

# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF CALVERT COUNTY CHURCH BYLAWS (2022)



## **ARTICLE 1-NAME AND PURPOSE**

### **SECTION 1.01—NAME**

This congregation of believers shall be known as First Baptist Church of Calvert County. The Church is incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Maryland.

### **SECTION 1.02—PURPOSE**

This congregation is organized as a Church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) of 1986, for such purposes including, but not limited to, proclaiming the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; establishing and maintaining religious worship; educating believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture; and maintaining missionary activities in the United States and around the world.

This Church shall be an independent body of baptized believers. The government of this Church shall be vested in its assembled membership through its duly elected officers. It shall never be subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body and no denominational or associational representative shall sit in judgment over its affairs. The Church may voluntarily fellowship and cooperate with other churches of like faith and practice for the furtherance of the gospel.

## **ARTICLE 2-STATEMENT OF FAITH**

### **SECTION 2.01—AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. This Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith and we believe it accurately represents Biblical teachings and is binding upon all members, staff, and volunteers. All literature used in the Church, whether print or electronic, shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith. All activities permitted or performed in any facilities owned, rented, or leased by this Church, or engaged in by any member of the Church staff (volunteer or paid), and all decisions of the administration of this Church shall not conflict with the Statement of Faith. In all conflicts regarding interpretation of the Statement of Faith, the Pastor and Board of Deacons, on behalf of the Church, have the final authority.

### **SECTION 2.02—BELIEFS ON DOCTRINE**

The following comprise the Scriptural beliefs of this church and its members.

**(A)** The Holy Scriptures. We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plerarily inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible, and God-breathed. They are, therefore, the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

**(B)** The Godhead. We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 14:10, 26; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

**(C)** The Person and Work of Christ.

1. We believe 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, that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-8).
2. We believe the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Acts 2:18-36; Romans 3:24-25; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 2:24).
3. We believe the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Intercessor, and Advocate (Acts 1:9-10; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25, 9:24; 1 John 2:1-2).

**(D)** The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

1. We believe the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. We believe He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, and indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption (John 16:8; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13-14).
2. We believe He is the divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and enables us to appropriate the Scriptures and it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to let the Holy Spirit direct and control their lives (Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27).
3. We believe God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly so they can do the work of the ministry (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 28; Ephesians 4:7-12).
4. We believe the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing were temporary. Speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit. Ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing (1 Corinthians 1:22, 13:8, 14:21-22).

**(E)** The Total Depravity of Man. We believe man was created in the image and likeness of God; but due to Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:22-23, 5:12; 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3, 4:17-19).

**(F)** Salvation.

1. We believe God the Father, before the foundation of the world, designed a plan to make repentant sinners (1) holy before Him, (2) children of Him, and therefore (3) accepted by Him (Ephesians 1:4-6). Those who are saved are sometimes called the elect or chosen (1 Peter 1:2). God the Son provided the way of salvation by securing for a repentant sinner (1) payment of sin, (2) release from sin, and (3)

assurance of salvation (Ephesians 1:7-12). God the Holy Spirit secures a repentant sinner's salvation by first convicting the sinner with the truth of God's Word (John 16:1-13), and then, by making Himself the down payment of salvation within each believer until his entrance into heaven (Ephesians 1:13-14).

2. We believe the obtaining of salvation is impossible apart from a personal voluntary choice of the sinner (John 3:16) based upon a complete reliance upon God's way of salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9). At the moment a sinner repents from sins and trusts Christ as his Savior, the sinner is united to Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17) and regenerated by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). This turning from sin (Psalms 51:3-4) to Christ as Savior (Romans 10:9-10) is called conversion. At conversion, God declares the sinner righteous (justified) because of the blood of Christ, a payment that satisfies the eternal penalty of sin (Romans 8:1). Consequently, the sinner is made alive spiritually (John 3:36) and is reconciled to God's favor (Romans 5:1-2, 10) thereby becoming holy. The sinner is thus made a saint. So, to summarize, we believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in Jesus Christ, whose blood was shed at Calvary for the forgiveness of sins for all those who would trust in Christ's finished work of the cross (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7, 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19). We believe that genuine faith will also include genuine repentance (Mark 1:14-15; Acts 3:19, 20:21; 2 Corinthians 7:10) and bring forth genuine fruit as evidenced in a changed life (Matthew 3:8; John 3:8; 2 Corinthians 5:17).
3. We believe the Scriptures teach that regeneration, or the new birth, is a change in the soul wrought by the Holy Spirit by which a new nature and spiritual life are imparted. The person becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus; and without regeneration salvation is impossible (John 3:3-6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Peter 1:23; Titus 3:5).
4. We believe the salvation of every believer is secure for all eternity from the moment of regeneration. This security is guaranteed to each believer by the promise, the keeping power of God, the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit, and the interceding ministry of Christ (John 5:24, 10:27; Romans 8:1, 35-39; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30).
5. We believe justification is the judicial act of God, whereby He declares us to be righteous through faith in Christ Jesus. Justification includes Jesus' payment of sin and the imputation of God's righteousness. It is bestowed not in consideration of any good works which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's shed blood and sacrifice on Calvary's cross (Isaiah 53:4-7; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1-9; 8:1; Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:15-21).

**(G) The Church.**

1. Concerning the Local Church - We believe a local church is a voluntary group of baptized believers, with Christ as its head; that joins together for worship, ministry, prayer, and teaching; it is independent [i.e. not required to join or align with any group or movement]; it has the power and right within itself to confess its own faith in accordance with the New Testament; and it is autonomous [i.e. each congregation recognizes its own self-contained government as its highest human authority for governing according to the will of the Lord Jesus Christ] (Acts 20:17; 1 Corinthians 3:10-17; 5:1-5; 11:2; 12:12-27; Colossians 1:18, 24; 3:15-16; 1 Timothy 3:1-15; Titus 1:5-11; Revelation 2:3).
2. Concerning the Christian and the Local Church - We believe the local church is the center of God's redemptive program for this age. Every Christian is bound by Scripture to give their unhindered cooperation to the furtherance of the Gospel into all the world, and to the evangelistic efforts of their local church. It is the responsibility of all believers to remember the work of the local church and its extension ministries in prayer, to support it with their monetary offerings as the Lord prospers them, to

participate in all the regular services of the church as the Lord enables, and to voluntarily submit to the watch care and discipline of the local church (1 Corinthians 16:2; 1 Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 10:19-25; 13:17).

