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# CHURCH CONSTITUTION

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Bible Church at Rockbridge



BIBLE CHURCH AT ROCKBRIDGE

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3 W. Whistle Creek  
Lexington, VA 24450

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540-463-1688

## **Church Covenant**

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love and to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort. to promote its prosperity and spirituality: to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines: to 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 also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to give our children a Christian education; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings and faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger, to abstain from the sale of and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, to be zealous in our efforts to advance the gospel of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love, to remember one another in prayer, and to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of the word of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

## Preamble

Because we believe that it is the purpose of God that the believers meet together in a local organized church for worship, for mutual fellowship and instruction in the word of God, for the preaching of the Gospel and for a witness to the community, we the members of Bible Church at Rockbridge adopt the following articles.

### Article I - Name

The name of this church shall be the Bible Church at Rockbridge, located in Lexington, Virginia. It shall be duly recorded and registered as to be recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### Article II - Purpose

The purpose of the church shall be:

- a) The worship of Almighty God.
- b) The preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ unto salvation of the lost.
- c) The teaching and instruction of the believers and the development in them of a consistent Christian character.
- d) The promotion of missionary enterprises at home and abroad.
- e) To maintain separation from apostasy according to II Tim. 3:5.

### Article III - Doctrinal Statement

**The Holy Scriptures:** We believe the Holy Scriptures (The King James Version of the Bible) of the Old and New Testaments to be the verbally inspired word of God, the final authority for the faith and life, inerrant in the original writings, infallible, and God breathed (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:20-21; Matt. 5:18; John 16:12-13).

**The Person and Work of God:** We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in (3) three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These are co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and have the same attributes and perfections (Deut. 6:4; II Cor. 13:14). The qualities and characteristics of the nature of God are known as His attributes. Some of these are:

- a) God is eternal (Ps. 90:2).
- b) God is incomprehensible (Rom. 11:33; Matt. 11:27).
- c) God is invisible (John 1:18).
- d) God is immutable-He never changes (Mal. 3:6; James 1:17).
- e) God is omnipotent (Job 42:2; Jer. 32:27; Matt. 19:26).
- f) God is omniscient (I John 3:20; Ps. 147:5).
- g) God is omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-10).
- h) God is sovereign (Rom. 11:36; I Sam. 2:6-10; I Chron. 29:11-12).

### **The Person and Work of Jesus Christ:**

- a) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men (John 1:1-2, 14; Luke 1:35; 19:10).
- b) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross and as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice: and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical sacrifice: and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Rom. 3:24-25; I Pet. 2:24; Eph. 1:7; I Pet. 1:3-5).
- c) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, whereas our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of representative, intercessor, and advocate (Acts 1:9-10; Heb. 7:25; 9:24; I John 2:1-2).
- d) We believe in the future literal return of Christ, first to the clouds, in the air, for every Christian (I Thess. 4:16) and second, to the earth to establish an earthly reign (Dan 2:44).

### **The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit:**

- a) We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, and proceeds from the Father and the Son, and is therefore eternal, and of the same essence, majesty and glory with the Father and the Son. We believe, therefore, that the Holy Spirit is truly God.
- b) We believe that the Holy Spirit is the person who convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, and that He is the super-natural agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body (Church) of Christ, indwelling them, and sealing them until the day of redemption (John 16:8-11; II Cor. 3:6; I Cor. 12:12-14; Rom. 8:9; Eph. 5:18).
- c) We believe He is the divine teacher who guides believers into all truth, and that it is the privilege and duty of all believers to be filled with the Spirit (John 16:13, I John 2:20, 27; Eph. 5:18).
- d) The Holy Spirit gives us the assurance of our salvation through the evidence of our new life as it harmonizes with the word of God (II Cor. 5:17; John 15:3).
- e) To be filled with the Holy Spirit means that we surrender our lives to Him in complete idleness, that we give Him full right of way. We must yield to this filling every day (I Cor. 3:16; Eph. 4:30; 5:18; I Thes. 5:19).

