

Amended & Restated
Constitution
of
Bethany Baptist Church

Approved: October 27, 2013

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PREAMBLE

The Bible admonishes us saying, "Let all things be done decently and in order." To this end do we, members of the Bethany Baptist Church, solemnly and sincerely set forth the following Constitution by which we willingly and cheerfully agree to be governed.

ARTICLE I -- Name

The name of the church shall be Bethany Baptist Church of Grand Blanc, Michigan ("BBC").

ARTICLE II -- Purpose

The purpose of this Church shall be to promote the evangelizing of the unsaved at home and abroad and to seek the spiritual improvement of its members through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as set forth in the Scriptures.

ARTICLE III -- Autonomy

The Bethany Baptist Church of Grand Blanc, Michigan is and shall remain independent and autonomous. However, it may participate in membership and activity with organizations of like doctrine for the promotion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as long as it does not infringe upon the independence or autonomy of this church.

In case Bethany Baptist Church is ever dissolved, the properties (personal, real, and mixed) of said organization shall be given by the remaining members to only a Bible-believing Baptist missionary organization or church, believing unequivocally in our stated doctrine.

ARTICLE IV – Doctrine

The Bible is God's special revelation of Himself so that we might know Him through His Son, Jesus Christ. In order to love God, learn of God and live for God, the Word of God is essential. True faith, teaching, spirituality, fellowship, service and the spread of the Gospel is achieved through a knowledge of His Word. Therefore, we are committed to the truth as revealed in His inerrant and infallible Word – the Bible. As a local New Testament Church, we put forth this summary of our beliefs based on His Word. Though not exhaustive, these teachings reveal the foundation upon which we desire to glorify Christ, edify one another and testify to the lost souls of men the excellencies of Jesus Christ.

1. THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the 66 books of the Bible are without error in their original writings.^a The author of the Bible is God, who used men moved by the Holy Spirit.^b Therefore, we believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of Scripture.^c We further believe the Bible to be the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions shall be tried. Thus, we believe the Bible to be the sole authority for our faith

and practice. ^d See **APPENDIX 1** for additional information regarding the Scriptures.¹

(a) *Psalm 19:7-9 and Psalm 119; and John 17:17.*

(b) *1 Corinthians 1:13-14; and 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

(c) *2 Timothy 3:15-17.*

(d) *Hebrews 4:12.*

2. THE TRUE GOD

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God ^a who is an infinite, eternal, self-existing ^b, perfect Spirit.^c He is the great “I AM.” ^d He is the supreme ruler of heaven and earth.^e He is overwhelmingly glorious in character (holy, just, omniscient, wise, faithful, good, loving, merciful, free and sovereign), worthy of all honor and obedience. ^f In the unity of the Godhead there are 3 persons ^g—God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit—who are equal in essence and divine perfection, yet distinct in person and role.^h

(a) *Genesis 1:1; and Deuteronomy 6:4-5.*

(b) *Genesis 1:1; Exodus 40:34-35; Job 36:26; Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 6:1-3; Romans 11:33-36; Hebrews 11:6 (His existence is assumed); and Revelation 1:8.*

(c) *John 4:24 and 15:26.*

(d) *Genesis 17:1; Exodus 3:14; and Mark 14:62.*

(e) *1 Chronicles 29:11.*

(f) *2 Samuel 22:4, Psalm 18:3; and 1 Peter 1:2.*

(g) *Matthew 3:16-17 and 28:19; John 17:1-5; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:4; Ephesians 4:4-6; and Philippians 2:5-6.*

(h) *Genesis 1:2 (Note distinct roles in Creation); John 15:26; Philippians 2:5-7; and Colossians 1:16.*

A. THE FATHER

We believe by the decree of the Father all things were created according to the kind intention of His will.^a As a result, the Father is glorified and will be glorified.^b

(a) *Psalm 119:89-91; Isaiah 14:26-27 and 46:10-11; Daniel 4:35; and Acts 2:24-26 and 17:24-26.*

(b) *John 17:1-5; Romans 11:33-36; and Ephesians 1:5 and 1:11.*

B. THE SON

We believe that God has revealed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ who is the eternal Son of God. He was active in creation at the beginning of the world and sustains all things.^a In accordance with the decree of the Father, He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of Mary, who was a virgin. As a result of His birth, in the person of Jesus Christ, true deity and sinless humanity were united—fully God and fully man.^b Jesus lived a sinless life, died a vicarious death, rose in bodily form and ascended into Heaven. He now ministers as our high priest, He is the head of the Body, the Church^c, He will one day return for His Bride, the Church, and He will establish His earthly kingdom as He sits on the Davidic throne.^d

(a) *John 1:1-4; Colossians 1:15; and Hebrews 1:1-4.*

(b) *Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; and Philippians 2:5-7.*

(c) *1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:17; 1 Timothy 2:5; and Hebrews 4:15 and 9:11-14.*

¹ Appendix – The Scriptures – Page 23

(d) John 14:1-2; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; and Revelation 3:21.

C. 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. He was active in creation.^a Presently, He is active in restraining the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled through the Church. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching. He is the agent in the new birth and in the sanctification of a believer.^b He always functions in harmony with God's truth.^c

(a) Genesis 1-3; Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; and 1 Peter 1:2.

(b) John 16:8-11; Romans 8:14-16; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 1:13-14; and 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

(c) John 14:25-26 and 16:13-15; and 1 Corinthians 2:10-13.

3. CREATION

We believe in the Genesis account of creation whereby all creation was spoken into existence by God out of nothing in six (6) literal days. We believe man and woman were created in God's own image and after His own likeness.^a We further believe that humanity did not evolve from any other form of life. See APPENDIX 2 for additional information regarding creation.²

Genesis 1-3; Exodus 20:11; Psalm 33:6-9; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16-17; and Hebrews 1:1-4.

4. THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man, although created without sin, fell by the transgression of one man, Adam.^a As a result, all of humanity is in sin by nature, disposition and act. Humanity, therefore, is justly under the condemnation of God without defense or excuse.^b

(a) Genesis 2:16-17 and 3:6-7; and 1 Corinthians 15:21-22.

(b) Isaiah 53; John 3:35-36; Romans 1:18-20, 3:9-18 and 5:12-19; and Ephesians 2:1-3.

5. SALVATION

A. We believe that the only way of salvation for sinners is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.^a This is possible due to the sinless life, the substitutionary death and the resurrection from the grave of Jesus Christ. He was made to be sin and a curse for us and died in our stead.^b Nothing man does can add or take away from the finished work of Christ.

