all biblical requirements for service in that capacity, a deacon shall serve in that capacity for one year after their appointment by the Board of Elders. Deacons shall be reappointed consecutively, and as many times as necessary, to fulfill their various ministry roles until said roles are no longer necessary or until such time as

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the Deacon may disqualify themselves according to the standards set forth for Deacons in 1 Timothy 3:8–13.

- b. Service roles within the church which require deacon qualification will be designated by the elders as needed.

### 2) Deacon Qualifications:

In accordance with the list of qualification found in 1 Timothy 3:8–13 and the example of the church in Acts 6:1–6, Deacons shall exhibit the following:

- a. Men of dignity, not false in speech, or addicted to much wine, or greedy (1 Tim 3:8)
- b. Holding to the Mystery of the Faith with a clear conscience; Full of the Spirit and wisdom (1 Tim 3:9; Acts 6:3)
- c. Serve beyond reproach, having a good reputation; capable and skilled for serving the needs of the church (1 Tim 3:10; Acts 6:3)
- d. Husband of one wife, and good managers of their children and household (1 Tim 3:12)

### 3) Deaconess Qualifications:

In accordance with the list of qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3:11, and those of a godly woman in Titus 2:3–5, Deaconesses shall exhibit the following:

- a. Dignified and sensible in spiritual, personal, and public lives (1 Tim 3:11; Titus 2:5)
- b. Not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to alcohol (1 Tim 3:11; Titus 2:3)
- c. Temperate and faithful in all things; Teaching what is good (1 Tim 3:11; Titus 2:3)
- d. Encouraging and disciplining younger women to love their husbands, and to be faithful workers within the home, and setting the same example in their own marriage, with biblical submission (Titus 2:4–5)
- e. In all things seeking to live and speak in such a way that the word of God is honored (Titus 2:5)

### 4) Deacon Resignation

Any Deacon may resign effective upon giving notice to the Board of elders, unless the notice specifies a later time for the effectiveness of such resignation.

### 5) Removal of Deacons

Any Deacon may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Elders if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scripture, including 1 Timothy 3:8–13, and Acts 6:1–6)

## **Article IX – Receipt, Investment, and Disbursement of Funds**

### **I. Accountability and Management**

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The Board of Elders is accountable for the receipt, investment, and disbursement of moneys or other properties transferred to the church. The holding, managing, and disbursement of any funds or properties shall be consistent with the purpose of the church.

### **II. Receipt and Recording of Offerings**

1. Uncounted offerings and other cash receipts of any significant amount should never be in the sole possession of one individual. At least two persons should be in uninterrupted custody of all uncounted offerings. The principle of shared custody should be followed without exception.
2. At least two counters should certify by virtue of their signatures:
  - The amount of each offering count
  - The faithful observation of all offering count procedures.Any subsequent change to an offering count should be authorized (evidenced by all counters' initials in close proximity to any and all modifications). Changes to offering count documents must be made in a manner so as not to obscure the original entries (i.e. a single line should be crossed through incorrect amounts).
3. An individual responsible for the disbursement of church funds should not also be a custodian of uncounted offerings.
4. All disbursements of funds should be made by check or from a petty cash fund (for trivial amounts). No disbursements should be made directly from undeposited receipts.
5. All offering counters should be unrelated members of the church having reputations for Christian maturity and prudence. All offering counters should be appointed by action of the Board of Elders.
6. All offerings should be counted and deposited promptly.

### **III. Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year for the Corporation shall begin on the first day of January and end on the last day of December in each year.

### **IV. Indemnification:**

1. The corporation shall, to the extent legally permissible, indemnify each person who may serve or who has served at any time as an officer, director, or employee of the corporation against all expenses and liabilities, including, without limitation, counsel fees, judgments, fines, excise taxes, penalties and settlement payments, reasonably incurred by or imposed upon such person in connection with any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding in which he or she may become involved by reason of his or her service in such capacity; provided that no indemnification shall be provided for any such person with respect to any matter as to which he or she shall have been finally adjudicated in any proceeding not to have acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that such action was in the best interests of the corporation; and further provided that any compromise or settlement payment shall be approved by a majority vote of a quorum of the Board who are not at that time parties to the proceeding.
2. The indemnification provided hereunder shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of persons entitled to indemnification hereunder. The right of

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indemnification under this Article shall be in addition to and not exclusive of all other rights to which any person may be entitled.

3. No amendment or repeal of the provisions of this Article which adversely affects the right of an indemnified person under this Article shall apply to such person with respect to those acts or omissions which occurred at any time prior to such amendment or repeal, unless such amendment or repeal was voted by or was made with the written consent of such indemnified person.
4. This Article constitutes a contract between the corporation and the indemnified officers, directors, and employees. No amendment or repeal of the provisions of this Article which adversely affects the right of an indemnified officer, director, or employee under this Article shall apply to such officer, director, or employee with respect to those acts or omissions which occurred at any time prior to such amendment or repeal.

## **Article X – Corporate Records and Reports**

### **I. Audits and Reporting**

The Corporation shall maintain adequate and correct accounts, books, and records of its business and properties. All such books, records, and accounts shall be kept in a secure location and shall be accessible at all times from its principal place of business as fixed by the Board of Elders. On at least an annual basis, the elders shall present a report of the financial condition of the church to the membership. An independent audit shall be performed when deemed necessary by the Board of Elders.

### **II. Inspection**

Every member of the board shall have absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect all books, records, documents of every kind, and the physical properties of the Corporation, and also of its subsidiary organizations, if any.

## **Article XI – Property Rights**

No member of the Board of Elders, or any other church member, has any individual right to any part of the property of the church. On the other hand, no member of the church or any administrative committee may be held responsible for the corporate obligations of the church.

## **Article XII – Settlement of Disputes**

In any dispute arising between church members, pastors, or staff pertaining to any matter of spiritual teaching or practices, church finances, or title to property purchased with church contributions, the dispute shall be resolved by the Board of Elders of the church. Decisions shall be sought while striving to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1–3).

## **Article XIII - Amendments**

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The Board of Elders shall draft and seek to amend this Constitution and Bylaws as they deem necessary. In the event that any changes are made by the Board of Elders, the Elders shall inform the congregation in writing about those changes.

### **Article XIV - Dissolution**

Upon dissolution of this Corporation, the Board shall cause the assets herein to be distributed to another Corporation with purposes similar to those identified herein, as amended.