

Constitution And By-Laws

Bible Fellowship Church
Harrison County, Mississippi

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLE ONE -- CHARTER.....	3
ARTICLE TWO -- CONFESSION OF FAITH	5
ARTICLE THREE -- CHURCH COVENANT (HOLY ASPIRATIONS)	12
ARTICLE FOUR -- PURPOSE OF CONSTITUTION	12
ARTICLE FIVE -- PREAMBLE.....	13
ARTICLE SIX -- ORGANIZATION	14
ARTICLE SEVEN -- CHURCH MEMBERSHIP	16
ARTICLE EIGHT -- CHURCH OFFICERS.....	17
ARTICLE NINE -- CALLING OF PASTORS.....	21
ARTICLE TEN -- CHURCH MEETINGS	22
ARTICLE ELEVEN -- MISCELLANEOUS.....	24
ARTICLE TWELVE -- DATE OF EFFECT.....	25

Bible Fellowship Church Constitution

Article One -- Charter

A. Necessity

1. Believing there is a need for an Independent Bible Church in the suburban areas of our community; we call for the organization of the Bible Fellowship Church.

B. Organization

1. We believe the leadership of God through the Holy Spirit has been instrumental in bringing us together as a fellowship of believers knit with a spirit of unity and singleness of purpose.
2. Having established regular morning and evening worship services on the Lord's Day as well as Wednesday evening services, we believe it is God's perfect will that we call for the organization of Bible Fellowship Church.
3. Therefore, be it resolved; that we, the undersigned, organize the Bible Fellowship Church of Harrison County, Mississippi, on September 25, 1977.

C. Members

1. We, the undersigned, having accepted Jesus Christ as our own personal Savior and, furthermore, having confessed our faith in Him publicly, and through baptism, do hereby become charter members of the Bible Fellowship Church of Harrison County, Mississippi.
2. We do hereby pledge ourselves to become co-laborers with God in building this Christ centered Church upon the principles of the Word of God.

BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

CHARTER MEMBERS

<u>Rev. S. Sigworth</u>	<u>J. P. Brundet</u>
<u>Electa M. Sigworth</u>	<u>Mrs. O. Lane Brundet</u>
<u>Lawrence Scandina</u>	<u>Frederick Sturges</u>
<u>Michael Seabright</u>	<u>Pam Rager</u>
<u>Nancy H. Hughes</u>	<u>Valley J. Hugh</u>
<u>Estel B. Smith</u>	<u>Conrad D. St. John</u>
<u>Alfred</u>	
<u>Edna Pace</u>	
<u>Ernest Rager</u>	
<u>Robert E. Rager</u>	
<u>Marcia J. Grant</u>	
<u>Arthur E. Grant</u>	
<u>Margaret Thompson</u>	
<u>Catherine Grant</u>	
<u>Ben W. Sturges</u>	
<u>Robert E. Kennedy</u>	
<u>Caroline L. Kennedy</u>	
<u>Wayne Montgomery</u>	

Article Two -- Confession of Faith

A. The Scriptures

1. We believe that men controlled by the Holy Spirit wrote the Holy Bible.
 - Acts 1:16; 28:25; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21
2. We believe that it is truth without any error.
 - Psa. 119:105, 130, 160; Luke 24:25-27, 44-45; John 17:7
3. We believe in the progressive revelation of the scriptures.
 - Eph 3:1-6; Rom 16:25-26
4. We believe in the literal, historical-grammatical method of interpreting the scripture that takes into account the type of literature, the intention of the original author, and the understanding of the original audience.
 - 2 Tim 2:15
5. We believe that dispensationalism is the best theological framework for interpreting and understanding the scripture. Dispensationalism is a theological system that emphasizes the literal interpretation of the Bible, recognizes a distinction between Israel and the Church, and organizes the Bible into different dispensations, economies, or administrations.
6. • We believe, therefore, that the scripture is the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.
 - Psa. 19:7-11; 119:89; Prov. 30:5-6; Isa. 8:20; Luke 16:31; John 5:39, 45-47; 12:48; Rom. 3:4; 15:4; Eph. 6:17; 1 Pet. 1:23; Rev. 22:19