### **Man:**

- a) The whole human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God, and that of himself is totally depraved and unable to remedy his lost condition (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:10, 22-23; 5:12, 19; Eph. 2:1-3, 12; Ps. 51:5; 58:3; Eccl. 7:20).
- b) Man has the choice of one or the other of (2) two destinies: Heaven or Hell (Heb. 9:27). We can gain Heaven by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ: Hell is the destiny of all those who do not accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal savior.

**Salvation:** We believe salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary's cross for the forgiveness of our sins (Eph. 2:8-10; John 1:12; Eph. 1:7; I Peter 1:18-19; Acts 16:31).

- a) By grace you are saved: (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 3:24; 5:20-21; Titus 2:11).
- b) Salvation is through faith: (Heb. 11:1; Acts 16:31; Eph. 2:8; Rom. 4:5; 5:1; John 1:12;

3:16, 36).

- c) Salvation is the gift of God: (Eph. 2:8; John 4:10; Isa. 55:1; Rom. 6:3; II Cor. 9:15). A gift is not a gift if we pay the smallest price for it or work the least for it. A gift is free and must be received. It will not be thrown at us.
- d) Salvation is not of works: (Eph. 2:8; Titus 3:5; Romans 4:5). No one will ever obtain salvation or go to Heaven by doing the best he can. Christ paid it all.

#### **Eternal Security and the Assurance of the Believer:**

- a) We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40; John 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1, 38-39; I Cor. 1:4-8; I Peter 1:5).
- b) We believe it is the privilege of the believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's word which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion of the flesh (Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).
- c) Definition: "Eternal security" means that one who is saved, having received life eternal, has received a gift that cannot be taken away. His eternal state is already and permanently secured.
- d) The assurance of the believer is the confidence which the Christian has in God that he is presently and eternally saved from all his sin (John 5:24; 6:37, 39; 10:28-29; Eccl. 3:14; Rom. 8:1; II Cor. 5:21, Heb. 7:25, Luke 22: 31-32).

#### **Ordinances of the Church:**

##### **a) The Lord's Supper:**

- a. We believe the Lord's Supper is a memorial ordinance by which believers remember and show forth the Lord's death till he comes (I Cor. 11:23-29; Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:18-20).
- b. We do not believe in the doctrine of transubstantiation, which teaches the bread (wafers) turns to the body and that the wine (juice) turns to the blood of Christ. These elements are only symbols to call us to remembrance of Christ.
- c. We believe that the church should practice open communion, which means all believers in a right relationship to God are able to partake regardless of local church membership.

##### **b) Baptism:**

- a. We believe that Christian baptism by immersion of the believer in water in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the Biblical mode of baptism and testifies to the believer's faith in, and identification with the crucified, buried, and risen Savior (Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12; I Pet. 3:21). We do not believe that an individual is born again by water baptism.

#### **The Believer's Two Natures:**

- a) We believe that every believer (every saved person) possesses two natures, with the provision made for victory of the new nature over the old nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit; and that all claims of the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural. (Rom. 6:13, 8:12-13; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:10; I Pet. 1:14-16; I John 3:5-9).
- b) We believe that sinless perfection will not be achieved until we reach the glories of Heaven. When a person is saved, his old nature is not improved; God gives him a new nature and

by yielding to the Holy Spirit, the new nature can overrule the old nature. By not yielding to the Holy Spirit will allow the old nature to overcome and cause sin in our lives.

### **Separation:**

- a) We believe that all saved should live in a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Lord and Savior, also in order not to be a stumbling block to their weaker Christian brethren and the lost. This means constant watching and praying and separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations is commanded of God (II Tim. 3:1-5; Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11; II Cor. 6:14; 7:1).
- b) Apostate means one who departs from professed principles or faith. They deny the fundamentals of the faith: the deity of Christ, His miracles, the inspiration of the scriptures, and don't separate themselves from the things of the world.
- c) This separation is not only to be *from* something, but *unto* God the Father through faith in Jesus Christ and kept by the Holy Spirit whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30). This separation includes being separated to a gospel believing church and doing things pleasing to God.
- d) It also includes not being unequally yoked with unbelievers in any way, shape, form or fashion such as business or marriage.