3. We believe there are two ordinances of the church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are simple acts of obedience and offer no special grace or merit with God.
4. We believe immersion is the only form of baptism revealed and commanded in the Scriptures; it has NO saving power, but is only for those who are already saved. The new birth, which comes through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is the Scriptural prerequisite to baptism; therefore, only those who are old enough to believe for themselves should be baptized (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3-5).
5. We believe the Lord's Supper is a memorial of the death of Christ and only those who have been saved through faith in His atoning blood and are walking in obedient fellowship with Him ought to partake (1 Corinthians 11:23-32).
6. We believe there are two officers of a New Testament church, pastors (elders and bishops being different names for the same office) and Board of Deacons (Acts 6:1-7; 20:17, 28; 1 Timothy 3:1-13).
7. We believe one pastor shall be the overseer and shepherd of the flock. The assistant pastor(s) is his assistant in the spiritual domain. The Board of Deacons are spiritual helpers in the ministry (Acts 6:1-7; 20:17, 28).

**(H)** Separation. We believe all the saved are called into a life of separation. This separation is in at least three areas: moral, personal, and ecclesiastical.

1. Moral: The Ten Commandments are God's perfect standard that no one has been or will be able to obey. We are commanded to strive for holiness (2 Corinthians 7:1) in the fear of God. The believer is never to suffer as an evildoer (1 Peter 4:15); but is commanded to be clean in body and in mind (2 Corinthians 10:5).
2. Personal: Romans 14 explains that there are areas where believers will disagree in matters which they call sin. The stronger brother will be able to do things that the weaker cannot. In matters of eating, holy days, etc., every believer should be fully persuaded in their own mind (Romans 14:5b).
3. Ecclesiastical: While recognizing the unity of all true believers, it is also evident that unbelief and error in many organized fellowships have developed to the point where recognized and indisputable apostasy exists. We stand in opposition to cooperative evangelistic programs between churches and people not of like precious faith (Luke 12:51; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:11-12).

**(I)** The Second Advent of Christ. We believe in the blessed hope, the personal, imminent return of Christ, who will rapture His church prior to the seven-year tribulation period. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom which was promised to the nation of Israel (Psalms 89:3-4; Daniel 2:31-45; Zechariah 14:4-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6).

**(J)** The Eternal State.

1. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Revelation 20:5-6, 12-13).
2. We believe 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, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be

glorified forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 20:4-6).

3. We believe the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment (Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15).

**(K)** The Personality of Satan. We believe Satan is an actual being, the author of sin. He is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

**(L)** Creation. We believe in the Genesis account of creation. We accept it literally, not allegorically or figuratively. Man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness. Man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species. All animal and vegetable life was created directly by God and God's design was that they should bring forth only "after their kind" (Genesis 1:1, 11, 24, 26-27; Exodus 20:11; Jeremiah 10:12; Nehemiah 9:6; Romans 1:20; Acts 4:24; 17:24; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 11:3; Revelation 10:6).

**(M)** Civil Government. We believe God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: (1) the home, (2) the church, and (3) the government. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the government are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God (Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 2:13-14).

**(N)** Family Relationships.

1. We believe men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is the leader of the home, and men are the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:18; 1 Timothy 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12).
2. We believe 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 a 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 (Genesis 1:26-28; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalms 127:3-5; Proverbs 19:18, 22:15, 23:13-14; Mark 10:6-12; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33, 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7).

**(O)** Marriage and Sexuality.

1. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one legitimate meaning, and that is marriage sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman in a single, covenantal union, as delineated by Scripture.

Marriage ceremonies performed in any facility owned, leased, or rented by this church will be only those ceremonies sanctioned by God, joining one man with one woman as their genders were determined at birth. Whenever there is a conflict between the church's position and any new legal standard for marriage, the Church's Statement of Faith, doctrines, and biblical positions will govern (Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:22-23; Mark 10:6-9; I Corinthians 7:1-9).

2. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage as defined in (a) above. We believe that any other type of sexual activity, identity or expression that lies outside of this definition of marriage, including those that are becoming more accepted in the culture and the courts, are contradictory to God's natural design and purpose for sexual activity. (Genesis 2:24, 19:5; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1: 26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)
3. We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two, distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God and the rejection of one's biological gender is a rejection of the image of God within that person. (Genesis 1:26-27)

**(P)** Divorce and Remarriage. We believe God disapproves of divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. We believe that "he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:10-17; 1 Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6).

**(Q)** Abortion. We believe human life begins at conception and 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 mental wellbeing of the mother are acceptable (Job 3:16; Psalms 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24, 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5, 20:15-18; Luke 1:44).

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

**(S)** Protection of Children. We believe that children are from the Lord and must be absolutely protected by this Church from any form of abuse or molestation. The Church has zero tolerance for any person who abuses or molests a child (Psalms 127:3-5; Matthew 18:6, 19:14; Mark 10:14).

**(T)** Love. We believe we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward unbelievers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids stirring up strife, taking revenge, or threatening violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:9-10, 17-21; 13:8-10; Philippians 2:2-4; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18).

**(U)** Lawsuits between Believers. We believe Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the Church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for damages or injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander (Matthew 18:15-17, 21-22; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32).

**(V)** Missions. We believe God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the gospel to all nations so there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:20).

**(W)** Giving. We believe God established the Old Testament tithe as an example for the New Testament church. In the Church Age, "grace giving" is taught, meaning every Christian should give offerings sacrificially, faithfully, and cheerfully. We believe the financial support of every Christian is for the general operations of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the gospel at home and abroad. We believe every Christian should support missionaries involved in worldwide evangelization (Genesis 14:20; Proverbs 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17).

### **SECTION 2.03 - COVENANT**

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

We promise, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and effectiveness; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; and 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 promise to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred, acquaintances, and all others; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful to our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from such worldly amusements which bring reproach on our testimony before the world; to be free from all oath-bound secret societies and unequal partnerships with unbelievers; to acknowledge our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit and are dedicated to the glory of God, which therefore requires us to use wisdom concerning anything which harms the body or our minds such as tobacco in any form, narcotic drugs, or intoxicating drink; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We further promise to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy of speech; to be slow to



take offense but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior, and to secure reconciliation without delay.

We moreover promise, when we leave this church, we will 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.

