

Constitution and Bylaws

Forest Baptist Church

Prepared by
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Adopted
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CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE 1. NAME

The name of this Church shall be Forest Baptist Church (“Church”), which shall be located in Forest, Virginia and other locations as determined by the Church.

ARTICLE 2. INCORPORATION AND TAX-EXEMPT PURPOSES

Section 1. Incorporation

This Church shall be incorporated under the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act.

Section 2. Purpose

The Church is organized exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law).

Section 3. Prerogatives

The Church may engage in all legal activities in order to fulfill its non-profit purposes as a religious, educational, and charitable corporation. Specifically, the Church shall strive to make disciples by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth and to glorify God through worshipping Him, celebrating the ordinances, equipping the saints, serving others, fellowshiping together, and loving one another.

ARTICLE 3. AFFILIATIONS

This Church shall affiliate with the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia and the Southern Baptist Convention. The Church may affiliate with other networks of churches of like faith and practice.

ARTICLE 4. STATEMENT OF FAITH

This Church adheres to the *Baptist Faith and Message (2000)*, which is incorporated herein by reference. All teaching, preaching, and doctrinal matters of the Church shall be consistent with this summary of the Christian faith. (See Appendix A: *Baptist Faith & Message*)

ARTICLE 5. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amending the Statement of Faith

The Statement of Faith may be amended upon the recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of three-quarters of the voting members voting at a Members' Meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing and made available to the congregation at least thirty (30) days prior to final consideration.

Section 2. Amending the Constitution

Amendments to this Constitution shall be approved by the Elders and a three-fourths majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called and noticed meeting of the membership, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing and made available to the congregation at least thirty (30) days prior to final consideration.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE 1. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Qualifications

- A. To qualify for membership in this Church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ whose life gives evidence of genuine regeneration, who has been baptized (by immersion) in obedience to Christ following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible and endeavors to live a consecrated life wholly unto the Lord.
- B. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant (See Appendix B: Church Covenant). The Elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith or other such evidence as the Elders deem appropriate.

Section 2. Admission of Members

To be admitted into full Church membership, applicants shall have completed the New Members Class, be recommended by the Elders for admission, accepted by vote of the members at any regular or special meeting of the members, and shall at that point relinquish their membership in other Churches.

Section 3. Duties and Privileges of Membership

- A. In accordance with the duties described in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the Church consistent with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only members of this congregation may serve in the ministries of the Church; non-members may serve on an Ad hoc basis with the approval of the Elders.
- B. Under Christ, this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend Members' Meetings and vote on such matters submitted to the congregation – including: the election of officers, decisions regarding membership status, doctrinal matters, revisions to the governing documents (e.g. Constitution, Statement of Faith, Church Covenant), the annual ministry investment plan, and any other matters deemed necessary by the Elders. (See Article 2, Section 2- Members' Meetings)

Section 4. Watchcare Membership

Students and others temporarily residing in the area (e.g. missionaries, military, etc.) who are members of an evangelical Church may apply for Watchcare membership.

- A. The *purpose* of Watchcare membership is to provide access to the ministries of the Church and many of the benefits of membership during an individual's short-term residence in the area while they also maintain concurrent membership at their home Church.
- B. *Qualifications* are identical to those for full membership as set out above, except that home Church membership must be retained. A letter of commendation will be sought from the applicant's home church.
- C. *Duties and privileges* of Watchcare members are the same as for full members except that: when absent from the area for extended periods of time they are released from the responsibility to attend our church services; while they will be encouraged to attend Members' Meetings they will not be eligible to vote or stand for any office.
- D. *Termination* of Watchcare membership as a disciplinary measure will be as it is for full members, except that the Elders shall notify the pastor or Elders of the home church of that termination. Watchcare membership will normally terminate immediately upon the ending of the period of temporary residence in the area. Watchcare members apply to the Elders for full membership at any time.

Section 5. Church Discipline

- A. Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties as described in the Church Covenant or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the Church, shall be subject to the admonition of the Elders and the discipline of the Church according to the instructions of Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, and 2 Corinthians 2:6-8. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed.
- B. Church discipline by a majority vote of the Elders or congregation may include admonition or removal from serving in any ministry of the Church. Church discipline by the congregation can include exclusion from the Lord's Supper for a definite period, or termination of membership by a simple majority vote of the members present and voting at any duly called and noticed meeting of the membership. Reinstatement of a disciplined individual requires a simple majority vote of the members present and voting at any duly called and noticed meeting of the membership.