(a) Romans 3:20 and 3:28; Galatians 2:16; and Ephesians 2:8.

(b) Isaiah 53:4-6; 2 Corinthians 5:21; and 1 Peter 2:24.

B. We believe that the new birth comes only through faith in Christ. Repentance is inherent in belief and is not in itself a separate and independent condition of salvation.^a There are no other acts (such as a religious ritual, baptism, prayer, good works, etc.) that can be added to belief as a condition for salvation.^b

(a) John 3:16; Acts 16:31; Romans 5:1; and Ephesians 1:13-14.

(b) Ephesians 2:8-9; and Titus 3:5.

² Appendix 2 – Creation – Page 23

- C. We believe that justification is God declaring righteous ^a those who, by faith, believe^b in the finished work of Jesus Christ. This righteousness is wholly apart from any merit or work of man.^c Instead it involves the placement of our sins onto Christ and the placement of Christ's righteousness onto us.^d Therefore, God is just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. ^e

(a) Romans 5:1 and 8:33.

(b) John 1:12.

(c) Romans 3:20 and 4:6; and Titus 3:5.

(d) 2 Corinthians 5:21; Colossians 2:14; and 1 Peter 2:24.

(e) Romans 3:26.

- D. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the agent in salvation.^a He draws sinners by His power to the truth of the Gospel so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel, the result being a newness of life.^b

(a) John 16:8-11; and 1 Corinthians 2:14.

(b) Romans 8:9; Galatians 3:1-3; and Ephesians 2:14-22.

- E. We believe that election is the eternal purpose of God by which He graciously saves sinners.^a Though a divine act, it is perfectly consistent with the responsibility of man to respond to the Gospel. Election includes all the means in connection with the salvation of a sinner.^b It is the most glorious display of God's grace and goodness toward mankind.^c His election of sinners for salvation excludes all boasting by man and promotes within man humility, love and praise of the one who redeemed him.^d The Biblical teaching on election is foundational for the assurance of our salvation.^e

(a) Ephesians 1:3-5; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:8-9; and 1 Peter 1:1-2.

(b) Exodus 33:18-19; Jeremiah 31:3; Romans 9:22-24; and Ephesians 1:9-11.

(c) Romans 3:27-28; 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, 4:7; and Colossians 3:12.

(d) 1 Corinthians 15:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:12-13; 2 Timothy 2:10; and 1 Peter 2:9.

(e) Ephesians 1:3-6; and Hebrews 6:11-12.

6. THE EXTENT OF SALVATION

- A. We believe that the blessing of salvation is made free to all by the Gospel. It is the duty of all to accept it by faith. Nothing prevents the salvation of anyone, but his own depravity and rejection of the Gospel. Therefore we believe the atonement was unlimited.

John 5:24; 2 Peter 2:1; and 1 John 4:10.

- B. We believe that when an unregenerated person exercises faith in Christ, he/she passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life.

John 3:16; Romans 5:1; Colossians 2:10; and 1 Thessalonians 2:13

7. SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the process by which the Holy Spirit manifests the life of Christ in the believer.^a This work occurs in three (3) phases. Positional sanctification occurs at the time of our salvation when we are made complete in Christ.^b Progressive sanctification is the consistent work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer by conforming his/her daily life to Christ.^c Ultimate sanctification is the receiving of our glorified bodies when Jesus Christ returns for His Bride, the Church.^d

(a) Romans 8:9 and 8:14; and Galatians 5:16-25.

(b) Ephesians 1:3-5; and Colossians 2:9-10.

(c) Philippians 1:9-11; Hebrews 6:1; and 2 Peter 1:5-8 and 3:18.

(d) Romans 8:29-30; and 2 Corinthians 5:6-8.

8. ETERNAL SECURITY

We believe that genuine Christians will be kept by the power of God and will persevere until the end.^a A believer's eternal security is accomplished through the finished work of Christ at Calvary and the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit.^b We also believe that as a believer sins in this life, he will experience the chastening of the Father.^c God the Father cannot fail and will in the end present every believer faultless before His throne.

(a) Philippians 1:5; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; and Hebrews 10:22.

(b) John 8:31; Ephesians 1:13-14; and Hebrews 10:1-18.

(c) 1 Corinthians 11:31-32; Ephesians 4:30; and Hebrews 12:5-11.

9. THE CHURCH

A. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

We believe that all who have been genuinely saved through the Gospel of Jesus Christ are immediately placed, through the baptism of the Holy Spirit,^a into the Body of Christ,^b the universal church, of which Christ is the head.^c

(a) Romans 6:1-11; and 1 Corinthians 12:12-14.

(b) 1 Corinthians 12:12-13.

(c) Ephesians 1:22-23; and Colossians 1:17-18.

B. THE LOCAL CHURCH

We believe that the local church is a visible manifestation of the universal church in a particular location.^a A local church is a gathering of believers who have been saved and baptized through immersion. A local church is committed to the Lord and each other for the purpose of carrying out the will of God as revealed in His Word.^b As a local church, we are responsible to submit our hearts to the teaching of the Word, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to faithfully care for our homes and church family and to assist in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth.^c As a local church, we are free from external controls of any religious organization.^d We adhere to the pattern of a congregational form of church polity that acknowledges the Biblical position of the saints who are often referred to as brethren, the overseers who are referred to in Scripture as leaders, pastors or elders; and servants who have traditionally been called deacons. We further accept the responsibility to gather together at prescribed times to stimulate one another to love and good works.^e

(a) Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; Philippians 1:1; and 1 Thessalonians 1:1.

(b) Acts 2:42-47; and Ephesians 4:1-6, 9 and 11-16.

(c) Ephesians 4:3 and 5:22-6:4; 1 Timothy 5:8; and Hebrews 13:17.

(d) Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 14:23 and Acts 15; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; and Titus 1:5.

(e) Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9 and Titus 2; and Hebrews 10:25-26.

10. THE TWO ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

- A. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer. It publicly displays his faith in Christ and identifies him with other believers in a local church.

Matthew 28:19; and Acts 2:41-42, 8:38-39 and 9:18.

- B. We believe that the Lord's Table was instituted by Christ prior to Calvary and carried out by the church after His ascension into heaven. It is a memorial undertaken by a local church to remember Christ. The frequency of this memorial varies but shall always be preceded by a believer's self-examination.