### **ARTICLE 3 – MEMBERSHIP**

#### **SECTION 3.01—QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Those seeking membership must, through their actions, words, lifestyle and affiliations, evidence a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior. All candidates for membership shall be examined by the Pastor and/or an officially appointed representative from the Board of Deacons. During this meeting the candidates shall give their testimony of salvation and reason for desiring membership. The Pastor and/or the representative shall recommend to the Church the acceptance of the candidate.

Upon a seventy five percent (75%) vote of the members present at any Church service, membership shall be extended to all who fully subscribe to the Statement of Faith contained herein, who enter into the Church covenant contained herein, who agree to submit to the authority of the Church and its leaders as set forth herein, and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:

- (A) By baptism (immersion) at this local church following a profession of faith as a true believer in Christ Jesus as personal Savior;
- (B) By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith; or
- (C) By testimony of faith, having been baptized by immersion.
- (D) By restoration, in situations where sin is involved, and satisfactory evidence of repentance is given to the Pastor (or the Board of Deacons if the office of Pastor is vacant), upon seventy five percent (75%) vote of the congregation after confession is made publicly before the Church membership.
- (E) By restoration, in all other cases of removal from membership, upon seventy five percent (75%) vote of the Church.

#### **SECTION 3.02-EXPECTATIONS OF A MEMBER**

- (A) It is the expectation of all members to honor, esteem, and love their pastor; to pray for him, fervently and daily, to submit to him in the scriptural exercise of his official authority, to manifest a tender regard for his reputation, and to assist him generally in proportion to their ability.
- (B) It is the expectation of each member to cultivate and cherish brotherly love for all other members of the church and to show this love by using all proper measures to promote their spiritual benefit and prosperity.

(C) It is the expectation of each member to contribute in service and finance toward the general work of the Church, its spiritual growth, its financial support, and its missionary program. Scriptural giving is one of the fundamentals of the faith (II Corinthians 9:7). We are commanded to bring our gifts into the storehouse (common treasury of a church) upon the 1st day of the week (I Corinthians 16:2). Since it is our belief that the giving of believers shall support the Church, no sales or bazaars shall be used to raise funds to pay for normal Church functions. With the express permission of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons, special groups may use fund raisers to offset the costs of their activities (for example, teens offsetting the cost of camp or those going on mission trips reducing their ticket prices).

(D) It is the expectation of each member to attend, insofar as possible, such meetings as are called for worship, prayer, evangelism, instruction, business, or fellowship.

(E) It is the expectation of each member to deal honestly and honorably at all times with fellow believers and with those outside the church.

(F) It is the expectation of each member, as it is for all Christians, to take every opportunity available to present the gospel unto all people.

### **SECTION 3.03-PURVIEW OF MEMBERSHIP**

(A) Only members of at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the Church shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting.

(B) This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the Pastor as the under-shepherd with the counsel of the Board of Deacons. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the Church's own rules and procedures.

(C) Membership in this Church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights. Although the general public is invited to all of the Church's worship services, the Church property remains private property. The Pastor or designated individuals have the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on Church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on Church property, the person may, in the discretion of the Pastor, (or in his absence, an individual designated by the Board of Deacons), be treated as a trespasser.

(D) A member may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the Church and the minutes of the proceedings of Church meetings, provided he shall have made a written request upon the Church and the Church has received the written request at least five business days before the requested inspection date. Board of Deacons meeting minutes and discipline committee meetings, as well as other information involving privacy interests such as, but not limited to, contribution statements, lists of names and addresses of Church members, individual benevolence, individual salaries, health information, background checks, and social security numbers, are exempt from this provision and are not subject to inspection or copy without a court order. The Church may impose a reasonable charge, covering the costs of labor and materials, for copies of any documents provided to the member before releasing the copies to the member.

### **SECTION 3.04-DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER**

(A) Discipline Process.

1. In keeping with Matthew 18, when a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders the spiritual growth and testimony of an individual or the entire body of the Church, the person is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore that individual. Before they go, they should first examine themselves. When they go, they should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.
2. If reconciliation is not reached, a second member (either a Deacon or the Pastor) is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
3. There shall be a Discipline Committee consisting of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons. These men shall have sole authority in determining if deviations from the Statement of Faith and violations of the Church covenant warrant church discipline. If the Pastor or a member of the Board of Deacons is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the discipline committee. The Pastor and Deacons shall be entitled to the same steps as other Church members and be subject to the same discipline.
4. If the matter is still unresolved, the Discipline Committee, as the Church representatives who are Biblically responsible for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the hearing before the committee, the committee shall recommend to the members of the Church that they, after self-examination, make an effort personally to go to the offending member and seek that member's restoration.
5. If the matter is still unresolved, such members who refuse to repent and be restored are to be removed from the membership of the Church by a seventy five percent (75%) vote of the members present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action. Removal may terminate the individual's membership without further notice to the individual(s). Unless the matter involves an issue of safety or security to the members of the Church at large, the specifics of the matter shall not be addressed in a public forum or with the general Church membership.
6. No matter may be heard by the Discipline Committee or the Church unless the steps outlined in subsections (1) and (2) have been taken, except in the case of a public offense.
7. For any memberships terminated in accordance with this provision, the Pastor may cause a letter to be written informing the prior member of the termination.
8. If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the membership, all contact with him from that point forward (except by family members) must be for the sake of restoration.
9. Any Church officer shall be entitled to the same steps as other Church members and be subject to the same discipline. If they are the subject of a disciplinary matter, they shall not be permitted to vote on their own membership termination.
10. The procedures provided in this section are based on Matthew 18:15-20; Romans 16:17-18; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:1-11; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 10-15; 1 Timothy 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.

### **SECTION 3.05 - TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP**

Members not under the disciplinary process of section 3.04 may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church. A member may resign at any time, but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the Pastor.

### **SECTION 3.06—AUTOMATIC TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

- (A) Any member of the Church who has been absent from the regular worship services of the Church for a period of three months or more, without being considered by the Church as providentially hindered, shall be placed on an inactive, non-voting roll. The Pastor and the Board of Deacons shall review the inactive roll and contact the individual members. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the Church in the preceding six months. Upon good cause being shown to the Pastor, this provision for termination may be waived at the discretion of the Pastor.
- (B) No member of this Church may hold membership in another church. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member unites in membership with another church.
- (C) An individual's membership shall automatically terminate if the member states that they are actively involved in any conduct that is not in agreement with the Statement of Faith, unless such statement is made in the process of seeking counseling or during Church discipline.
- (D) Except as defined in this section, members shall not be dismissed by removal except by vote of the Church upon recommendation of the Pastor and/or Board of Deacons.
- (E) The membership of an individual will automatically terminate upon his or her death.