- C. The purpose of such discipline should be for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined, for the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, for the purity of the Church as a whole, for the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians, and supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character.

Section 6. Termination of Membership

- A. The Church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership after he or she has voluntarily resigned (in writing), joined with another Church, or following his or her death. Membership may also be terminated as an act of Church discipline (ordinarily, but not necessarily, at the recommendation of the Elders) upon the vote of a simple majority vote of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members.
- B. On a regular basis, the Elders will also identify those members who have become inactive (having gone at least six (6) months without attending, giving financially, or serving the Church) and shall make reasonable attempts to contact them concerning their membership status. Those members who persist in inactivity shall be recommended to the congregation, by the Elders, to have their membership terminated. (Exceptions to this process will be made for missionaries, military, Watchcare members, shut-ins and any others deemed necessary by the Elders.)

ARTICLE 2. MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Meetings

The Church shall meet together for public worship each Sunday and at other times throughout the week as the Church may determine. The meeting time may be changed or canceled by the Elders as deemed necessary (e.g. weather, emergency, etc.).

Section 2. Members' Meetings

- A. The Church shall hold a regular Members' Meeting in the months of January, April, July, and October. Regular Members' Meetings shall be announced on at least the two Sundays prior to the Members' Meeting in question.
- B. Special Members' Meetings may be called by the Elders, whenever deemed necessary, or by a written request of at least ten percent of the voting members. The date, time, and purpose of any special Members' Meetings shall be announced on at least the Sunday prior to the Members' Meeting and allow for at least 7 days prior to such a meeting. No business shall be transacted at special Members' Meetings except that purpose for which the meetings are called.

- C. A member designated by the Elders shall serve as Moderator at all Members' Meetings. The rules of procedures for Members' Meetings shall be based on the principles of *Robert's Rules of Order* and the Moderator's sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The Moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure. The Moderator shall only vote in the case of a tie in the motion under consideration.
- D. Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present. Motions shall be adopted upon the agreement of a majority of the voting members present (unless otherwise specified). There shall be no proxy or absentee voting.
- E. In every meeting together, members shall act in a spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE 3. ELDERS (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

Section 1. Board of Directors Composition, Number, Qualifications, Duties, Selection, Term, and Committees

- A. **Composition and Term.** There shall be a Board of Directors, composed of two (2) classes of Directors. Class A Directors shall be laymen elected by a three-quarters majority vote of congregational members present and voting at a duly called and noticed Members' meeting. Class A Directors may serve two (2) consecutive three-year terms and then must rotate off for one year, after which time a Director may be reelected pursuant to these Bylaws.

Class B Directors shall be paid staff elected to serve as a pastor/elder by a three-quarters majority vote of congregational members present and voting at a duly called and noticed Members' meeting pursuant to these Bylaws. Class B Directors serve until death, resignation, or removal pursuant to these Bylaws.

There shall be no fewer than three (3) Directors. A majority of the Board of Directors shall be Class A Directors. Directors shall also be referred to as Elders and the Board of Directors may also be referred to as the Elders or Council of Elders

- B. **Number.** The Elders shall set the number of Directors pursuant to these Bylaws.
- C. **Qualifications.** Elders shall be men who satisfy the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 and are willing to serve.
- D. **Duties.** The Elders shall, in keeping with the principles set forth in the Scriptures (especially Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; James 5:14; and 1

Peter 5:1-4) undertake the responsibility of shepherding God's flock by devoting themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. They shall have particular authority:

- a. To plan and oversee worship services;
- b. To oversee the ordinances, namely baptism and the Lord's Supper;
- c. To examine and instruct prospective members;
- d. To oversee the process of Church discipline;
- e. To examine and recommend candidates for all offices and positions;
- f. To encourage sound doctrine;
- g. To oversee the Church finances;
- h. To oversee the work of the deacons and all other agents of the Church;
- i. To shepherd the flock providing pastoral care, accountability and counseling;
- j. To mobilize the Church for global missions;
- k. To have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision and evaluation of staff members;
- l. To take any other action which shall be necessary and proper for faithfully overseeing, shepherding and leading the Church; and
- m. To establish such committees and ministries necessary to fulfill the purpose of the Church.