### **Missions:**

- a) We believe it is the duty and obligation of the saved to be witnesses by life and word to the truths of the Holy Scriptures and to seek to proclaim the gospel to all mankind (Acts 1:8; I Pet. 3:15; Ps. 107:2; Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:19-20).
- b) We believe in supporting missionaries with a tithe of the church income as a matter of right and will support at least one missionary in the foreign field and at least one in the U.S. The missionary goes where we cannot, but we will be a witness where we are. The church will also support the missionaries in prayer.

### **The Church:**

- a) We believe the church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born again believers of this present age (Eph. 1:22-23; I Cor. 12:12-14; II Cor. 11:2).
- b) We also believe that establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament (Acts 14:27; 20:17; 28-32; I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1: 5-11).
- c) Every true Christian should be a member of a Bible believing, Bible teaching, Christ honoring local church. Much care should be taken when moving to a new community to find such a church. Membership in a modernistic church that doesn't believe or preach that the bible is God's infallible word is wrong and displeasing to God.

### **Second Coming of Christ:**

- a) We believe in "that blessed hope," the personal, imminent, pre-tribulational, and pre-millennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones (Christians); and His subsequent return to the earth, with His saints, to establish His millennial kingdom (I Thess. 1:1; 4:13-18; 5:9; Zech. 14:4-11; Rev. 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6).

b) Definitions:

- a. Imminent: possible at any time, not necessarily soon, although it may be.
- b. Pre-tribulation: before the tribulation period.
- c. Pre-millennial: before the millennium.
- d. Millennium: any period of 1,000 years, but usually, as here, referring to the 1,000 years reign of Christ on earth.

**The Rapture and the First Resurrection:** The shout and the trumpet shall sound and the dead in Christ shall rise and we which are alive will rise with them to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord. We use the term “*rapture*” to describe this event, and even though it is not a Biblical word, the idea is clearly given in these verses and others. Only as much time as it takes for the twinkling of an eye will be needed for the whole process to be complete (I Thess. 4:16-17; I Cor. 15:52). Events between the rapture (the Lord coming in the air for the saints) and the revelation (Christ coming in great power and glory to set up His millennial kingdom).

**Judgment of Believer’s Works:** This judgment has nothing to do with salvation and its security. This was settled eternally when Christ took our place on Calvary’s cross. This judgment is giving an account of what we have done since we got saved (I Cor. 3:13-15; 2 Cor. 5:10).

**Rewards for faithfulness:**

- a) Rewards are earned *after* salvation; salvation is free. God offers rewards in the form of crowns; these are to be given back in love to the Savior who enables us to win them. First, some crowns are:
  - a. Crown of rejoicing (I Thess. 2:19).
  - b. Soul winners crown
  - c. Crown of life (James 1:12).
  - d. Crown of righteousness (II Tim. 4:8).
  - e. Crown of glory (I Pet. 5:4).
- b) These rewards can be forfeited through faithless living (II John 8). We can lose rewards, but not salvation. A full reward will be ours if we remain faithful to the end (Rev. 22:12).

**The Marriage of the Lamb:** The wedding of the Lord to His bride (the church) is an eternal wedding. These things take place in Heaven during a time of great tribulation on earth. This will take place in a period of seven years (Rev. 19:7, 9).

**The Revelation of Jesus Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords:** This is the time that Christ actually returns to the earth (Col. 3:4; Jude 14).

**The Judgment of the Nations:** This is the time immediately after the great tribulation, just before Christ sets up His kingdom. The wicked nations, (goats) will go to eternal destruction, and the righteous, (sheep) will enter into His kingdom (Matt. 25:31-32; Joel 3:1-2).

**Christ’s 1,000-Year Reign on Earth:** Christ’s kingdom on earth will be 1,000 years in duration, then He will deliver it up to the Father and it will continue in glory forever (I Cor. 15:24; Matt. 25:34; Rev. 20:2-3; Isa. 2:4; 11:6-9; 33:24; 35:1-2, 5-10; Joel 3:18; Micah 4:3-4). After Christ delivers His kingdom to the Father, the glories of heaven will be entered into forever and ever (Dan. 2:44).