B. God In Three Persons – The Trinity

We believe that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit - equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

• Matt. 28:19; John 10:30; 15:26; 17:5, Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 2:10-11; 12:4-6; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 2:18; Phil. 2:5-6; 1 John 5:7

1. God The Father

- a. We believe there is one true God. He is omnipotent (all-powerful), He is omniscient (all-knowing), and He is omnipresent (everywhere).
 - Gen. 17:1; Ex. 20:2-3; Psa. 83:18; 90:2; 145:5; Jer. 10:10; John 4:24; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6

- b. We believe that this living and true God is inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love.
 - Ex. 15:11; Mark 12:30; Rom. 11:33; 1 Tim. 1:17; Rev. 4:11

2. God The Son

- a. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner, that he was born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born, or can ever be born of woman.
 - Gen. 3:15; Psa. 2:7; Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:35; John 1:14; Gal. 4:4
- b. We believe that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - John 1:1-3
- c. We believe that as God the Son, He is fully God and fully man.
 - Col 2:9; 1 Cor. 15:47; 1 John 5:20

3. God The Holy Spirit

- a. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature.
 - John 14:16-17, 26; Matt. 28:19; Luke 1:35; Heb. 9:14
- b. We believe that He was active in the creation.
 - Gen. 1:1-3
- c. We believe that in His relation to the unbelieving world, He restrains the Evil One until God's purpose is fulfilled.
 - 2 Thess. 2:7
- d. We believe that He convicts of sin, of judgment, and of righteousness.
 - John 16:8-11
- e. We believe that He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony.
 - John 14:26-27; Acts 5:30-32

C. Justification

- 1. We believe that the great Gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is Justification, that Justification includes the pardon of sin, the gift of eternal life, and the immediate indwelling of the Spirit of God.
 - Isa. 53:11; Zech. 13:1; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:1, 9:8
- a. We believe that eternal life is not bestowed in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but His righteousness is imputed unto us solely through faith in the person

of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God.

- Rom. 1:16-17; 4:1-3; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:14; 10:38; Titus 3:4-7

b. We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again.

- John 3:3; 1 Pet. 1:23; James 1:18

2. We believe that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel

- Isa. 55:7; John 3:15-16, 18, 36, 5:40; Eph. 2:4-5; 1 Cor. 15:10; 1 Tim. 1:15

D. Sanctification

We believe that sanctification has a twofold meaning:

1. That of setting apart and cleansing of things, days, or persons specifically for God, and that the believer, at the moment of belief, is so set apart by God the Father.

- 1 Cor. 1:30; Heb. 10:10, 14

2. The progressive work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer, obedient to the Word of God, experiences the power of the indwelling Christ for holiness of life, victory over the old nature, and preparation for the Kingdom to come, which will be completed when the believer stands in Christ's presence at the Bema seat.

- John 17:17; 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 1:26-28; 1 Thess. 5:23

E. Glorification

1. We believe that by way of the grave or meeting Jesus in the air, our salvation will be complete by the elimination of the very presence of sin in our being.

- 1 Cor 15:50-54; Phil 3:10-11; Luke 24:36-43

2. We believe all believers will stand before the Bema seat of Christ and receive rewards or the lack thereof based on our faithfulness in this present dispensation.

- 2 Cor 5:10; Matt 10:40-42

F. The Devil Or Satan

1. We believe that he is the malignant prince of the power of the air and the unholy god of this world.

- John 14:30; Eph. 2:2; Gal. 4:4

2. We hold him to be:

a. Man's great tempter.