E. Selection.

The Elders shall be selected as follows:

Elder Search Committee

- a. As deemed necessary for the appointment of new Elders, the Council of Elders shall request the Church to appoint an Elder Search Committee consisting of:
 1. One (1) voting Elder selected by the Elders, serving as the Committee Chair
 2. One (1) voting Deacon selected by the Deacons
 3. Three (3) voting members nominated at-large by the congregation
 4. Two (2) non-voting alternates nominated at-large by the congregation
- b. The Elder Search Committee shall sit for a period of two (2) years.
- c. Written nominations for the five at-large positions shall be given to the Deacons prior to the Members' Meeting. The Deacons, as custodians of the nominations, shall confirm the willingness of nominated members to serve on the Elder Search Committee. The names of additional members,

who must be in attendance, may be submitted in the Members' Meeting and the Moderator shall confirm the willingness of nominated members to serve.

- d. Having a slate of willing nominees, the motion will be put to a written vote in a Members' Meeting. Members may vote for a maximum of five nominees. Two or more members designated by the Clerk shall count the paper votes. The three nominees receiving the most votes will serve as the three members at-large. The two nominees receiving the next highest number of votes will serve as the alternate members. The Clerk shall provide the Moderator with the results. The Moderator shall announce the results.

Elder Selection

- a. The Elder Search Committee shall solicit from the congregation recommendations for the Office of Elder, which recommendations shall be given in writing directly to a member of the Elder Search Committee in private, and not publicly.
- b. Should any of the members of the Elder Search Committee be nominated and willing to serve as an Elder, the nominee(s) shall be recused from the Elder Search Committee and one or both of the alternates will serve as a voting member on the Elder Search Committee.
- c. The Elder Search Committee shall give due consideration to any recommendation received.
- d. The Elder Search Committee shall present to the Church a list of nominees for the Office of Elder.
- e. For a period of at least one month, the Church shall consider whether such nominees are qualified for the office. If any member believes one or more of the nominees to be unqualified, that member shall express such concern to the Elder Search Committee in private, who may on the basis of that advice remove names from the list of nominees. No name shall be added to the list of nominees which was not included on the initial list.
- f. After a period of thirty (30) days has elapsed, the Elder Search Committee shall at the next Members' Meeting present a final list of nominees to the Church, who shall vote on each of the nominees. Two or more members designated by the Clerk shall count the paper votes and provide the Moderator with the results.

- g. The Moderator shall announce the results. Any nominee having the approval of at least three-quarters of the members voting on his nomination shall be an Elder, after which the Church shall officially recognize these men and set them apart as such.

Section 2. Board Meetings, Notice, and Action

- A. **Regular Meetings.** The Board shall convene one (1) time per year to conduct the necessary corporate business of the Church as required by the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act.
- B. **Call.** The President or Secretary may call a special meeting of the Board.
- C. **Notice of Regular Meeting.** Notice of a regular meeting of the Board shall be provided no less than fourteen (14) days before the meeting and no more than thirty (30) days before the meeting via electronic communication or first-class mail.
- D. **Notice of Special Meeting.** Notice of a special meeting of the Board shall be provided in writing no less two (2) days and no more than seven (7) days before the meeting via electronic communication or first-class mail. The notice requirement may be waived by a unanimous vote, provided all Directors in office are present at the meeting either in person or pursuant to Section 2(G) of this Article.
- E. **Quorum.** A majority of Directors present shall constitute a quorum.
- F. **Percentage Required to Approve Action.** To be approved, all action by the Board of Directors must receive a simple majority vote, unless otherwise prescribed in these Bylaws.
- G. **Meetings by Electronic Means.** The Board may also hold meetings by means of a remote electronic communications system, including video or telephone conferencing technology or the Internet, or any combination, only if each person entitled to participate in the meeting consents to the meeting being held by means of that system, and the system provides access to the meeting in a manner or using a method by which each person participating in the meeting can communicate concurrently with each other participant. Participation in such a meeting shall constitute presence in person at such meeting, except participation for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business on the grounds that the meeting is not lawfully called or convened.
- H. **Action Without a Meeting.** The Board may approve a resolution or action via electronic mail or the like, provided the motion is clearly articulated in the email

and receives an affirmative vote from all Directors in office. The vote shall be recorded in the minutes of the next regular or special meeting of the Board.