## **ARTICLE 4-OFFICERS**

### **SECTION 4.01 - CHURCH OFFICERS**

- (A) The Church officers are Pastor (see Section 4.04), Other Pastoral Staff (see Section 4.06), Deacons (see Section 4.07), Trustees (see Section 4.08), Clerk (see Section 4.09), and Treasurer (see Section 4.10). One person may hold two or more offices, except that of Pastor and/or Other Pastoral Staff. The Pastor, from time to time as he deems appropriate, may appoint other Church Officers, subject to a confirmation vote by the Church. All officers are subject to background checks. Elected officers may be removed at the discretion of the Church at any regular Church business meeting, provided notice to that effect shall have been given from the pulpit to the Church two Sundays prior to said regular Church business meeting.
- (B) All officers shall surrender all official records in their possession to the Church Clerk at the close of their term of office to be filed as a permanent record of the work of the Church. All records are the property of the Church and should be kept in the Church.
- (C) Any officer who neglects his duties as outlined in the bylaws for a period of three months may be removed from his office, at the discretion of the Pastor, and another may be appointed by the Pastor to serve the unexpired term.

### **SECTION 4.02 - DESIGNATION OF CORPORATE OFFICERS**

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the Church, the Pastor shall serve as President of the Corporation; the Clerk shall serve as Secretary of the Corporation; the Treasurer shall serve as Treasurer of the

Corporation; and the Chairman of the Board of Deacons and the Head Trustee shall serve as Vice President(s) of the Corporation. All powers of the Corporate Officers, (whether Pastor, Deacon, Trustee, Treasurer, Clerk, or other appointed group) shall be compatible with the laws of the State of Maryland.

#### **SECTION 4.03 - ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE**

All officers shall hold membership in the Church and shall subscribe annually in writing and answer in the affirmative to the following questions. Any officer who is unable to do this must resign, and their office be declared vacant.

- (A)** Have you publicly confessed Christ as your personal Savior and experienced the new birth as set forth in John 3:3-6?
- (B)** Are you in hearty agreement with the Statement of Faith and Bylaws?
- (C)** Are you, insofar as you are able to determine, living a surrendered prayerful Christian life, especially regarding loyal obedience to the moral precepts of the Word, and is your life an example that others should follow?

#### **SECTION 4.04—THE PASTOR**

- (A)** Qualifications.
  1. He shall meet the qualifications for a Pastor as outlined in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
  2. He shall be an ordained minister, subscribing without reservation to the Statement of Faith as found in these bylaws.
  3. The life of the Pastor and his family shall be an example of godliness and spirituality. They shall not indulge in worldly or sinful practices which would tend to weaken the testimony of this Church (I Thessalonians 5:22), including the use of intoxicating liquors, drugs, or tobacco in any form, sinful language, sinful associations, and other such practices (Galatians 5:19-21).
  4. No divorced man shall be considered for, or serve as, the Pastor of this Church (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:6).
  5. No woman shall be considered for, or serve as, Pastor of this Church (I Timothy 2:12).
- (B)** Duties. The Pastor shall have the general oversight of the entire Church, including the spiritual life, regular services, and administration of the ordinances of the Church. He shall preach regularly at church and administer the ordinances of the Gospel (Baptism and the Lord's Supper). He shall select the officers and teachers of the Sunday School organization and the music program of the church. He shall be the moderator of the Church and preside at all its business meetings (as able) and be an ex officio member of all the committees and organizations (which includes the privilege of voting). The Pastor shall serve as the President of the Corporation and be a member in good standing. The Pastor shall approve and invite all speakers for Church organizations and to occupy the pulpit (I Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:7; I Peter 5:2-4; I Timothy 2:7). He shall conscientiously perform such additional duties as may be arranged between the Church and himself.
  1. All appointments for public worship and Bible study and the arrangements thereof, including time and place and the use of the property belonging to the Church for any other purposes shall be under the control of the Pastor, who, with the advice and counsel of the Board of Deacons, shall be able to determine the appropriateness of all property use, as well as persons permitted to use the Church property.

2. The Pastor and the Board of Deacons shall be responsible to establish mandatory safety and security procedures for all ministries and programs. There will be a zero-tolerance policy with regard to abuse of minors; any reasonable suspicions of child abuse alleged to be perpetrated by staff, volunteers, members, or non-members will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement or child abuse prevention authorities. The Pastor or his designee will be responsible to provide yearly child abuse prevention training for all staff and volunteers.
3. The Pastor is accountable to the Board of Deacons and the Church to ensure that their teaching/preaching is relevant to the needs of the Church.
4. The Pastor and/or the Board of Deacons (in the absence of the Pastor) shall disburse the benevolence fund. The Board of Deacons shall assist the Pastor in all other evangelistic efforts of the Church.

#### **SECTION 4.05—CALLING A PASTOR**

(A) When a vacancy occurs in the pastorate, a pulpit committee shall be established consisting of the Board of Deacons. The Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall be chairman of this committee, the duty of which shall be to seek for a suitable pastor. This committee shall seek advice to gather names of qualified and available men to present to the Church. It shall be announced in at least one regular public service prior to the visiting minister's speaking that he is a candidate for pastor. It shall be announced at the regular service in which the candidate speaks that a vote by ballot shall be taken the following Sunday as to whether to call the candidate as pastor. The candidate shall be voted into office by at least an eighty five percent (85%) vote of the active members present and voting. Any candidate recommended to the Church must be voted on before another candidate can be presented.

(B) The interview process for selecting a pastoral candidate shall include, at a minimum, the following: a background check, a credit check, a reference check, and the filling out of a detailed application that explains the potential candidate's philosophy of ministry as well as his positions on issues of doctrinal significance.

(C) Upon an eighty five percent (85%) vote of the pulpit committee, the pulpit committee will formally announce the candidate to the church, after which the candidate must preach at least one regularly scheduled church service and be available for a church-wide question/answer time prior to being voted upon by the church membership.

(D) Benefits. The Pastor's salary and benefits package shall be reviewed yearly by the Board of Deacons. When a new pastor is being called, the salary and benefits package shall be proposed by the Board of Deacons and agreed upon by the Church before he comes to speak as a candidate for pastor.

(E) Term of Office. The relationship between the Pastor and Church will be indefinite and will continue until dissolved at the option of either the Pastor or Church.