- Matt. 4:1, 3; 1 Thess. 3:5; 1 Pet. 5:8

- b. The enemy of God and His Christ.
 - Zech. 3:1-3; Matt. 13:25; 37-39; Luke 22:3-4; 1 John 3:8
- c. The author of all false religions, the chief power behind the present apostasy.
 - Mark 13:21-22; 2 Cor. 11:13-15
- d. The author of all powers of darkness is destined, however, to final defeat at the hands of God's Son and to the judgment of an eternal justice in the Lake of Fire- a place prepared for him and his angels.
 - 2 Thess. 2:8-11; Rev 20:10; Matt. 25:41

G. The Creation

We accept the Genesis account of creation and believe that man came by the direct creation of God in His own image.

- Gen. 1, 2; John 1:3; Col. 1:16-17

H. The Fall Of Man

1. We believe that man was created in innocence and without sin.
2. We believe that by voluntary transgression, man fell from his sinless state in full relationship with his Creator.
 - Gen. 3:1-6, 24; Rom. 5:12, 19
3. We believe that as a consequence of this fall, all mankind are now sinners, not only by nature, but also by choice.
 - Rom. 1:18, 32; 3:10-19; Eph. 2:1-3; Ezek. 18:19-20
4. We believe, therefore, that man is under just condemnation without defense or excuse.
 - Rom. 1:20, 28, 32; Gal. 3:22
5. We believe that the fall of man corrupted all of creation. Creation is still awaiting restoration from corruption.
 - Rom 8:19-23; Rev 22:3

I. The Atonement For Sin

1. We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God (who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Himself our nature and, without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience) and who by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins.
 - Eph. 2:8; Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:24-25; Isa. 53:4-7; Matt. 18:11; John 3:16; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:14; 2 John 4:10

2. We believe that his atonement was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place - the Just dying for the unjust - Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the cross.
 - Isa. 53:11; John 10:18; Gal. 1:4; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 12:2; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18
3. We believe that having risen from the dead and ascended to the Father, He is seated at the right hand of the Father, uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection. He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate, and all-sufficient Savior.
 - Isa. 53:12; 1 Cor. 15:20; Heb. 7:25; 9:12-15; 1 John 2:2; Heb. 9:23-28

J. The Church

1. We believe that a local Church of Christ is a Congregation of believers observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His Word and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word.
 - Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; Eph. 4:1-12; 1 Cor. 12:4, 8-13
2. We believe that the Scripturally designated officers are Elders and Deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the scriptures.
 - Acts 6:5-6; 14:23; 15:23; 20:17-28; 1 Tim. 3:1-13
3. We believe the true mission of the Church is found in the great commission and applies to believers of this age, and further defined in 2 Cor. 5:17-20 and Matt. 28:19-20
4. We hold that the local church, the body of Christ, has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations, and that the one and only Head is Christ, through the Holy Spirit.
 - Eph. 4:11-16, 5:23-24; Col. 1:18; 1 Pet. 5:1-4
5. We believe that it is Scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel, that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation.
 - Acts 15:22; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8:23-24; Jude 3-4
6. We believe that on all matters of membership, policy, government, discipline, and benevolence, the will of the local church is final.
 - 1 Cor. 5:11-13; 6:1

K. Baptism And The Lord's Supper

1. We believe that water baptism is the sign of belief, never the means of belief, and is never to be administered to the unbeliever, but to believers only.
 - Acts 10:47, 48; Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 3:27; Col. 3:3
2. Although water baptism is not a requirement for membership in Bible Fellowship, we encourage all believers to submit to water baptism as a public profession of their faith in the finished work of Christ on

their behalf.

- Acts 2:41; Acts 8:36-38; Acts 9:18; Rom. 5:18; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12, 13

3. We believe that our Lord Jesus, on the night wherein He was betrayed, instituted the Lord's Supper to be observed by His Church until His return, for the remembrance of the sacrifice of Himself in His death, and of His coming again.
 - 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20
4. We believe that this ordinance is to be observed in anticipation of His coming and preceded always by solemn self-examination.
 - 1 Cor. 11:28