Section 3. Removal, Resignation, and Vacancy of Directors

- A. **Removal.** A Director may be removed by at least a two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting at any duly called and noticed meeting of the membership.
- B. **Resignation.** Any Director may resign by submitting a written letter of resignation to the Pastor-Teacher and/or Secretary.
- C. **Vacancy.** In the event of a vacancy by removal, death, or resignation, such a vacancy may be filled by the selection process prescribed in these Bylaws. The Board shall determine if and when such a vacancy shall be filled if there is a sufficient number of remaining Directors.
- D. **Chairperson.** The Pastor-Teacher shall serve as Chairman of the Board. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Pastor-Teacher, the Board shall select from among its members an Interim Chairperson by a simple majority vote of the Board present and voting at any duly called and noticed meeting.

Section 4. Compensation

Directors shall receive no compensation for their service on the Board.

Section 5. Confidentiality

Each Director shall execute a confidentiality agreement upon being voted onto and accepting appointment to the Board.

ARTICLE 4. CORPORATE OFFICERS

Section 1. General

There shall be a President, Secretary, and Treasurer. An officer may appoint one or more assistant officers to aid in the execution of the duties of said officer.

Section 2. President

- A. **Selection.** The Pastor-Teacher shall serve as the President of the Corporation.
- B. **Term.** The term of the sitting President shall expire upon the resignation or removal of the Pastor-Teacher.

- C. **Duties.** The President shall oversee the day-to day corporate operations of the Church and shall serve as an *ex officio* member of all committees and may appoint other Directors to service on committees in his stead.
- D. **Vacancy.** In the event of a vacancy, the Board may elect an Interim President by a simple majority vote of the Board present and voting at a duly called and noticed meeting.

Section 3. Secretary

- A. **Selection.** The Board shall select from among itself a person to serve as the Secretary by a simple majority vote of the Directors present and voting at any duly called and noticed meeting of the Directors.
- B. **Term.** The Secretary shall serve a one-year term and may be appointed to an unlimited number of terms.
- C. **Duties.** The Secretary shall maintain all corporate documents, including minutes of all meetings. The Secretary shall also work with the Church Clerk to ensure these documents are maintained accurately.
- D. **Removal.** The Secretary may be removed as a corporate officer with or without cause by a simple majority vote of the Directors present and voting at any duly called and noticed meeting of the Board.
- E. **Vacancy.** The Board shall fill any vacancy by the selection process prescribed in this section.

Section 4. Treasurer

- A. **Selection.** The Board shall select from among itself a person to serve as the Treasurer by a simple majority vote of the Directors present and voting at any duly called and noticed meeting of the Directors.
- B. **Duties.** The Treasurer shall oversee all the finances of the Church, including but not limited to the provision of receipts to donors, the provision of reports to the Board, and the maintenance of all appropriate financial records.
- C. **Assistance.** The Board may appoint other persons or hire such professionals as needed to assist the Treasurer in completing the above-described duties.
- D. **Removal.** The Treasurer may be removed as a corporate officer with or without cause by a simple majority vote of the Directors present and voting at any duly called and noticed meeting of the Board.

- E. **Vacancy.** The Board shall fill any vacancy by the selection process prescribed in this section.

ARTICLE 5. DEACONS

Section 1. General

The office of deacon is described in I Timothy 3: 8–13 and Acts 6: 1–7. The Church shall recognize individuals who are giving of themselves in service to the Church, who possess particular gifts of service, who are scripturally qualified, and who are willing to serve. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as Deacons.