### **The Eternal State:**

- a) We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved for eternal life, and the unsaved into judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matt. 25:46; John 5:21, 29; 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13).
- b) We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, where spirit, soul and body are united to be glorified forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; Rev. 20:4-6; II Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:2-3; 3:21; I Thess. 4:16-17).
- c) We believe the souls of the unbelievers remain, after death, in constant misery until the second resurrection, when that soul and body will be reunited and they will appear before the great white throne judgment, and be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, (utterly destroyed), but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment (Luke 16:19-26; Matt. 25:41-46; II Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Mark 9:43-48; Rev. 20:11-15).
- d) Although all men will not be resurrected (raised from the dead) at the same time, scripture does teach that every man will experience the resurrection of the body.
- e) At the resurrection, the body and soul will be reunited. These two resurrections are taught in scripture, the resurrection of the saved will be at the rapture of the church. The resurrection of the unsaved (lost), will take place after the 1,000-year (millennial) reign of Christ. The bible teaches these facts for the Christian:
  - a. Death of the body
  - b. Continuous life for the soul
  - c. Conscious joy in the presence of the Lord
  - d. Resurrection and glorification of the body, reunification with the soul.
  - e. Everlasting bliss, no more death, sorrow, separation.
- f) The eternal state of the *unbeliever* is such that at death of the body, the soul is in conscious misery to await the resurrection and judgment and the final sentence to the lake of fire, there to experience everlasting, conscious torment. Hell is a place of temporary punishment and is cast into the lake of fire for eternal punishment.

### **Dispensations/Dispensational:**

- a) We believe in the dispensational view of bible teaching and interpretation, but reject the extreme teaching known as “hyper-dispensationalism”, such as the teaching which opposes either the Lord’s table or water baptism as a scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:8; I Cor. 11:23-26).
- b) The dispensations we see are six in number and are:
  - a. *Innocence*: From creation of Adam to his expulsion from the garden of Eden because of sin.
  - b. *Conscience*: From expulsion from the garden of Eden to the flood of Noah.
  - c. *Human authority of Government*: From the end of the flood to the tower of Babel.
  - d. *Promise*: From the tower of Babel to the giving of the law by Moses.
  - e. *Law*: From the giving of the Mosaic law to the death of Christ. This dispensation gave way to grace but will return to the earth during the tribulation period.
  - f. *Grace*: From the death of Christ to the rapture of the Church.



**The Personality of Satan:** We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin, and the cause of the fall; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man, that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10). Satan has helpers in his evil ways. These are called demons and he also had other angels that fell in sin with him. Satan is the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10).

**Creation:**

- a) We believe that God created the universe in six literal, twenty-four-hour periods.
- b) We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day- Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin (Gen. 1 & 2; Ex. 20:11).

**Human Sexuality:**

- a) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bi-sexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance (Gen. 2:24; 19:5-13; 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; I Cor. 5:1; 6:9; I Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4).
- b) We believe that the only scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman even if people of same sex have been joined in a legal civil ceremony or any other religious ceremony in contradiction of our doctrinal stand (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; I Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23).

**Family Relationships:**

- a) We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God, but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; I Tim. 2:8-18; 3:4-5, 12).
- b) We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the Church. The wife is to submit herself to the scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are an heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including scriptural corporal correction (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mark. 10:6-12; I Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; I Pet. 3:1-7).

**Divorce and Remarriage:** We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of Pastor or deacon (Mal. 2: 4-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; I Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6).

**Abortion:** We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental wellbeing of the mother are acceptable (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44).

**Euthanasia:**

- a) We believe that the direct taking of the innocent human life as a mercy killing, or any other intention is a moral evil. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death.
- b) Thus, we believe that an act or omission, which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering, constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God.
- c) Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment (Ex. 20:13; 23:7; Matt. 5:21; Acts 17:28).

**Authority of Statement of Faith:** The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible Itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing statement of faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

## **Article IV - Government**

The government of this church shall be vested in the official board as prescribed by this constitution and membership. This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body or forum. The official board does not have veto power over the will of the congregational membership.