L. The Preservation Of The Saints

1. We hold that upon belief in the person of Jesus Christ, the believer is placed in the body of Christ and cannot be removed by any means of the self.
 - Matt. 13:19-20; 1 John 2:19; Rom. 8:37-39
2. We hold that God watches over His children, rewarding faithfulness and chastening unfaithfulness.
 - Psa. 121:3; Matt. 6:30; Rom. 8:28-39; Heb. 1:14, 12:6
3. We hold that those who believe in Christ are kept by the power of God unto eternal salvation.
 - John 10:27-29; Rom. 8:35-39; Phil. 1:6; 1 Pet. 1:5

M. Children of God and Children of the Devil

1. We believe that only those who, through faith, are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem.
 - Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 1:17; 1 Cor. 15:22; 1 John 2:29, 3:7
2. We believe that all who continue in unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse.
 - Rom. 6:16, 23, 7:6; Gal. 3:10; 1 John 5:19
3. We believe that this distinction holds among men both in and after death in the everlasting life of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost.
 - Prov. 14:32; Matt. 7:13-14; Matt. 25:32-41; Luke 9:26; 16:25; John 8:21-24, 12:25

N. Civil Government

1. We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society.
 - Ex. 18:21-22; Rom. 13:1-7; 2 Sam. 23:3; Dan. 4:17; 1 Peter 2:13-14

2. We believe that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed, except in those things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience and the coming King of kings and Lord of lords.
 - Matt. 22:21; Acts 23:5; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-14, 17; Dan. 3:17-18; Acts 4:19-20, 5:29; Psa. 72:11; Matt. 10:28; 23:10; Phil. 2:10; Rev. 1:5-6

O. The Resurrection. Return of Christ and Related Events

1. We believe in the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus.
 - Matt. 28:6-7; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6, 39; John 20:27; 1 Cor. 15:4
2. We believe in the Ascension.
 - Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9, 11; Heb. 8:1, 12:2; Rev. 3:21
3. We believe in the High Priesthood of Jesus Christ.
 - Heb. 2:17, 5:9-10, 8:1-6; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 John 2:1; Heb. 7:24-27
4. We believe in the Pretribulation Rapture of the Saints in Christ.
 - Cor. 15:51-53; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17
5. We believe in the Bodily Resurrection of the dead, both righteous and unrighteous.
 - 1 Cor. 15:42-44, 52; 1 Thess. 4:16; John 5:28, 29; Rev. 20:5, 6; Luke 14:13-14
6. We believe in the Premillennial Second Coming of Christ.
 - Matt. 24:13, 27, 42; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:14; Heb. 9:28; James 5:8
7. We believe in Christ's literal and physical Millennial Reign on Earth.
 - Psa. 72:8; Isa. 11:4-5, 32:1; 1 Cor. 15:25; Rev. 20:1-6

Article Three -- Church Covenant (Holy Aspirations)

A. Affirmation

1. Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and, on the profession of our faith, 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.
2. We covenant together 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 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.
3. We also covenant together to bring our children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.
4. We further covenant together 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 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.
5. We moreover covenant together that if we move from this community, 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 Four -- Purpose of Constitution

A. Execution

1. The sole purpose of church government is to execute those laws which are already laid down in the Holy Scriptures.
2. Therefore, in full recognition of this Constitution, we do accept and adhere to the same with full understanding that all organizations governed by or connected with the Church shall be subject to this Constitution.

Article Five -- Preamble

A. Creed

1. We repose our faith wholly in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation, believing in the teachings, practices, and those great distinctive principles found in the Holy Scriptures:
 - a. The preeminence of Christ as our divine Lord and Savior.
 - b. The absolute authority of the Bible and its sufficiency as our only rule of faith and practice.
 - c. The right of private interpretation and the competency of the individual soul in direct approach to God.
 - d. The absolute separation of the Church and State.
 - e. The ordinance of believer's baptism in obedience to the command of Christ.
 - f. The complete independence of the local church.
 - g. The solemn obligation of majority rule, guaranteeing equal rights to all and special privileges to none.
 - h. The spiritual unity of all believers for which the Lord so earnestly prayed.
 - i. A world-wide program of missionary fervor and evangelism in obedience to the final command of Christ.