Section 2. Selection

Deacons shall be selected as follows:

- a. The Elders shall solicit from the congregation recommendations for the Office of Deacon, which recommendations shall be given to the Elders in private, and not publicly. The Elders shall give due consideration to any recommendation received.
- b. The Elders shall at a Members' Meeting present to the Church a list of nominees to the Office of Deacon.
- c. Each nominee having the approval of at least three-quarters of the members present and voting on the nomination at a duly called and noticed meeting of the members shall be a Deacon, after which the Church shall publicly recognize these individuals and set them apart as such. They shall be elected to one term lasting three (3) years and may be elected to an indefinite number of terms.

Section 3. Duties

Deacons shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to the accommodations for public worship (including preparations for the Lord's Supper and Baptism) and encourage those who are able to help others. The Deacons, while under the spiritual authority of the Elders, shall support the Elders' ministry of the Word, work to maintain Church unity, and care for the physical needs of the Church. Specific Deacon roles shall be established and maintained by the mutual agreement of the Elders and Deacons.

The Deacons shall be allocated a fund for benevolence, reporting on its use to the Elders and to the Church. The Deacons shall also provide the elders and Church with reports of their care for the Church body. The Deacons, with the agreement of the Elders, may establish unpaid ministry teams of members to assist them in fulfilling their

responsibilities in the Church (e.g. Flower Team, Greeter Team, Nursery Team, Fellowship Team, etc.).

ARTICLE 6. ADMINISTRATION

Section 1. Clerk

- A. It shall be the duty of the Clerk (in cooperation with the Church secretary) to record the minutes of all regular and special Members' Meetings of the Church, to preserve an accurate membership roll (available to the members).
- B. The Clerk shall be nominated by the Elders. In the absence or incapacity of the Clerk the Elders shall appoint a willing member to perform the duties of the Church Clerk.

Section 2. Treasurer

- A. The Treasurer, under the authority of the Elders and in cooperation with the corporate officers, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the Church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The Treasurer has the authority to disburse funds and is responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues, and expenses of the Church at each Members' Meeting. These responsibilities may be delegated with the approval of the Elders. The Treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept, which belongs to the Church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the Church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the Church. The Treasurer shall render to the Elders annually, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the Church.
- B. The Treasurer shall be nominated by the Elders. In the absence or incapacity of the Treasurer the Elders shall appoint a willing member to perform the duties of the Church Treasurer.

Section 3. Recording Secretary

- A. The Recording Secretary shall keep an accurate record of the offerings received by the Church.
- B. The Recording Secretary shall receive the emptied offering envelopes and other documentation of contributions and shall record such gifts. The envelopes and other documentation shall be kept for reference for a period of seven (7) years.

- C. The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for preparing and distributing statements annually.
- D. The Recording Secretary shall be nominated by the Elders. In the absence or incapacity of the Recording Secretary the Elders shall appoint a willing member to perform the duties of the Church Recording Secretary.

Section 5. Paid Staff

- A. The congregation may create additional paid staff positions – this includes ministry positions (e.g. Student Ministry, Music Ministry, etc.) and administrative positions (e.g. Secretary, Interns, Pastoral Assistants, etc.).
- B. Ministry staff positions shall be filled as follows: the Elders shall present to the Church the name of a candidate for a specific ministry staff position. For a period of at least two weeks, the Church shall consider the nominee's gifts and commitment to minister personally to the members of that respective ministry. If any member believes the nominee to be unqualified, that member shall express such concern to the Elders in private, who will give consideration to such concern. When a period of two weeks has elapsed, the Elders shall at the next Members' Meeting present the nominee to the Church, who shall vote on the selection as such. If the nominee receives the approval of at least three-quarters of the members voting, the nominee shall be a member of the Church, and staff member for that position. Ministry staff members may also serve as Elders (having been elected according to Article 7 Section 2) but are not Elders unless expressly approved as such.
- C. Employment practices, such as hiring, termination, and management of pastoral and non-pastoral staff shall be governed by the Church's Policy and Procedures Manual.

Section 6. Personnel Committee

- A. Established by the Elders to assist in their responsibilities, the Personnel Committee is the link between paid staff and the church in matters relating to personnel management.
- B. The Personnel Committee shall be a policy-making group in consultation with the Elders on management issues.
- C. The Personnel Committee shall have the authority to revise and update the Personnel Manual in consultation with the Church Administrator or Elders.