**Official Board:**

- a) The official board shall be composed of the Pastor and the board of deacons and trustees. The clerk and treasurer shall also sit in on the meetings.
- b) The official board shall meet once a month at a regularly scheduled meeting, and by call of the Pastor, deacons or trustees for a special meeting when necessary. Special meetings shall be announced the Sunday before, to the congregation, and the preceding week in the church bulletin if possible.

**Duties of the Official Board:**

- a) It shall hear all matters brought before it and shall refer them with its recommendations to the proper board or officer for action.
- b) It shall monthly share reports of various activities of the church departments.
- c) It shall review and approve or disapprove all items to be submitted to the congregation for consideration and vote.
- d) It shall make recommendations to the congregation on matters of policy and administration.
- e) It shall formulate a general plan for the yearly program of the church.

## **Article V – Officers**

- a) The elected officers of this church shall be Pastor, deacons, trustees, treasurer, assistant treasurer, secretary clerk, assistant secretary clerk, ushers, Sunday School superintendent, Assistant Sunday school superintendent, youth leaders, Sunday school teachers and assistants, choir director, and others will be added as church growth deems necessary.
- b) Except for the Pastor, deacons, and trustees, all officers shall be nominated by the nominating committee and elected by a majority vote of the church members present at the annual business meeting. Their terms of office shall coincide with the church year.
- c) All officers and teachers at Bible Church at Rockbridge must be saved, a member of the church in good standing, adhere to the doctrinal statement and the constitution of the church without reservation.
- d) All officers, teachers, and committees elected or appointed shall take office on promotion day, the first Sunday of July of each year. All officers shall continue to perform their duties until their successors are elected and qualified.
- e) Upon installation, all officers and teachers shall read and subscribe to the doctrinal statement and constitution of this church.

### **Offices of More Than One-Year Terms:**

#### **a) Pastor:**

- a. The Pastor of this church shall be chosen for an indefinite period by vote upon the recommendation of the pulpit committee, after careful investigation and consideration. Only one candidate considered shall conscientiously adhere to the covenant, doctrinal statement, and constitution of this church without mental reservations. Such selection of Pastor shall be voted upon at least one week prior to such meeting at the regular meeting of the church congregation. A majority of at least (3/4, 75%) three-fourths of the vote present shall be necessary to elect or call the Pastor. (This does not necessarily mean 75% of the members of the church, only those present at the pre-called meeting). No Pastor or speaker shall stand in the pulpit of this church who does not subscribed to the doctrinal statement of the church. The qualifications for Pastor are found in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1: 5-9.
- b. Participation in other areas of ministry shall be allowed as long as it does not interfere with the ministry of the church.

#### **c. The Duties of the Pastor:**

- i. He shall have charge of the spiritual welfare and oversight of the church.
- ii. He shall conduct spiritual services on stated and special occasions.
- iii. He shall administer the ordinances of the church.
- iv. He shall minister to the members of the church in time of need, hospital visits, funerals, weddings, etc.
- v. He shall be a (ex-officer, non-voting, except in case of a tie) member of all the boards, departments, organizations, and committees of the church. He is the spiritual and administrative head of the church.
- vi. Subject of the approval of the official board, he shall have charge of the pulpit ministry of the church, provide for pulpit supply when he is absent, and to arrange for evangelists for revival services and the special services of the church.

- vii. The pastor may submit his resignation to the official board at any time. The relationship may be terminated 30 days from the date of notice of Intention from the Pastor, or at any other time of mutual consent. The official board shall have authority to consider the matter and make proper recommendations to the church.
- viii. The Pastor can be removed by a vote of no confidence by the congregation with at least 75% of the congregation present at such a meeting and a 51% vote to ask the Pastor to resign and leave.