B. Prologue

We, therefore, band ourselves together as a body of believers in Jesus Christ and adopt for our government, plan of worship and service, this Constitution.

Article Six -- Organization

A. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Bible Fellowship Church of Harrison County, Mississippi.

B. Purposes

The purposes of this Church corporation are as follows:

- a. The maintenance of Christian worship.
- b. The proclamation of the Gospel of Christ.
- c. To study and teach the Bible.
- d. The spiritual growth of its members.
- e. The support of missionary work at home and abroad.
- f. The administration of the ordinances.

C. Income And Distribution

No part of the income of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of any member, trustee, director, officer of the corporation, or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the corporation effecting one or more of its purposes) and no member, trustee, director, officer of the corporation, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporation's assets on dissolution of the corporation.

D. Scope Of Activity

The corporation shall have the power, either directly or indirectly, either alone or in conjunction or cooperation with others, to do any and all lawful acts and things, and to engage in any and all lawful activities which may be necessary, useful, suitable, desirable, or proper for the furtherance, accomplishment, fostering, or attainment of any or all the purposes for which the corporation is organized, including the ownership of such real and personal property as may be necessary or desirable in furtherance of such purposes. Said organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future tax code.

E. Distribution On Dissolution Or Liquidation

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, whether voluntary or involuntary, no member shall be entitled to any distribution or division of its remaining property or its proceeds, and the balance of all money and other property received by the corporation from any source, after payment of all debts and obligations of the corporation shall be used or distributed, exclusively for the purposes set forth in Paragraph B above and shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

F. Prohibited Activities

No part of the activities of the corporation shall be carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, or participating in, or intervening in (including the publication or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Article Seven -- Church Membership

A. Reception

Any person, professing personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and accepting the Confession of Faith and Church Covenant, will be received into membership of the Church following a congregational vote of acceptance.

B. Responsibilities

Each member is urged:

1. TO DEVELOP his spiritual life by means of personal growth in Grace (2 Pet. 3:18; 1:5-10), and active participation in the life and ministry of the Church (Eph. 4:4-6; Eph. 2:19-22; Acts 2:41-47).
2. TO ENCOURAGE the maintenance and the prosperity of the Church ministry and administration by fulfilling the following Scriptural rules and regulations in the interrelated Church life and ministry (1 Thess. 5:12-23).
3. TO EXERCISE discernment in Christian deportment and Church discipline in order that "All things might be done decently and in order" in the House of God. The New Testament Scriptural methods are to be earnestly and sincerely followed through according to the circumstances involved:
 - a. For personal problems: Matt. 5:23, 24; 18:15-19.
 - b. For public problems:
 - 1) The problem of heresy or false doctrine: Gal. 1:9; 2 John 10, 11; Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10.
 - 2) The problem of immoral conduct: 1 Cor. 5:1-11; Eph. 5:5-7.
 - 3) The problem of disorderly conduct: 2 Thess. 3:6-15.

POSTSCRIPT A - In the above passages, the following procedures will be observed:

- a. The problem - Scripturally considered;
 - b. The process - individually and congregationally followed through and completed.
4. The perfect solution -
- a. The restoration or suspension of the individual (s) involved;
 - b. The unity and harmony of the Church under the fear of God in all holiness and love;
 - c. The work of the Church, vindicated in its profession of redemptive relationships before the believing community it seeks to witness to and reach: Acts 1:8.
5. All of the above procedures shall be subject to the discretionary review and control of the Pastor and

Board of Elders.

POSTSCRIPT B - In summary, we ought always to:

- a. OBEY GOD and His Word: Acts 4:19, 20.
- b. ENDEAVOR TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT among the body of believers: Eph. 4:1-16.
- c. BE FAITHFUL TO THE HOLY SPIRIT IN HIS CHURCH SUPERVISION of the faith, the faithful, and the fortunes of the local witness of Christ: Rev. 2, 3; Matt. 18:1-10.