- D. The Personnel Committee shall hire, recommend for hire, oversee, and dismiss staff as outlined in the Personnel Manual unless otherwise prescribed in these Bylaws.

ARTICLE 7. FINANCES & PROPERTY

Section 1. Ministry Investment Plan

In the July Members' Meeting, the Council of Elders shall request the Church to appoint a Ministry Investment Committee consisting of:

1. An Elder selected by the Elders
2. The deacon of finance
3. The Treasurer
4. The Recording Secretary
5. Two (2) members at large

An annual unified ministry investment plan, which budgets funds for the following year, shall be prepared and presented by the Ministry Investment Committee and adopted by the congregation each year by the end of December. Giving for the general use of the Church should be encouraged; therefore, no designated money shall be solicited by the Church or any of its ministries without the approval of the Elders. Fundraisers to supplement line items in the ministry investment plan shall not be permitted.

Section 2. Special Offerings

Special offerings shall be received by the congregation each year for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. A goal for each of these offerings will be proposed by the Elders in a Members' Meeting for the congregation's approval. Additional Church-wide special offerings are subject to the approval of the Elders.

Section 3. Designated Offerings

Designated offerings will be used for the purpose for which it was designated. Upon the recommendation of the Elders and the approval of at least three-quarters of the members voting, designated funds may be moved if the items designated are no longer applicable.

Section 4. Church Property

- A. None of the Church buildings, property, or equipment may be used or rented to any organization or individuals for commercial purposes. Proposed usage by non-members or outside organizations for benevolent or humanitarian purposes, which are not contrary to our Purpose (Article 2) and Statement of Faith (Article 4), are subject to the approval of the Elders.

- B. All records, whether financial, invoices, receipts, checks, or any other documents pertaining to the functions of administrative positions are the property of the Church and must be surrendered to the Elders at the close of the term of office for said positions or upon one's resignation from said position.
- C. Dated copies of the most recent revision of this constitution are available upon request or online.

Section 5. Cemetery

The Forest Baptist Church Cemetery is located at 1181 Two Church Lane and is under the care of the Church. The guidelines for the cemetery are delineated in Appendix C, Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund Rules and Regulations, dated July 10, 2019, which can be amended separately and independently from this Constitution by the approval of three-quarters of the voting members voting at a Members' Meeting.

ARTICLE 8. NONPROFIT STATUS

Section 1. Private Inurement

No part of the net earnings of the Church shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the Church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered and to make payments and distribution in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article 1, Section 2 hereof.

Section 2. Political Involvement

No substantial part of the activities of the Church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The Church shall not participate in or intervene in (including publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

ARTICLE 9. ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY

Any disputes that arise over the interpretation of this Church's Constitution, Bylaws, doctrine and/or moral teachings shall be deferred to the Elders, which shall serve as the highest tribunal in such matters.

ARTICLE 10. MUTUAL INTEREST

The behavior of anyone in fellowship with this Church is of common interest to the Board of Directors and the membership. (Gal. 6:1) This Church requires every Director,

employee, ministry leader, and volunteer adhere to a lifestyle that is consistent with the doctrines and moral teachings of this Church as taught in the Holy Scriptures.

ARTICLE 11. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No Director, Officer, staff member, committee member, or other such person in a position of leadership shall be disqualified, by reason of his or her office, from dealing or contracting with the Church, either as vendor, purchaser, or otherwise.

No lawful transaction or contract of the Church shall be void or voidable on the grounds that any such person or entity in which such person has any financial interest or membership, is in any way interested in the transaction or contract, provided that: (1) the person's interest in the transaction was disclosed or known to the Board or the appropriate committee thereof prior to the transaction or contract being approved, and (2) the Board or committee thereof authorized, approved or ratified the transaction or contract without counting in the vote any such interested person; and (3) the transaction or contract was fair to the Church.

No accounting of profit/loss from the transaction or contract shall be required of a Director, Officer, staff member, committee member, or other such person in a position of leadership when approval is granted under the conditions of this Article.

ARTICLE 12. DISSOLUTION

Section 1. Dissolution

Any resolution for dissolution must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Directors present and voting at any duly called and noticed meeting of the Board to be recommended to the membership. For the Board's recommendation to be approved, it shall require a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a duly called and noticed regular or special meeting.