**b) Deacons:**

- a. There shall be an odd number of deacons. They shall be elected by the church for a period of three years. (This qualification shall be waived if no other qualified candidates exist.) Their term of office shall be so arranged that their terms shall not expire at the same time. They shall meet once a month at a regularly scheduled meeting, and by call of the Pastor.
- b. In the event there are not at least three qualified candidates for deacon, the church will appoint according to qualified members.
- c. The qualifications of the office of deacon shall therefore be found in I Tim. 3:2-13 and Titus 1:6-9.
- d. **Duties of the Deacons:**
  - i. They shall prepare the elements for the Lord's Supper.
  - ii. They shall distribute the elements of the Lord's Supper.
  - iii. They shall assist the Pastor in baptismal preparation.
  - iv. They shall consider all applicants for dismissal from this church.
  - v. They shall, along with the Pastor, have responsibility of the discipline and supervision of the membership of the church.
  - vi. In the absence of the Pastor, they shall supply the pulpit with men whose Christian character and training are in accordance with the constitution and doctrinal statement of this church.
  - vii. They shall counsel with and aid the Pastor in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church.
  - viii. They shall aid the Pastor in visitation.
  - ix. They shall serve on the official board along with the trustees.

**c) Trustees:**

- a. There shall be an odd number of trustees, at least three. They shall be elected by the church for a period of three years. Their terms shall be arranged so they do not all expire at the same time. They shall meet once a month at a regularly scheduled meeting, and by call of the Pastor for a special meeting when necessary.
- b. **Duties of the Trustees:**
  - i. They shall, with the approval of the church and in accordance of the laws of the state, have charge over the property of this church and all legal documents.
  - ii. No one shall give or convey to the church any property or other items without approval of the board of trustees.
  - iii. Trustees shall be the business leaders of the church and conduct whatsoever business the church shall deem essential.
  - iv. The trustees, along with the deacons, shall make up the official Board.

**Annually Elected Officers:** All annually elected officers shall be nominated by the nominating committee and elected by the congregation. They shall be elected at the annual business meeting of the church on the first Wednesday evening in June. They may be re-elected to the same office yearly. They shall attend the meetings of the official board when requested by the board. These officers shall adhere to the church covenant and doctrinal statement. These officers may include such other officers as deemed necessary by the official board.

a) **Treasurer:**

- a. He shall keep all records of finance of the church, seeing to it that all receipts and expenditures are recorded.
- b. He shall make disbursement of said funds at the appropriate time to meet the church obligations.
- c. He shall make a monthly report to the church as to the financial standing of the church.
- d. He shall keep the record of those paying tithes and offerings in envelopes and by check and issue receipts for tax purposes to those individuals contributing for the same.
- e. An offering shall be counted by the counting committee with the oversight of the treasurer who will deposit it in the bank.
- f. The church treasurer's books shall be audited by those designated by the church and all books, records, and accounts kept by him shall be considered the property of the church.
- g. An assistant treasurer will be elected as the needs of the church dictate. His duties will coincide with the treasurer's duties.
- h. In the treasurer's absence, the asst. treasurer will perform above duties.

b) **Recording Secretary and Clerk:**

- a. The recording secretary and clerk shall keep a complete record of all official meetings and special business meetings which shall be read at the next business meeting.
- b. The secretary shall keep records as to membership letters, forward letters of transfer when requested.
- c. He shall file and keep for future reference, reports and notes as deemed necessary by the official board.
- d. An assistant clerk shall be elected as the needs of the church dictate. His duties will coincide with the duties of the clerk.

c) **Ushers:**

- a. The ushers shall assist in seating the congregation.
- b. The ushers shall assist in receiving the offering at regular services.
- c. The ushers shall give visitors cards to visitors as directed by the Pastor.

d) **Sunday School Superintendent:**

- a. Shall oversee the orderly function of the Sunday school Dept.
- b. Shall maintain records as apply to membership, offering, etc.
- c. Provide support to Sunday school teachers including making available supplies, curriculum and moral support.
- d. Ensure that teachers are supplied for each class.

e) **Assistant Sunday School Superintendent:**

- a. Shall perform above duties in the absence of the superintendent.

f) **Sunday School Teachers:**

- a. Shall study Sunday school material, prayerfully prepare and present lessons.
- b. Shall promote the growth of their class and the Sunday school program through prayer, and personal contact if necessary.
- c. If possible, should give the superintendent notice when they are unable to teach their class.