1. The Pastor shall be free to resign as he feels led of the Holy Spirit, but out of Christian courtesy he shall give no less than thirty days written notice (or less by mutual consent) to the Board of Deacons, who will call a special business meeting.
2. Whenever dismissal proceedings against a Pastor on grounds of proven immorality, heresy in doctrine, apostasy, or failure to properly attend his duties as Pastor of the Church shall occur, his services shall be terminated by at least an eighty five percent (85%) vote of the active membership present and voting. Should the congregation vote to abruptly terminate the pastor's services, payment of any salary involved

shall be at the discretion of the Board of Deacons.

#### **SECTION 4.06 – OTHER PASTORAL STAFF.**

**(A)** Qualifications. (Same as Pastor, 4.04 A).

**(B)** Duties. Additional Pastoral staff shall be responsible to the Church through the Pastor. They shall be directly under the supervision of the Pastor for all their duties.

**(C)** Calling Pastoral Staff. When the need for additional Pastoral Staff occurs, the Pastor shall examine the candidate, present him to the Board of Deacons, and present him to the Church. He shall be voted into office by an eighty five percent (85%) vote of the active members present and voting. Any candidate recommended to the Church must be voted on before another candidate can be presented. The job description, salary, and benefits package shall be agreed upon at the time of the election of additional Pastoral staff.

**(D)** Benefits. Additional Pastoral staff salary and benefits package shall be reviewed yearly by the Board of Deacons.

**(E)** Term of Office. (same as Pastor, 4.05 E)

#### **SECTION 4.07—THE BOARD OF DEACONS**

**(A)** Qualifications. Deacons shall meet the requirements in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-4. The life of a deacon and his family shall be one of godliness and spirituality. No one shall be considered for, nor serve as, a deacon who is not in accordance with the Statement of Faith of this Church. No divorced man shall be considered for, or serve as, a deacon (1 Timothy 3:12). No woman shall be considered for, or serve as, a deacon.

**(B)** Duties.

1. The meaning given for the Greek word translated “deacons” in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 means “an attendant, a helper, specifically one who helps a Christian teacher or pastor”.
2. The Board of Deacons shall assist the Pastor in building up the Church, including visiting the sick, the sorrowing, and the needy, and personally striving to win the lost to Christ.
3. Duties toward the Pastor shall be to pray for him earnestly and continually, to act as host and friend on behalf of the Church, to see that his material and physical needs are taken care of, and to strive in every way to help him in the performance of Scriptural duties.
4. Deacons shall assist in making proper provisions for the observance of the ordinances of the Church.
5. The Pastor and/or the Board of Deacons (in the absence of the Pastor) shall disburse the benevolence fund. The Board of Deacons shall assist the Pastor in all other evangelistic efforts of the Church.
6. The Board of Deacons shall assist the Pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the Church’s various ministries.
7. They shall provide the pulpit supply if the Pastor is unavailable or the office of Pastor is vacant.
8. Upon the death, resignation, or dismissal of the Pastor, the Board of Deacons shall be the pulpit committee.
9. The Board of Deacons shall, in conjunction with the Pastor and Head Trustee, conduct an annual ministry liability and safety review of the following policies and/or topics: child protection, including but not limited to worker screening procedures, child abuse reporting procedures, and worker training on child

abuse prevention; building safety; security measures; insurance; financial accountability; transportation; sexual harassment; policies listed in IRS Form 990, including a whistleblower policy, a document retention and destruction policy, and a Church financial investment policy (if applicable).

10. Each Deacon shall review the bylaws annually, and shall bring suggested changes to a meeting of the Board of Deacons that has been designated for the purpose of reviewing the bylaws.
11. The Board of Deacons is accountable to the Church to ensure that all teaching/preaching is relevant to the needs of the Church.
12. Assistant Treasurer (Deacon) is authorized to sign checks on behalf of the Church.
13. Assistant Treasurer (Deacon) (in the absence of the Treasurer) shall have authority to invest Church funds seeking to minimize risk and increase return. They shall coordinate these activities with the Pastor and Board of Deacons.

**(C)** Terms of Office. Deacons shall be elected to the Board of Deacons by the Church at the annual meeting for a period of three years. The term of office of all Deacons (Pastor and Other Pastoral Staff excepted) shall begin and end January 31st, after their successors have been duly elected. In case of the non-election of any Deacons for any reason, the previous Deacons shall continue in office until such time as their successors are elected. At the end of their term of service, Deacons shall not be eligible for re-election to the Board of Deacons for one year. Deacons shall be selected by a nominating committee and elected by a 75% vote of the convened members at the annual meeting.

If a member of the Board of Deacons shall absent himself from three consecutive regular meetings of the Board of Deacons without presenting a reasonable excuse to the Chairman of the Board of Deacons, his name shall be removed from the Board of Deacons and his office be declared vacant.

**(D)** Officers of the Board of Deacons. After the annual meeting of the Church, the Board of Deacons shall elect from its members the Chairman of the Board of Deacons, the Secretary of the Board of Deacons, and the Assistant Treasurer. At the discretion of the Board of Deacons, a Deacon may continue with the duties of the Assistant Treasurer while not serving as an active Deacon.

**(E)** The Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall serve as one of the Vice-Presidents of the Corporation and be a member in good standing.

#### **SECTION 4.08 – TRUSTEES**

**(A)** Qualifications. No one shall be considered for, nor serve as, trustee who is not in accordance with the Statement of Faith of this Church. The life of a trustee and their family shall be one of godliness and spirituality. Godly men shall be sought who have wisdom, talents, and gifts in building, business, and financial matters, with less emphasis on spiritual and teaching gifts.

**(B)** Duties. The Trustees' primary function is to care for the physical well-being of the church facilities. They shall be elected by the Church at a duly called Church business meeting. The Trustees shall exercise only the following specific powers to:

1. Purchase, hold, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the Church, and to take real and personal property and procuring loans for new facilities by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the Church;



2. Maintain, repair, and improve the physical buildings, grounds, and vehicles owned by the Church, or used in its ministry; and
3. Exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the Church Corporation.
4. Administer the budget line items necessary for maintenance and improvement and shall provide recommendations in preparation of the budget.
5. (The Head Trustee) have authority to hire maintenance/improvement personnel as the need arises.
6. (The Head Trustee or designate) Sign legal papers on behalf of the Church in all legal matters; sell, convey, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, and mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the Church; borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and the use of the Church; cause to be executed, issued, and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the Church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, or pledges.
7. (The Head Trustee) Sign checks on behalf of the Church.
8. (The Head Trustee) (in the absence of the Treasurer) Invest Church funds seeking to minimize risk and increase return. They shall coordinate these activities with the Pastor and Board of Deacons.
9. (The Head Trustee) serves as one of the Vice-Presidents of the Corporation and be a member in good standing.