Section 2. Winding Up.

Upon the dissolution of the Church, none of its funds or assets shall be distributed to any Officer, Director, or any other individual. The Board shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Church, dispose of all of the funds and assets of the Church by conveying the same to another Church or ministry, provided that at the time, the Church or ministry meets the requirements for an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law). Any such funds or assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction to such organizations as the court shall determine.

ARTICLE 13. OTHER ENTITIES

The Church by action of the membership may create other such legal entities as necessary to further the purpose of the Church, including but not limited to additional non-profit corporations, non-profit holding companies, and for-profit companies (whether a corporation or limited liability company) designed to promote the Church's stated purposes, but which may not qualify for tax-exempt status pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

ARTICLE 14. INDEMNIFICATION

Section 1. Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the Church, the Church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the Elders determine that the person acted a) in good faith, b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the Church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

Section 2. Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the Elders, the Church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the Church's best interest and not unlawful.

Section 3. Procedure

If a majority of the Elders is not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of Elders seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may be made by the Church or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

ARTICLE 15. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 6:1-8), the Church shall require its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the Church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the Church, whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities.

ARTICLE 16. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amending the Church Covenant

The Church Covenant may be amended upon the recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of three-quarters of the voting members voting at a Members' Meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing and made available to the congregation at least thirty (30) days prior to final consideration.

Section 2. Amending the Bylaws

Amendments to these Bylaws shall be approved by the Elders and a three-fourths majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called and noticed meeting of the membership, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing and made available to the congregation at least thirty (30) days prior to final consideration.

Appendix A:

Baptist Faith & Message (2000)

I. The Scriptures

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

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

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

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

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

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

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

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

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

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

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

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

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the Church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the Church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a Church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of Church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the Church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

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

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

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

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

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

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for

knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence and should receive along with these the liberal support of the Churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

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

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

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

involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

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

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

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

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His Church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the Church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. 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. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

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

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Appendix B:

Church Covenant

Having, as we trust, been brought by Divine Grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to Him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with each other.

We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We will walk together in brotherly love, as becomes the members of a Christian Church; exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require.

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others.

We will endeavor to bring up such as may at any time be under our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family and friends.

We will rejoice at each other's happiness, and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.

We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation now to lead a new and holy life.

We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this Church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We will, when we move from this place, as soon as possible unite with some other Church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

Appendix C:

Forest Baptist Church
Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund
Rules and Regulations
July 10, 2019

1. Grave(s) may be purchased for the price of \$200 for a Forest Baptist Church member and \$375 for a non-member.
2. Before any grave is opened, one member of the cemetery committee must be contacted by calling the Church office. This is normally done by the funeral home in charge of arrangements.
3. Opening a grave must be arranged by the funeral home / crematory in charge of arrangements. All graves must be professionally opened.
4. Graves must be dug to a minimum depth of 4' 6". Graves for cremation remains must be dug to the standard depth of 36".
5. A metal or cement vault must be placed inside the grave. This is applicable even for the burial of cremains.
6. All caskets and urns must be placed in an appropriate vault.
7. All graves are required to have a permanent marker installed within one year. Before any tombstones or grave markers are installed or erected, a member of the cemetery committee must be contacted. This is normally done by the company in charge of making the memorial marker.
8. There is a requirement that a five-inch (5") ledge of concrete be put around all above-ground stones or grave markers to prevent the growth of grass too close to the stone or marker and to prevent damage during the mowing season.
9. No curbing or fences can be installed in any part of the cemetery nor can there be any shrubs or flowers planted.
10. The cemetery will be cleaned of all old wreaths and flowers by the 15th day of March each year in preparation for the mowing season, and as necessary throughout the year. Anyone having wreaths to save should remove them by this date.
11. No grave may be sold to another individual in excess of the original purchase price and may not be sold or given to anyone without the consent of the cemetery committee or Church trustees.

12. All sales are final. Anyone desiring to give a grave or graves back to the cemetery may do so by giving a written and signed statement to the cemetery committee or Church Trustees.
13. Upkeep and maintenance of grave markers will remain the responsibility of the deceased's family.

A member of the cemetery committee or a Church trustee can be reached by calling the Church office.