Luke 22:14-23; and 1 Corinthians 11:17-23

11. THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

- A. We believe that all Christians are called by God to live not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. To accomplish this, the Holy Spirit manifests the life of Christ in our being, our home, our church and the world. We believe that after salvation we are divinely reckoned to relate to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses, and that through our lives we should make Christ known to the world. Furthermore, our love for one another is essential for us to fulfill the Great Commission in our community. Thus, we strive together for the Gospel of Christ.

Acts 1:8; Romans 6:11-13 and 8:1-13; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3; 1 Peter 1:14-16.

- B. We believe that God through the ministry of the Holy Spirit has enabled us for service through the spiritual gifts and natural talents He has given us. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit and each is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit may will.^a

Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4:11-16; and 1 Peter 4:10-11.

- C. We believe that God through the Spirit gave gifts to the church to edify the body of Christ and to glorify Himself. The revelatory gifts ceased at the completion of the Word, while the service gifts continue until Christ completes the church.

1 Corinthians 3:8-13.

- D. We believe that upon the rapture of the Church, each believer will appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive from the Lord His praise for his life as a believer.

1 Corinthians 4:5; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; and Revelation 19:7-8.

12. ANGELS

Angels are created beings; thus, they are not objects of worship or veneration. They were created prior to the creation of the physical world.^a Between creation and the fall, certain angels, led by Satan, fell from their exalted state of service to God by sinning against God.^b

(a) *Job 38:7*

(b) *Genesis 3:1-5; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Isaiah 14:12 ff.*

A. HOLY ANGELS

Holy angels are those beings that carry out the will of God by ministering to Him,^a communicating His message to mankind,^b carrying out judgment for God,^c and ministering to the saints.^d

(a) *Isaiah 6:1-4*

(b) *Luke 2:9-14*

(c) *Revelation 7:1 ff*

(d) *Hebrews 1:6-7, 14*

B. FALLEN ANGELS

Fallen angels are those beings that attempt to thwart the will of God through deception, falsehood and various other means. In Scripture these angels are commonly referred to as demons.^a They are led by one who is called either Satan,^b the Devil,^c or the Evil One.^d Their fate is sealed as they await being thrown into the lake of fire which is hell.^e

(a) *Matthew 8:31, Job 1:6-7*

(b) *2 Corinthians 11:14*

(c) *Matthew 4:1-11*

(d) *John 17:15*

(e) *Isaiah 14:12-17; Revelation 20:10*

13. END TIMES

A. THE RAPTURE

We believe the Church will be raptured prior to the tribulation period. At this point the Lord will descend from heaven and receive to himself both His own who are alive and all those who have died in Christ. This event is the blessed hope for which we should be constantly looking.

John 14:1-3; Romans 8:19-23; 1 Corinthians 15:50-56; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; and Titus 2:11-14.

B. THE TRIBULATION

We believe that prior to the Second Coming, the church will be removed from God's wrath that will be revealed during the 70th week of Daniel. Israel's 70th week, or the Tribulation period, will be a time of judgment on the whole earth and a time of preparation for Israel to receive her Messiah. The latter half of the tribulation will be the time of Jacob's trouble which Jesus called the Great Tribulation.

Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24-25; and Revelation 6:1-17.

C. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe the Second Coming of Christ follows the Tribulation. Upon His return, the Lord will sit on David's throne for 1,000 years, to lift the curse which now rests upon creation, to restore Israel to her own land, to fulfill all of God's covenant promises to Israel and to bring the whole world to the knowledge of God. At the end of the 1,000-year reign of Christ, Satan will be loosed for a season to rebel against the Lord. At the end of the rebellion, all those who are unbelievers will be judged at the Great White Throne and cast into hell, which is the second death.

2 Samuel 7:8-17; Isaiah 11:1-10 and Isaiah 61; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Zechariah 14; and Revelation 20:1-3.

14. THE ETERNAL STATE

- A. We believe that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. Regardless of how God has managed His plan (dispensation), all believers who have exercised faith in Him will be with Him forever in glory.

Job 19:25; Daniel 12:1-3; Luke 23:39-43; 1 Corinthians 15:1-28; and 2 Corinthians 5:8.

- B. We believe that the unbeliever will likewise experience the eternal state. The eternal state for the unbeliever will consist of everlasting punishment due to their rejection of God.

Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 2 Peter 2:4-9; Jude 6-7; and Revelation 20:11-15.

ARTICLE V -- Covenant

Having been led, by the Holy Spirit of God, to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and to confess Him as Lord, and on confession of this faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully covenant with one another, as one body in Christ, to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him.

We promise by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to forsake the ways of sin and walk together in Christian love and in the paths of righteousness. With this in view we engage to strive together for both the peace and purity of this church; to sustain its worship and steadfastly to cherish and hold its ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute, as faithful stewards, such time, talent, and money in the measure that God prospers each of us, that the responsibility for the work of the local church and the world-wide ministry of spreading the Gospel be faithfully and effectively discharged.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotion; to teach the Bible to our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to be just in our dealings and faithful in our engagements; to be exemplary in our deportment; to avoid unkind words and unrighteous anger; to abstain from the use and sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage and from every form of evil; to combine zeal and knowledge in our efforts to advance the cause of our Savior; to make Christ first in all things both spiritual and temporal.

We further engage to give and receive admonition with meekness and affection; to remember each other in prayer, and to aid each other in case of sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and, mindful of the Scriptures, to seek it without delay; to encourage one another in the blessed hope of our Lord's return.

We moreover engage that when we move from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some local church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of the Word of God.

ARTICLE VI -- Reception of New Members

Section 1

Any person who confesses faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, gives satisfactory evidence of a change of heart and

adoption of the view of the faith and practices held by this Church and doctrines as set forth in Article IV (Doctrine) contained herein and is baptized by immersion as a testimony of his faith in Christ may be received into its membership.

Section 2

Any person to be considered for membership shall have been thoroughly instructed in Church doctrine, Church government, and individual member's responsibilities to this Church. Potential new members will attend the "New Membership Class", at the discretion of the Pastors, to promote better acquaintance with the church and harmony among its members.

Section 3

Letters of transfer from other Baptist churches of like faith and practice shall serve as a recommendation and indication of previous baptism. All other requirements of this Article shall be fulfilled.

Section 4

Those requesting membership, who have met the requirements for it, will meet with the Pastors and be recommended by them to the congregation to be received into membership at a regular church service.

Section 5

Membership privileges shall begin at the right hand of fellowship.

ARTICLE VII -- Membership

Section 1

Regular members shall be those who have been received into this Church according to the conditions set forth under Article VI of this Constitution, and shall have all the rights, duties, privileges and obligations of members as set forth in the Constitution.