**(C) Terms of Office.** Trustees shall be elected by the Church at the annual meeting for a period of three years. The term of office of all Trustees shall begin and end January 31st, after their successors have been duly elected. After the Annual Meeting the Trustees shall meet and elect a Head Trustee.

#### **SECTION 4.09—CHURCH CLERK**

- (A) Qualifications.** No one shall be considered for, nor serve as, clerk who is not in accordance with the Statement of Faith of this Church. The life of the clerk and their family shall be one of godliness and spirituality. Godly people shall be sought who have wisdom, talents, and gifts in building, business, and financial matters, with less emphasis on spiritual and teaching gifts.
- (B) Duties.**
1. Certify and keep at the office of the Church, the current adopted Church bylaws, or a copy, including all amendments or alterations to the bylaws, minutes of meetings, the membership roll, baptisms, certificates of ordination, license, commissions, and records of any special events which are of historical interest to the Church; and shall deliver such documents to their successor upon leaving office.
  2. Maintain and file minutes of all Church business meetings, including the time and place of holding, the notice given, the names of those present unless a Church-wide meeting, and an accurate record of all Church business approved at each meeting. A copy of these minutes shall be kept as a permanent record of the Church and shall be made available at all reasonable times to proper person(s) on terms provided by law and pursuant to these bylaws.
  3. Sign, have certified, or attest documents as may be required by law; see that reports, statements, certificates, and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed.
  4. See that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws. In case of the absence or disability of the clerk, or their refusal or neglect to act, notice may be given and served by the Pastor or by the Chairman of the Board of Deacons.
  5. See that the reports, statements, certificates, licenses, and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed.

6. Keep an account of any special events in the life of the Church which are of historical interest and give a report at the annual Church business meeting of the status of the membership roll in the past year.
7. Serve as the Secretary of the Corporation and be a member in good standing.
8. Serve as the Designated Representative with the State of Maryland.

**(C)** Term of Office. The Clerk shall be elected by the Church at the annual meeting for a period of three years. The term of office of the Clerk shall begin and end January 31st, after their successor has been duly elected.

#### **SECTION 4.10—CHURCH TREASURER**

**(A)** Qualifications. No one shall be considered for, nor serve as, Treasurer who is not in accordance with the Statement of Faith of this Church. The life of the Treasurer and their family shall be one of godliness and spirituality. Godly people shall be sought who have wisdom, talents, and gifts in building, business, and financial matters, with less emphasis on spiritual and teaching gifts.

**(B)** Duties.

1. Keep in the Church office an accurate and permanent record of all financial transactions of Church funds. Make reports of itemized disbursements and the financial condition of the Church as requested by Pastor and the Board of Deacons, and for annual, quarterly, or other special or regular business meetings; and deliver such records to their successor upon leaving office.
2. Have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds of the corporation, and redeposit/invest all funds in the name of the Church in banks, trust companies, or other depositories selected with the concurrence of the Pastor or the Board of Deacons.
3. Receive, and give receipt for all contributions, gifts, and donations to the Church; (Physical gifts are documented by the Treasurer and financial gifts are documented by the Assistant Treasurer).
4. Disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the Church as may be directed by the Pastor or the Board of Deacons (as may be allowed within the approved budget, or the budget adopted by the members of the Church at the annual Church business meeting), taking proper receipts for the disbursements.
5. Keep and maintain adequate and correct accounts of the Church's properties and business transactions including account of its assets, liabilities, receipts, disbursements, and capital.
6. Make all expenditures of the Church (except miscellaneous petty cash disbursements) by check;
7. When and as requested, render to the Pastor and the Board of Deacons accounts of all transactions and of the financial condition of the Church.
8. Present a written report of disbursements at the regular quarterly Church business meetings and make a general report for the year at the annual Church business meeting.
9. Should keep all Church financial records at the office of the Church and deliver them to their successor upon leaving office.
10. Serve as Treasurer of the Corporation and be a member in good standing.
11. The Treasurer is authorized to sign checks on behalf of the Church.
12. The Treasurer shall have authority to invest Church funds seeking to minimize risk and increase return. They shall coordinate these activities with the Pastor and Board of Deacons.

**(C)** Term of Office. The Treasurer shall be elected by the Church at the annual meeting for a period of three years. The term of office of the Treasurer shall begin and end January 31st, after their successor has been duly elected.

## **SECTION 4.11 – NON-PASTORAL STAFF**

- (A)** Subject to the approval of the Church, the Pastor may hire paid staff to assist him in carrying out required church functions. All paid church staff shall be under the daily supervision of the Pastor. No person will be dismissed without reasonable cause subject to the approval of the Board of Deacons and/or Head Trustee.
- (B)** All volunteer Church staff shall be under the supervision of the Pastor. The Pastor has the sole authority to dismiss all non-elected positions.
- (C)** No one shall be considered for, nor serve as, non-pastoral staff who is not in accordance with the Statement of Faith of this Church. All employees and volunteers must be members in good standing of the church prior to assuming their duties.

## **ARTICLE 5—CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 5.01—MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP**

Unless otherwise determined by the Pastor, the Church shall meet each Sunday for public worship both morning and evening and at least once during the week for Bible study and prayer. Bible conferences, missionary conferences, and revivals may be held as the Pastor deems beneficial.

The King James Version of the Bible shall be the translation used by the church for all preaching and teaching. However, printed materials that are supplemental such as books and tracts may use other translations in the text of the material.

### **SECTION 5.02—MEETINGS FOR CHURCH BUSINESS**

- (A)** The annual meeting for the reception of reports and the election of officers and other business shall be held during the month of November or December, with two Sundays notice given before said date.
- (B)** The quarterly Church business meeting shall be held in the first month of every quarter, at which time the regular Church business shall be considered. A quorum shall consist of no less than a quarter of the official active church membership (maintained by the Church Clerk) who have attained the age of eighteen (18) years. Unless otherwise stated, all actions taken shall require at least a seventy five percent (75%) vote of those present for passage.
- (C)** Special business meetings may be called for the transaction of business, providing that announcement of said meeting be given from the pulpit and publicly posted with two Sundays notice. Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Pastor, or the Board of Deacons, or upon written request of ten percent (10%) of the members who are eligible to vote. All actions taken at such meetings shall first be recommended by the Board of Deacons and shall require at least a seventy five percent (75%) vote of those present for passage.
- (D)** All Church business meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer for divine guidance and blessing.