## **Article VI - Membership**

**Procedure for Membership:**

- a) The applicant shall meet or has met the following conditions to be considered for membership.
  - a. Has personally accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
  - b. Has assurance of salvation.
  - c. Has read and given assent to the Church covenant, doctrinal statement, and constitution.
- b) Having met these requirements, the applicant will be received for membership by one of the following ways:
  - a. Statement of Faith - any person who gives proof of regeneration and subscribes to the doctrines and practices of the church.
  - b. Letter - any person having been saved coming from another church of like faith and practice by a letter of dismissal from that church.
  - c. Baptism - one who has been saved but not a member of a church of like faith who has not been baptized may join by scriptural baptism.

**Termination of Membership:**

- a) **By Demission:**
  - a. Letters of recommendations to the churches of like faith and practice shall be granted to those leaving our fellowship to members of good standing.
- b) **By Deletion:**
  - a. Any member, by asking the clerk, can have his name removed from the church roll.
  - b. Those finding themselves at variances with the teachings, life, and rules of the church shall ask the clerk to remove their names, to be deleted, and quietly withdraw from the church.
  - c. Any member who is absent from all meetings of the church for a period of (6) months shall have their name deleted unless cause is found for such an absence.
- c) **By Discipline:**
  - a. All matters of discipline shall be submitted to the board of deacons.
  - b. The church shall regard as grounds for discipline infractions respecting the following matters:
    - i. Propagation of hearsay (Titus 3:10).
    - ii. Causing and abetting factions (Rom. 6:17).
    - iii. Personal slander of the Pastor and fellow members (James 3).
    - iv. Conduct unbecoming to a Christian (I Cor. 5:1-13; Eph. 5; Col 3; II Thess. 3:6-15).

**c. Procedure for Discipline:**

- i. The procedure shall be in regard to and in accordance with Matt. 18:15-17 and I Cor. 5:1-5.
- ii. The Pastor and deacons are under obligation before God to restore the sinning member, if possible, before submitting his name to the membership for exclusion (Gal 6:1-2).

## **Article VII - Meetings**

**Worship Services:**

- a) The stated services of the church for worship, evangelism and prayer shall be held Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening, under the general supervision of the Pastor and board of deacons.

**Business Meetings:**

- a) Annual meetings - to elect officers
- b) Monthly meetings - to conduct the business of the church.
- c) Special meetings - as deemed necessary by the Pastor or any member of the official board.

**Moderator:**

- a) The Pastor shall act as moderator and preside over all meetings unless deemed necessary by the official board to replace him with another officer.

## **Article VIII - Rules of Order**

All meetings of the church membership shall be governed by the following manner:

- a) The moderator will call the meeting to order.
- b) The moderator will make recommendations to call for a motion.
- c) Motions must be made by any member present who is eligible to vote.
- d) A second to the motion must be made by any member eligible to vote.
- e) Any discussion to the motion will take place.
- f) Call for the vote. Majority rules.
- g) All meetings must be adjourned by a motion to adjourn. No second will be necessary.

**Quorum:**

- a) 25% of the eligible voting membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- b) In meetings of boards and committees of the church, at least 50% of said board or committee must be present to constitute a quorum.

**Amendments:**

- a) This Constitution may be amended by a 2/3 majority of eligible members present voting in a monthly meeting of the church provided such amendment is given to the church clerk and is announced to the church at least 30 days prior to the time the vote is taken.

- b) There shall be no amendments to Articles II and III or to those provisions of the constitution having to do with ownership, control, or disposition of physical properties and assets of the Bible Church at Rockbridge.
- c) If it becomes necessary to amplify our doctrinal statement, (article 3) by further expounding our doctrinal stand for scripture, said additions will not be construed as amendments.

**Voting:**

- a) Eligibility to vote: Only members who have been in regular attendance for three months prior to the meeting shall be eligible to vote.
- b) There shall be no absentee or proxy votes allowed.
- c) All voting being done concerning individuals shall be done by secret ballot.
- d) A majority of the voting members present at any regular or special meeting shall be competent to decide any questions coming before the membership.