Section 2

Associate members shall be received in the same manner as regular members (cf. Article VI), but without voting privileges or right of holding elective offices. The Associate Membership Roll shall be composed of people of temporary residence and ordained or licensed ministers except those who are serving this pulpit as regular pastors.

After reasonable time, an ordained or licensed minister may be received as a regular member upon unanimous consent of the Pastors.

Any regular member who becomes ordained or licensed as a minister shall be automatically placed on the Associate Membership Roll.

ARTICLE VIII -- Dismissal of Members

Section 1

Letters of transfer to other Baptist churches of like faith and practice shall be granted by the Church upon recommendation of the Pastors and shall be sent by the Clerk directly to the church named in the letter.

Section 2

Letters of dismissal shall be granted by the Church upon recommendation of the Pastors for members who are uniting with churches not of like faith and practice. This letter shall be sent by the clerk directly to the church named in the letter.

Section 3

1. Review of membership rolls shall be conducted annually by the Pastors.
2. Based upon this review, the names of those members who have failed to express a desire to continue their membership with our church will be presented to the Church at its Annual Meeting for the purpose of removal from our Membership Roll. This shall not apply to members who, due to health reasons, are physically prevented from active membership.
3. An attempt will be made to send a letter of removal to those members who have been dropped.

ARTICLE IX -- Discipline

The Bible instructs believers to maintain the unity of Spirit in the bond of peace. Sometimes, however, believers break that instruction which causes harm to our fellowship and dishonors the Lord Jesus. Every attempt should be made by believers with a humble spirit of forgiveness to reconcile. The Pastors along with mature believers within our fellowship are available for counsel and guidance if reconciliation between members is necessary.

The purpose for church discipline is clearly explained in the Word as follows:

1. A concern for the glory of God.
2. A concern for the restoration of a believer's fellowship with Christ and His Church.
3. A concern for Christ's Church from being influenced by moral impurity and doctrinal error.

The practice of church discipline should follow these guidelines:

1. Those who walk disorderly are to be admonished, warned and appealed to in love (Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14-15; 1 Tim. 5:1-2; Eph. 4:15).
2. It must be done with a spirit of gentleness, humility and patience (Gal. 6:1-2).

3. If the one in sin does not repent, then members are to withhold intimate fellowship until there is repentance (2 Thess. 3:6, 14).
4. If the one in sin persists after admonishment and withdrawal of intimate fellowship, the final step is formal removal from the fellowship of saints until such time as the sinning member repents of their sin (1 Cor. 5:1-11).
5. It must be remembered that church discipline always includes a readiness to forgive. Whether it is personal or public, we must be ready and eager to forgive, comfort and reaffirm our love to a repentant member (2 Cor. 2:6-8).
6. If the discipline involves a Pastor, then the additional requirement of 1 Timothy 5:19-20 must be followed.

Slanderous Gossip Forbidden. The slandering of the character of any member of the Church, or hurtful destructive criticism of the methods and practices of the Church, its pastors, or other officers of the Church, shall be considered grounds for discipline.

Circulation of Petitions. The circulation of a petition among members, without having secured the permission of the Pastors, shall not be allowed, and the persons so doing shall be subject to discipline.

Unauthorized Meetings. The calling of a meeting with a purpose to hinder or interrupt the work of an officer, board, or committee is prohibited. Persons calling such a meeting without permission of the Pastors shall be subject to discipline.

Conduct. A member who is unchristian in conduct or who promotes discord or injures the unity and effectiveness of the Church shall be subject to discipline.

ARTICLE X -- Financial Support

Section 1

This Church shall be supported in all its endeavors by the tithes and freewill offerings of the people and is opposed to suppers, bazaars, fairs, box socials, and lecture courses as a means of raising money for Church purposes. The Church may acquire funds for purchasing property or construction of church facilities through mortgage or bond issues.

Section 2

All funds for the Bethany Baptist Church handled by any person, organization, or group of the Church shall be kept in the bank under the name of Bethany Baptist Church in conjunction with the name of the group or organization. These accounts will be subject to audit at the direction of the Pastors.

ARTICLE XI -- Officers

Section 1: Officers and Qualifications

The officers of this Church shall consist of the Pastors, Deacons, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Financial

Secretary, Auditors, Clerk, Adult Education Director, Preschool & Children’s Sunday School Director, Children’s Church Director and Christian Education Administrative Assistant. A member holding any one of these offices shall be in full fellowship with this Church.

It is required of the Pastors, Church officers, youth workers and organizational officers to express agreement with the Church Consecration Pledge³ each year. This pledge is to be renewed at the beginning of the church year, except for the Sunday School teachers who will renew at the beginning of the Sunday School year.

Section 2: Election and Term of Officers

Officers of the Church shall be called, elected at the annual meeting or appointed to serve as set forth below. Due to the extreme sensitivity, confidentiality, liability and many complexities involved in dealing with the finances of the Church, the offices of Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be appointed annually by the Pastors. This appointment shall be accomplished each year prior to the annual meeting.

Office	Term	Called, Elected or Appointed	Section in Constitution
Pastors	See Article XII	Called & Elected by Congregation	Article XII – Section 1
Deacons	3-year term	Elected at Annual Mtg.	Article XII – Section 2
Treasurer	1-year appointment	Appointed by Pastors	Article XII – Section 3
Asst. Treasurer	1-year appointment	Appointed by Pastors	Article XII – Section 4
Financial Secretary	1-year appointment	Appointed by Pastors	Article XII – Section 5
Auditors	1-year term	Elected at Annual Mtg.	Article XII – Section 6
Clerk	1-year term	Elected at Annual Mtg.	Article XII – Section 7
Adult Education Director	2-year term	Elected at Annual Mtg.	Article XII – Section 8
Preschool & Children’s Sunday School Director	2-year term	Elected at Annual Mtg.	Article XII – Section 8
Children’s Church Director	2-year term	Elected at Annual Mtg.	Article XII – Section 8
Christian Education Admin. Asst.	2-year term	Elected at Annual Mtg.	Article XII – Section 8

ARTICLE XII -- Duties of Officers

Section 1: Pastors

A. Qualifications

Pastors will be men whose lives are characterized by the qualities of character and competency as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

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1. They should desire to be a Pastor and demonstrate spiritual leadership abilities among the congregation that evidence a call from God.
2. They must be able to teach the Word of God with patience and wisdom.
3. They should evidence godly character that is consistent with one who loves God.
4. They must be able to manage their home in a biblical manner.
5. They should be able to refute error thereby protecting the congregation from false doctrine.