(E) In all regular or special business meetings the Pastor shall preside as moderator, or in his absence, the Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall preside. If both the Pastor and the Chairman of the Board of Deacons are absent, another Pastor or Deacon appointed by the Pastor or the Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall preside.

(F) The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to their 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, and his decision is final and controlling.

(G) For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require non-members (or children, if circumstances so warrant) to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, he may, in his sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises and treat the person as a trespasser.

### **SECTION 5.03—FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin January 1st and end December 31st.

### **SECTION 5.04—VOTING AT CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS**

Voting at any Church business meeting is limited to eligible members in good standing (i.e., active and not under discipline) with the Church who are physically present at the meeting. Absentee voting is not permitted. A vote of seventy five percent (75%) will constitute the requisite number of votes for passage of all motions, whether by the board voting at a board meeting or by the members voting in a Church business meeting.

### **SECTION 5.05—MOTIONS AT CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS**

As a courtesy we highly recommend members who desire that a certain motion be made, or subject matter be discussed during an annual or regular business meeting should file a written recommendation with the Pastor and the Board of Deacons two weeks prior to the set meeting.

## **ARTICLE 6—COMMITTEES**

### **SECTION 6.01—STANDING COMMITTEES**

The Pastor (or the Board of Deacons if the office of Pastor is vacant), on behalf of the Church, shall appoint standing committees and designate a chairperson for each standing committee and, except when otherwise specifically provided in the Church bylaws, shall determine the membership of each standing committee.

(A) Missions Committee. The Missions Committee will consist at a minimum of the Pastor and members from the Board of Deacons, to formulate suggestions to the Church for missions business.

(B) Nominating Committee. During the months of September-October, the Nominating Committee shall be selected by the Board of Deacons. The Pastor and the Board of Deacons may provide a listing of eligible candidates to the Nominating Committee for their consideration.

The Nominating Committee shall consist of five male members of Church, including its chairman, and shall be chosen from and represent the Church as follows: Two Deacons, one of which will be chairman, one Trustee, and two others from the membership. One of the five members shall be selected from and represent the Sunday School.

The Nominating Committee shall thoroughly investigate the character, qualifications, and capabilities of every candidate. No candidate shall be considered unless agreed upon by (75%) of Nominating Committee members. Each candidate selected shall be examined in a regularly called meeting of the committee to their familiarity of these bylaws and their agreement with it in every particular.

It shall be impossible for the committee to place in nomination any candidate who cannot answer in the affirmative and who does not subscribe in writing to the questions as outlined in Section 4.03, questions (A), (B), and (C) of these bylaws.

The Nominating Committee shall publicly post with two Sundays notice given before the annual business meeting, candidates for vacant elective offices. It shall be within the province of the Church to accept or reject in part or in whole the committee's nominations at the annual business meeting. Nominations from the floor will not be permitted.

(C) Financial Committee. This committee shall count, or cause to be counted, by a minimum of two persons so appointed, and record in a permanent record all the monies received in offerings for the Church. This shall be done following each service or day of services of the Church.

This committee shall convey in a timely manner all funds received and deposited in the bank, including moneys received from outside sources.

This committee shall maintain a permanent weekly record of individual giving for all donations, offerings, contributions, and gifts, and guard the confidentiality of these records.

This committee shall issue an official contribution statement to each contributor at the end of the fiscal year.

The Assistant Treasurer and the Head Trustee shall be members of this committee. The Chairman for this committee shall be the Assistant Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer and Head Trustee may appoint additional members to the Finance Committee, which may be composed of 3 or more active church members. The Treasurer may sit in for any member to assist the committee. To protect the Pastor(s), they shall not be members of this committee, nor should they have access to the confidential contribution statements. A weekly report shall be made in quadruple of the amount received and designations. The 1st copy (original) shall be maintained by the Assistant Treasurer as the official record. The 2<sup>nd</sup> copy shall be given to the Treasurer. The 3<sup>rd</sup> copy shall be given to the Church Secretary. The 4<sup>th</sup> copy shall be given to Pastor.

(D) Budget Committee. The budget committee shall develop and present the Church fiscal year budget to the congregation for approval. The committee membership is the Pastor, the Treasurer, the Chairman of the Board of Deacons, and the Head Trustee. Care shall be taken to ensure each area of ministry receives the funding necessary to perform that ministry, within the bounds of the projected funds available. The draft budget shall then receive a vote of approval from the Board of Deacons before being presented to the congregation at the annual business meeting in December.

## **SECTION 6.02—SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

The Pastor, Board of Deacons and/or the Trustees, in their discretion, may create special committees to provide them with advice and information regarding matters submitted to the committee by them for consideration. Such a committee shall have no authority to act on behalf of the Church.

## **SECTION 6.03—ACTIONS OF COMMITTEES**

Their primary function is to research and recommend. Committees shall make available upon request all records and materials to the Pastor and the Board of Deacons, who shall have the right to overrule any plans or decisions made by the committee. Each committee should have a secretary that keeps documentation from meeting(s). If deemed appropriate by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons, the committee secretary, in conjunction with the chairman, shall submit an annual report to the Church of the decisions and plans of the committee.

## **ARTICLE 7—ORDINANCES**

### **SECTION 7.01—THE LORD'S SUPPER**

The Lord's Supper shall be observed as frequently as the Pastor and/or the Board of Deacons shall order.

### **SECTION 7.02—BAPTISM**

Baptism shall be administered to those who have accepted Christ as Savior. Each candidate shall be examined and demonstrate an understanding of salvation and the purpose of baptism; the mode of baptism shall be by immersion, unless providentially hindered.

## **ARTICLE 8-CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

### **SECTION 8.01—PURPOSE**

The Church believes that the home and church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education. To help fulfill this responsibility of imparting biblical truth and furthering the Great Commission, this church shall establish and maintain an educational program for the purposes of teaching Bible doctrine, godly worship, and biblical Christian living. To this end, the church shall engage in educational ministries.

### **SECTION 8.02—CHURCH PARTICIPATION**

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the Church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the Church; however, the Pastor, on behalf of the Church, may permit non-church members to participate in Church educational programs or courses of instruction if they deem it in the best interest of the Church.