B. Vocational / Lay Pastors

By definition, a vocational Pastor is one who is financially supported by the church, while a lay Pastor would be defined as a man who is financially supported by another means. It is understood that vocational Pastors are able to devote more time to the ministry of the Word and prayer, but lay Pastors are just as valuable for the ministry. The ratio between vocational and lay Pastors will be determined by the finances of the church and the particular calling of a man.

C. Appointment

According to the Scriptures, Pastors are appointed by God and confirmed by the congregation (Acts 20:28). A task of BBC is to seek and discover God's direction and leading in choosing men who would serve as Pastors at BBC. The process for selecting a Pastor is based upon an orderly sequence of events that seeks to identify God's appointment of men to ministry. The congregation of BBC should be on the alert for men whose lives characterize the qualifications laid out in Scripture for Pastors.

1. When the need arises for selecting a Pastor, the existing Pastors will assume primary responsibility in seeking the right man. The specific nature of the need and the decision to seek a new Pastor would be announced to the congregation. The congregation will be asked to suggest qualified men for the position based on the biblical criteria for Pastors.
2. If the Pastors after a period of prayerful consideration and investigation believe a man to be considered as a nominee, he will meet with the Pastoral staff to discuss the specific nature of the need and to determine the man's willingness to serve at BBC.
3. If the nominee and the Pastoral staff find agreement with and between each other, then the Pastors will notify the congregation of the time and place for:
 - a. Teaching opportunities for the nominee; and
 - b. Discussion opportunities with the congregation for the nominee.
4. If after all the teaching, discussions and evaluations, the Pastoral staff discerns that the Lord is leading to extend an invitation to the nominee to join BBC as a Pastor, a time will be announced for conducting a vote by the congregation.
5. To insure substantial agreement among the flock for God's selection of the nominee, a three-fourths (3/4) vote will be necessary for extending an official invitation to the nominee to join BBC as a Pastor.

- a. If the vote is in the affirmative, the new Pastor will subsequently be ordained by the current Pastoral staff (1 Tim. 4:14; Acts 16:1-2) with consent by the congregation.

D. Tenure

Pastors are appointed to an indefinite tenure that is consistent with their continued desire and ability to serve the congregation.

1. Voluntary Resignation: A Pastor may step down at any time he so chooses. The Pastor should prayerfully reflect on his decisions and seek counsel from other members of the Pastoral staff before making a final decision.
2. Involuntary Resignation: An involuntary resignation of a Pastor will be a disciplinary action of the congregation in accordance with 1 Timothy 5:19-20, Galatians 6:1 and 1 Corinthians 5:1-11. The specific procedures for this are explained under "Discipline" in "Article IX – Discipline" of this document with the following differences:
 - a. If the situation is not an issue of sin, but of some nature that has disrupted the unity of the Pastoral staff and/or congregation, the Pastoral staff may suggest voluntary resignation by the person involved.
 - i. If he refuses or believes he has been unfairly treated, then it is to be brought before the congregation for consideration.
 - ii. All parties involved will be allowed to present their case. If resolution is still unattainable, it will be decided by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the congregation at a subsequent meeting.
 - iii. The congregation must be informed at least two (2) weeks prior to the time of any such meeting.
 - b. If the situation is an issue of sin, the Pastoral staff will make a recommendation to the congregation for their approval as to whether or not the man is fit for continued service as a Pastor at BBC.

In the event of either a voluntary or involuntary resignation of a vocational Pastor, the Pastoral staff will recommend to the congregation a severance package for their approval.

3. Sabbatical from Service: A sabbatical from service is intended to completely release a Pastor from the duties and responsibilities of ministry for a period of time to refresh and strengthen him for continued service.
 - a. Every three (3) years a Pastor may be eligible for a sabbatical from service.
 - i. If a lay Pastor, the sabbatical can extend for up to one (1) year.
 - ii. If a vocational Pastor, the sabbatical can extend for up to one (1) month.
 - b. The time of a sabbatical must be taken as a block of time so as to maximize the intent of the sabbatical.

- c. Dates for sabbatical from service will be agreed upon by the Pastoral staff and communicated to the congregation.

E. Responsibilities

The function of a Pastor at BBC is to share with other Pastors the task of shepherding the congregation. The task of shepherding the flock at BBC would involve the following:

1. Teaching and prayer;
2. Oversight for the ministry;
3. Spiritual care of the saints;
4. Protection from false doctrine; and
5. Evangelism and discipleship.

F. Organization

While it is recognized in Scripture that Pastors are equal in position, they will differ in specific responsibility. Therefore, Pastors at BBC will be arranged as a Council. The Council of Pastors will organize itself in the following way:

1. BBC desires to have three (3) or more Pastors at any given time who satisfy the Scriptural qualifications for a Pastor.
2. Every two (2) years a lead Pastor will be chosen by the Council to assist in the various administrative responsibilities of the Council.
3. Any issue that requires a vote by the congregation will not be brought to the congregation without unanimous agreement by the Council.
4. Council meetings will take place on a regular basis to oversee BBC.
5. A period of time will be set aside at regular Council meetings to allow for members in good standing to speak to the entire Council about an issue.
6. The Council of Pastors shall support this Constitution in its entirety and fulfill its various requirements with integrity and dedication.

G. Discretionary Fund

The Council of Pastors will be able to spend up to \$1,000.00 per occurrence without congregational approval on behalf of BBC. Each year at the annual meeting, the Council of Pastors will give a report of any and all discretionary funds used during that fiscal year.

Section 2: Deacons

A. Qualifications

The Deacons are servants to the congregation. They are men who possess particular gifts and talents that bless our church. Deacons shall embody the qualifications as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. The number of Deacons that BBC needs will be determined by, but not limited to, the following:

1. The size of the congregation.
2. The particular needs of the congregation.
3. The work of the Holy Spirit in the congregation.
4. The availability of qualified men.

B. Selection

In the New Testament church, both the Pastors and congregation play an important role in choosing Deacons. The following procedure will be used to select Deacons who will minister to and for us:

1. Prayerful consideration concerning the needs of the congregation.
2. Consultation with the congregation about those needs and a request from them to recommend to the Council of Pastors those saints they believe meet the qualifications.
3. The Council of Pastors will carefully review and prayerfully consider the names submitted to them along with any additional names they believe to be qualified.
4. At the annual meeting of the church the congregation will select Deacons for their service.

C. Responsibilities

The Deacons will be responsible to assist the Council of Pastors with the temporal needs of the members, attend to the accommodations of public worship, encourage and support the overall mission of BBC and any other way the Pastoral staff may need their assistance.