### **SECTION 8.03—STAFF**

All instructors, teachers, and administrators shall be in agreement with the Statement of Faith and be faithful members of this Church.

All staff shall be subject to background checks. As deemed necessary, background checks may also apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, or preachers engaged for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals, or other special meetings on a temporary basis.

**SECTION 8.04—AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT OF FAITH**

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the Church and shall be taught and presented in full agreement with the Statement of Faith of the Church and the inerrant Word of God. The Church shall not hire, appoint, or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs who fails to adhere to or who expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith or who adopts or lives a lifestyle inconsistent with the beliefs and practices of the Statement of the Faith or this Church, whether in or out of the classroom. Those who cannot answer in the affirmative and who do not subscribe in writing to the questions as outlined in Section 4.03 (A), (B) and (C) cannot be instructors, teachers, or administrators. Each educational program administrator, prior to the appointment of new instructors and/or teachers during the year, shall obtain the approval of the Pastor and/or Board of Deacons.

**SECTION 8.05—CHRISTIAN WALK**

All instructors, teachers, and administrators shall continue or adopt a lifestyle consistent with the precepts which they teach, whether in or out of the classroom.

**ARTICLE 9—ORDINATION**

**SECTION 9.01—ORDINATION QUALIFICATIONS**

Any member of this Church or its mission churches who gives evidence of a genuine call of God into the work of the ministry and possesses the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, may be ordained as a minister of the Gospel.

**SECTION 9.02—ORDINATION PROCEDURE**

- (A) Upon a conference with the Pastor and after the Pastor has approved the candidate for ordination, the Pastor shall call a council to examine and pass on the qualification of the candidate. The ordination council shall consist of the Pastor(s), Board of Deacons and ordained ministers of like faith invited to participate in the examination of the candidate.
- (B) If the candidate is found worthy of ordination by the council, the ordination council may ordain the candidate on behalf of the Church.
- (C) The Pastor and the Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall arrange for the ordination service.

**ARTICLE 10—DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS**

From time to time the Church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Contributors may suggest uses for their contributions, but all suggestions shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. Distributions of designated contributions

shall only be made to those funds established by the Church, to be authorized as tax-deductible contributions. All contributions made to specific funds or otherwise designated shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the Pastor, Treasurer, and Financial Committee. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the Church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Section 1.02.

Financial gifts received in church offerings, that are not designated, are for the support of the local church and those in need. Financial gifts for building, missions, or other Church approved ministries must be designated at the time of giving. [Federal law requires anyone to relinquish all rights to direct the use of their offering once the gift has been made.]

## **ARTICLE 11 - CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

### **SECTION 11.01—PURPOSE**

The purpose of this conflict of interest policy is to protect the Church’s interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of any voting member of the Church and/or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state or federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

### **SECTION 11.02—DEFINITIONS**

- (A)** Financial interest exists when a voting member has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:
1. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Church has a transaction or arrangement,
  2. A compensation arrangement with the Church or with any individual or entity with which the Church has a transaction or arrangement, or
  3. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the church is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.
  4. If a voting member is under consideration and/or submitting a formal bid, they are not allowed to vote.
  5. A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. A person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the Pastor and the Board of Deacons decide that a conflict of interest exists.
- (B)** Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.
- (C)** The Pastor and the Board of Deacons will determine procedures for determining a possible conflict of interest.

### **SECTION 11.03—PROCEDURES**

- (A)** Voting members in connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to staff considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.



**(B)** Voting members after disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, including any presentations by and discussion with the interested person, shall not vote while the determination of a conflict of interest involving the transaction or arrangement is discussed and voted upon.

**(C)** Violations of the Conflict of Interest Policy.

1. If the Pastor and/or the Board of Deacons have reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
2. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Pastor and/or Board of Deacons determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective action.

#### **SECTION 11.04—COMPENSATION**

**(A)** A voting member who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Church for services rendered may not vote on matters pertaining to that member's compensation. The only exception is annually during the vote for the Church's Budget for the following year.

**(B)** Voting member whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Church, either individually or collectively, are required to provide information to any committee regarding compensation.

### **ARTICLE 12 - BINDING ARBITRATION**

#### **SECTION 12.01—SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION**

Members of this Church agree to submit to binding arbitration any legal matters within the Church, which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bring any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

#### **SECTION 12.02—ARBITRATION PROCEDURES**

The procedures for arbitration shall be as adopted by the Church. If the Church has not adopted procedures, they will use arbitration procedures provided by the National Center for Life and Liberty. This arbitration provision is ecclesiastical and faith-based in nature and is intended to operate under the rules and guidelines of this Church. It is not intended to operate under any state or federal guidelines for arbitration.

### **ARTICLE 13 - TAX-EXEMPT PROVISIONS**

#### **SECTION 13.01—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 distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Section 1.02.

### **SECTION 13.02—POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT**

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

### **SECTION 13.03—DISSOLUTION**

Upon the dissolution of the Church, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the Church, disposal of all assets of the Church shall be made to such organization(s) formed and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as the board shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to tax-exempt organizations that agree with the Statement of Faith.

### **SECTION 13.04—NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Church shall not discriminate against members, applicants for membership, employees (except Pastor(s) and Deacon(s)) on the basis of race, sex, color, or national and ethnic origin. As a religious institution it reserves the right to deny employment in accordance with its religious beliefs or to deny or terminate the employment of persons whose lifestyle, words, actions or otherwise do not align with the Statement of Faith, standard of conduct or other policies of this organization.

### **SECTION 13.05—LIMITATION OF ACTIVITIES**

Notwithstanding any other provision of these bylaws, the Church shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes stated in Section 1.02.

## **ARTICLE 14 - AMENDMENTS**

Any proposed alteration or amendment to this current adopted Church bylaws must be presented in writing at a regularly called business meeting of the Church, and the vote on such an alteration or amendment taken at a special business meeting not earlier than one month from the date of its presentation. Copies of the amendment shall be provided upon request. At least a seventy five percent (75%) vote shall be necessary for its adoption. Notice of such a proposed alteration or amendment shall be posted in the church from the meeting at which it is presented until the meeting at which action is to be taken on the same. The posted notice shall also specify the date of the business meeting at which the vote on the proposed alteration or amendment is to be taken.

**ADOPTION**

These bylaws were adopted by at least a seventy five percent (75%) vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the Church in which a quorum was present.

These bylaws supersede any other oral or written documents of First Baptist Church of Calvert County.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Church Clerk