D. Organization

Deacons will be organized as follows:

1. Facilities Team
 - a. The facilities team will be responsible to assist the Council of Pastors with the physical properties of BBC, which would include all properties, grounds and vehicles. Beyond budgeted items, they will be allowed to spend up to \$1,500.00 per occurrence without congregational approval. In the event of an emergency or potential emergency, they will be allowed to spend up to \$10,000.00 per emergency without congregational approval. (An emergency would be defined as an event that could or has caused catastrophic damage to our facilities.)
 - i. Each year at the annual meeting the facilities team will give a report of any and all discretionary funds used for that fiscal year.
 - b. The facilities team will be responsible to assist the Council of Pastors at times to make recommendations to the congregation regarding the repair and maintenance of our properties that exceed the regular budget.
2. Benevolence Team
 - a. The benevolence team will be responsible to assist the Council of Pastors with the financial needs of members of the congregation.

- i. The benevolence team will be responsible to receive, hold and disburse a fund of benevolence for members of our congregation who need assistance.
- ii. At the annual meeting a report will be submitted that will contain total receipts and total disbursements for that fiscal year.
- b. The benevolence team will be responsible to assist the Council of Pastors in acts of mercy that are necessary to comfort members of the congregation during a time of personal need.
- c. The benevolence team will make recommendations concerning changes in salaries for paid staff members to be reviewed and incorporated into the yearly budget process for consideration by the congregation.

3. Service Team

- a. The service team will be responsible to assist the Council of Pastors with the various events that involve the entire church fellowship. This would include, but not be limited to, the celebration of the Lord's Table, fellowship meals, special meetings, etc.
- b. The service team will be responsible to assist the Council of Pastors with needs that could arise with members of our congregation. This assistance would involve direct help and/or organization of help as members of BBC experience a need.

Since the needs of the saints change over time, it will be necessary to periodically adjust and redesign the organization of Deacons. Any change to their future ministry will be made in accordance with the provisions of "Article XVI – Amendments".

Section 3: Treasurer

The Treasurer shall have custody of all Church and Sunday School funds (except the Fellowship Communion Fund) which must be deposited as soon as possible in the name of the Church in a checking account at a reputable bank approved by the Pastors. He shall keep an accurate record of all receipts and expenditures. He shall make all disbursements only by check as ordered by the approved Church budget. A written statement of the credit or indebtedness of the Church shall be prepared by the Treasurer monthly. A copy of the same shall be presented to the Pastors and provided to the congregation monthly and reviewed by the Pastors monthly. The Treasurer shall count all receipts with the help of the Financial Secretary. In case of the absence of one or the other, they shall appoint someone to assist in counting the receipts for this particular occasion. Two signed statements (signatures) of the receipts shall be given to the Pastors of each offering received. The Treasurer shall present an annual report including the Auditors' statement.

Section 4: Assistant Treasurer

The Assistant Treasurer shall assume all the responsibilities of the treasurer in his absence (Article XII; Sec. 3).

Section 5: Financial Secretary

It shall be the duty of the Financial Secretary to have charge of distributing offering envelopes and keeping an accurate record of all Church and Sunday School offerings received. The Financial Secretary shall keep an accurate record of individual contributors and present to them, upon request, annual reports of their giving. This statement of receipts will serve for income tax purposes. The annual report of the Financial Secretary is not to

include the names of individual contributors, but a summary of giving through envelopes, loose offerings, current, mission, specials, etc. The Financial Secretary shall assist the Treasurer in counting all offerings.

Section 6: Auditors

The Church shall elect two auditors annually. It shall be the auditors' duty to audit the books of all treasurers in the Church and Sunday school annually or whenever requested by the Church. Their report shall be presented in writing to the Church.

Section 7: Clerk

The Clerk shall keep a correct and permanent record of all the business meetings of the Church, sign all letters of dismission, take charge of all Church records, and maintain a register of members, in which shall be noted such changes as may occur. The Clerk shall enter upon the records of the Church current events in the life of the Church that are likely to be of historical value, thus making the Church records a true and complete history of the Church.

Section 8: Christian Education

a. Adult Education Director

The Adult Education Director is responsible to the Pastors for adult Sunday school education. This individual is responsible for planning, conducting and evaluating the work of the department. The department director works closely with teachers, encouraging them and assisting them in fulfilling their responsibilities.

b. Preschool & Children's Sunday School Director

The preschool and Children's Sunday School Director is responsible to the Pastors for the Sunday school education of children 2 years of age through the Junior Department. This individual is responsible for planning, conducting and evaluating the work of the department. The department director works closely with teachers and their assistants, encouraging them and assisting them in fulfilling their responsibilities.

c. Children's Church Director

The Children's Church Director is responsible to the Pastors for the general supervision of Children's Church, including the morning and evening services, children's special programs, and/or special musical presentations and/or anytime the church may meet for its regular scheduled or special business meetings. This individual is responsible for planning, conducting and evaluating the work of the department. The department director works closely with teachers and their assistants, encouraging them and assisting them in fulfilling their responsibilities.

d. Christian Education Administrative Assistant

The Christian Education Administrative Assistant provides support related to recordkeeping, report and other communications.

ARTICLE XIII – Organizations

No auxiliary or affiliated society or committee shall be permitted to meet in the name of the Church without the approval of the Pastors. After it has received the approval of the Pastors and Church, it shall be included in the Church Constitution as an amendment.

The Church recognizes the Bethany Baptist Missionary Guild, the Bethany Baptist Youth Group, the Bethany Baptist Possessors and the Michigan School of Ministry, as organizations of this Church, subject to this Constitution.

ARTICLE XIV -- Committees

Section 1: Deaconess Committee

The Deaconess Committee shall consist of twelve members elected for a two-year term. Six shall be elected at each annual meeting to cooperate with the Pastors in the following lines of work: to assist in the preparation for the administration of the ordinances, charitable visitation and providing flowers for the decoration of the pulpit. They shall elect their own chair and secretary at their first meeting immediately after the annual election.

Section 2: Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of five members: two appointed from the Deacons, one appointed by and from the Deaconess Committee, and two nominated (not Deaconesses or Deacons) by and elected from the congregation at the regular annual election. There shall be one or more (preferably two) nominees for each office and committee, providing qualified candidates are available. The list of nominees for the various offices shall be posted at least two weeks in advance of the annual meeting. This Committee shall be a standing committee during the entire fiscal year and shall so act to fill any vacancies that may occur until the next annual election.

Section 3: Pulpit Committee

The Pulpit Committee shall consist of the Pastors. If there are no Pastors, then the provisions of Appendix 3 shall apply. The Committee shall secure pastoral candidates and provide pulpit supplies during the time the Church may be without a Pastor. The Pulpit Committee shall be dissolved from its duties when the new Pastor assumes his duties.

Section 4: Missions Committee

The Missions Committee shall consist of six members: four members elected for a two-year term; two of which will be elected at each annual meeting. One member shall be the standing president of the Bethany Missionary Guild, and one member shall be from the pastoral staff, who will act as Chairman of the committee. The Missions Committee shall oversee all aspects of Missions.

Section 5: Qualifications

All committee members shall be regular members, having attained the age of twenty-one (21) years and in full fellowship.

ARTICLE XV -- Meetings of the Church

Section 1: Church Services

Regular Sunday Services (Sunday School, Sunday Morning Worship, and Sunday Evening Worship) shall be maintained. There shall be a regular midweek prayer service. The Lord's Supper shall be observed in connection with regular services of the Church at least once each month, preferably on the first Sunday evening.

Section 2: Business Meetings

A quorum at any Church business meeting shall require 25% of the eligible, voting members. An eligible, voting member shall be one who is in full fellowship with the Church and is 16 years of age. One who has not attended Sunday worship services of the Church in the last thirty days shall be considered ineligible to vote at any Church business meetings. A majority vote of the voting members present shall decide all matters, except the calling or dismissing of a Pastor, or amending the Constitution, or purchase or sale of Church property which cases shall require a three-fourths vote.

1. Quarterly Meetings: There shall be a quarterly meeting of the Church to conduct business on the second Wednesday of August, November, February and May. The last quarterly meeting shall be held in connection with the annual meeting.
2. Annual Meetings: The annual meeting shall be held no later than the third Wednesday in May.
3. Special Meetings: Special meetings may be called by the Pastors, provided that notice of such meetings shall be posted for one week prior to the meeting and announced at all regular services during this period.

ARTICLE XVI – Amendments

This Constitution may be amended at any business meeting of the Church by a three-fourths vote of the members present, provided that such amendment, in writing, shall have been approved by the Pastors and read at the regular services on the two consecutive Sundays next preceding said meeting and posted for two weeks immediately preceding the meeting in a conspicuous place within the Church building, and read at the regular Sunday services of the Church during said period.

ARTICLE XVII -- Use of Church Facilities

Members in good and regular standing have the privilege of using the Church facilities for weddings, receptions, and other appropriate functions in compliance with church use policies. Non-members desiring to use the church facilities must have the approval of the Pastors.

ARTICLE XVIII -- Support of Missionaries

Missions Structure

Section 1: Purpose

The Church is committed to the propagation of the Gospel by engaging in missions (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 3:1-13). This is to be accomplished by:

- A. Developing a structure to assist the members of the Church to be involved in missions.
- B. Supporting missions work through the labor, prayers and finances of the Church.
- C. Establishing procedures for selecting missionaries who participate in missions.
- D. Participating with organizations of like faith which assist and support missions.

Section 2: Missions Committee:

- A. Purpose: To organize and administer all aspects of the missions program.
- B. Authority: This committee shall operate under the authority of the Pastors.
- C. Responsibilities include:
 - 1. Develop and recommend to the Pastors policies, procedures and methods related to missions.
 - 2. Administrate and evaluate the missions program.
 - 3. Recommend missionaries or organizations for support.
 - 4. Provide loving accountability in the missions program.
 - 5. Financial stewardship:
 - a. Recommend an annual mission budget to the Pastors for approval by the congregation at the annual meeting.
 - b. Make dispersals from the Mission Fund to meet the special needs of missionaries or organizations that are supported by the Church.
 - 6. Communicate, interact and engage with missionaries and organizations to build relationships, understanding, cooperation and involvement in missions work.
 - 7. Organize activities to promote missions.
 - 8. Educate members of the Church about missions.
 - 9. Serve as liaison between the Church and missions agencies or organizations and individual missionaries.

Missions Support

Section 3: New Candidate Support

A new candidate for mission support shall be thoroughly investigated as to doctrine and character before they are heard or recommended to the Church. A new candidate shall be required to speak in a regular service of the Church. Advance notice of at least two (2) weeks shall be given to the Church that a new candidate is scheduled to speak and that the new candidate is being considered for support.

Section 4: Discontinued or Diminished Support

Before the support of any missionary or organization who is supported on a regular basis by our Church can be discontinued or diminished, the Pastors will have the responsibility of determining that such action is for due cause as follows:

- a. The mission board under which the missionary serves has changed its doctrinal position and is no longer in

agreement with the doctrinal position of the Church.

- b. The mission board under which the missionary serves has become affiliated with an organization or organizations with which our Church is not in agreement.
- c. The missionary or organization has changed its doctrinal position and is no longer in agreement with the doctrinal position of the Church.
- d. The missionary has fallen into sin of which the missionary has refused to repent, or is conducting themselves in such a way that the Pastors deem action necessary, or is failing to perform their duties as a missionary for reasons other than illness.
- e. If or when the Church's financial condition becomes such that it is no longer able to meet its financial responsibilities toward missions, the Pastors shall have the responsibility to re-evaluate the financial support of all missionaries and organizations.
- f. The missionary has retired from missionary service because of age or disability, or has changed to a field not originally approved by the Church.
- g. The organization has either discontinued operations or has changed their focus to a mission field not originally approved by the Church.

Section 5: Compliance

When, in compliance with Sections 3 and 4 of this Article, matters relating to the support of missions shall be presented at a special, quarterly or annual business meeting, a majority of the members present shall be required for approval.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: The Scriptures:

- We accept modern translations that are based on the Hebrew and Greek texts.
- For further explanation on our acceptance of the sufficiency, inerrancy and infallibility of Scripture, please see the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (1978).

APPENDIX 2: Creation:

Based upon creation, we believe God ordained the institution of marriage as being between a man and a woman (Genesis 2:21-25; and Matthew 19:1-6).

APPENDIX 3:

In the event that BBC ever finds itself with just one (1) Pastor, that Pastor shall recommend to the congregation for their approval three (3) men who will assist that Pastor on an interim basis. Together they will be a transition team providing continuity for the ministry. In addition they will also aid that Pastor in a pastoral search. The group will be dissolved whenever a second Pastor assumes his duties.

In the event that BBC ever finds itself with no pastors, the Deacons shall select from among the congregation five (5) men to be a Pulpit Committee for the purpose of following the procedures in Article XII(Section 1) for the appointment of a Pastor. The Pulpit Committee will be dissolved from its duties when the new Pastor assumes his duties.

APPENDIX 4
CHURCH CONSECRATION PLEDGE
(Spiritual Leadership Standards)

For Pastors, church officers, Sunday School teachers and officers, youth counselors, and organizational officers.

Realizing the importance, privilege, and responsibility of serving the Lord Jesus Christ in a position of leadership in His church, I hereby declare:

Having been led, by the Holy Spirit of God, to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and to confess Him as Lord, and on confession of this faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, I do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully covenant with one another, as one body in Christ, to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him.

I promise by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to forsake the ways of sin and walk together in Christian love and in the paths of righteousness. With this in view, I engage to strive together for both the peace and purity of this church; to sustain its worship and steadfastly to cherish and hold to its ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute as a faithful steward, such time, talent and money in the measure that God prospers me, that the responsibility for the work of the local church and the world-wide ministry of spreading the Gospel be faithfully and effectively discharged.

I also engage to maintain private devotions; to teach the Bible to my children; to seek the salvation of my kindred and acquaintances; to be just in my dealings and faithful in my engagements; to be exemplary in my deportment; to avoid unkind words and unrighteous anger; to abstain from the use and sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage and from every form of evil; to combine zeal and knowledge to my efforts to advance the cause of my Savior; to make Christ first in all things both spiritual and temporal.

I further engage to give and receive admonition with meekness and affection; to remember each other in prayer, and to aid each other in case of sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and, mindful of the Scriptures, to seek it without delay; to encourage one another in the blessed hope of our Lord's return.

FURTHERMORE, IT IS MY DESIRE, BY THE HELP OF GOD TO SERVE THE LORD AND HIS CHURCH IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

1. To pray daily for the members of my class or group. (Eph. 6:18)
2. To study my Bible faithfully in order that I might increase my knowledge of the Word. (II Timothy 2:15)
3. To adequately prepare my lessons, programs and duties. (Ezra 7:10)
4. To co-operate fully with the Pastor, Superintendent, officers and other teachers of our Sunday School, officers of our church, and other youth and organizational officers. (I Cor. 3:9)
5. To regularly attend scheduled business meetings of the Church, group and class, and all the services of the Church including prayer meeting, and to encourage members of my group or class to do likewise.

(Heb. 10:24-25), making sickness, employment, vacations, and providential hindrances the only acceptable excuse for failure to attend. (Luke 16:12-13)

6. To visit the members for whom I am responsible, and the prospects for Christ and the Church, learning first hand about their homes and keeping in touch with them as much as possible. (Eph. 6:7)
7. To notify the department superintendent or proper official at least the day before of my inability to be present to perform my duties, and attempt to arrange for an approved substitute. (1 Cor. 4:2)
8. To lean upon the Lord as my strength and the Holy Spirit as my guide in the accomplishing of these Scriptural Standards. (Phil. 4:13)

THE SCRIPTURAL APPROACH TO GIVING

As adopted by the Board of Deacons
and Pastor of the Bethany Baptist Church)

- A. It is a blessing to give. (Acts 20:35)
1. Blessed because it will cause others to give thanks to God. (II Cor. 9:11, 12)
 2. Blessed because it will provoke others to pray for us. (II Cor. 9:14)
 3. Blessed because the power of the Lord will be upon us. (Isa. 58:10, 11)
 4. Blessed because the glory of the Lord will be upon us. (Isa. 58:7, 8)
 5. Blessed because our soul will be made fat. (Prov. 11:25)
 6. Blessed because of the happiness God imparts to us. (Prov. 14:21)
 7. Blessed because of the material benefits. (Luke 6:38)
 8. Blessed because of deliverance in time of trouble. (Psa. 41:1)
 9. Blessed because of the honor given by men. (Psa. 112:9)
 10. Blessed because of the treasures laid up in Heaven. (Mt. 19:21)
- B. It is an obligation to give.
1. It is commanded. (I Cor. 16:2)
 2. It is exhorted. (II Cor. 8:7, 8)
 3. It is exemplified.
 - a. The Corinthian Church (I Cor. 16:1, 2; II Cor. 8:2)
 - b. The Philippian Church (Phil. 4:18, 19)
 - c. The Jews (Lev. 27:30-32)
 4. The lack of giving is reproved.
 - a. The Jews (Mal. 3:8)
 - b. The Nations (Mt. 25:42-46)
 - c. The Rich Man (Luke 16:19-31)
 - d. The Rich Ruler (Mark 10:17-22)
 - e. Anyone (Prov. 28:27; I Jn. 3:17)
- C. It is to be done with the proper attitude.
1. Willing (II Cor. 8:3, 12; II Cor. 9:7)
 2. Joyful (II Cor. 9:7)
 3. Eager (II Cor. 9:2)
 4. Humble (Mt. 6:2-4; Rom. 12:8; Col. 3:17; Deut. 8:18)
 5. Loving (I Cor. 13:3)
 6. Confidently (Phil. 4:18, 19; Luke 6:38)
- D. It is to be done with proper method.
1. Regularly (I Cor. 16:2)
 2. Bringing the Tithe into the Storehouse (Mal. 3:10; I Cor. 16:2; II Chron. 31:10; Acts 4:37)
 3. Proportionately (II Cor. 8:12; I Cor. 16:2; Deut. 16:17; Luke 12:48; Mark 12:41-44)
 4. To the Lord First (Mt. 6:33; Prov. 3:9)
 5. Generously (II Cor. 9:6)

E. The Amount of My Giving

1. At Least a Tenth (Lev. 27:3-32; Mt. 23:23; Heb. 7:1, 2, 9, 17; Gen. 28:20-22)
2. More Than a Tenth (II Cor. 8:3)
 - a. I should give of my abundance. (II Cor. 8:14)
 - b. I should give of my want. (Mark 12:44)
 - c. The Jews gave more than a tenth. (Mal. 3:8; Lev. 27:31)
 - d. Zacchaeus gave more than a tenth. (Luke 19:8)

F. The Purpose of Giving

1. To strengthen the work of the Lord. (Mal. 3:10)
2. To meet the needs of the saints. (II Cor. 9:12)
3. To satisfy the hungry. (Isa. 58:7, 10)
4. To meet the need of the poor. (Isa. 58:7; Prov. 14:21; Psa. 112:9; Psa. 41:1)
5. To meet the need of the fatherless, the widows, the Levites, and the strangers. (Deut. 14:28, 29).