C. Requirements of Membership

Every member should realize not only their privileges and responsibilities, but also the requirements of a member in good standing. For this reason, an active and inactive membership list shall be maintained. For the edification and coordination of those who desire to maintain and fulfill their Church Covenant vows, only active members will be able to vote and hold office when duly elected or appointed in the Church or in any of the ministries.

1. Active membership shall consist of all who regularly attend the stated services of the Church, its communion observances, and participate in the financial support of its ministry.
2. Anyone failing to maintain an active membership for a period of one (1) year shall automatically lapse from active membership, their name being placed upon an INACTIVE MEMBERSHIP LIST. However, any inactive member showing a renewed interest in the life and ministry of the Church may, upon request to and by the vote of the Board of Elders, be reinstated as an active member.
3. If, after four (4) years, one still neglects to fulfill their obligations (having been notified in the meantime), their name shall be permanently dropped from the roll without any special action of the Church. The matter of final adjustment shall be left to the Pastor and Board of Elders.
4. All active member voting privileges will begin at the age of sixteen (16).

Article Eight -- Church Officers

A. Organization

1. The ordinary and perpetual officers in the Church are Elders, whose office is to have the government and spiritual oversight of the Church, including Pastors, or Ministers of the Word, who are commissioned to preach the Gospel and administer the Ordinances; and Deacons, whose office is to receive and administer the offerings of the people. As in Scripture, the offices of both Pastors and Elders are given to men only who share equally in the governing of the Church. Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9
2. No one who holds office in the Church ought to usurp authority therein, or receive any official titles of spiritual preeminence, except such as are employed in the Scriptures.
3. The congregation is the final authority on all Church matters.

4. In the event the church membership is unable to support Elders and Deacons, the Elders will perform the Deacon duties until additional eligible men are found.

B. The Pastor

1. This office is the first in the Church, both for dignity and usefulness. The person who fills it has in Scripture different titles expressive of his various duties. As he has the oversight of the flock of Christ, he is termed bishop. As he feeds them with spiritual food, he is termed pastor. As he serves Christ in the Church, he is termed minister. As it is his duty to be grave and prudent and an example to the flock and to govern well in the house and kingdom of Christ, he is termed presbyter or elder. As he is sent to declare the will of God to sinners and to beseech them to be reconciled to God through Christ, he is termed ambassador. As he bears the glad tidings of salvation to the ignorant and perishing, he is termed evangelist. As he stands to proclaim the Gospel, he is termed preacher. As he expounds the Word and by sound doctrine both exhorts and convinces the gainsayer, he is termed teacher. As he dispenses the manifold grace of God and the ordinances instituted by Christ, he is termed steward of the mysteries of God. These titles do not indicate different grades of office, but all describe one and the same officer.
2. He that fills this office should possess a competency of human learning and be blameless in life, sound in the faith, and apt to teach. He should exhibit a sobriety and holiness of life becoming the Gospel. He should rule his own house well and should have a good report of them that are outside the Church.
3. As the Lord has given different gifts to the Pastors and has committed to them various works to execute, the Church is authorized to call and appoint them to labor as pastors, organizing pastors, teachers, and evangelists, and in such other works as may be needful to the Church, according to the gifts in which they excel.
4. When a pastor is called to labor, it belongs to his office to pray for and with his flock, as the mouth of the people unto God; to feed the flock by reading, expounding, and preaching the Word; to direct the congregation in singing the praises of God; to administer the Ordinances; to teach the children and youth; to visit the people, devoting special attention to the poor, the sick, the afflicted, and the dying; and with the other Elders, to exercise the joint power of government.
5. When the Church appoints an evangelist or missionary, he is commissioned to preach the Word and administer the Ordinances in foreign countries, frontier settlements, or the destitute parts of the Church; and to him may be entrusted power to organize churches and ordain Elders and Deacons therein.

C. The Elder

1. Elders possess the same authority and eligibility to office in governing the Church as the ministers of the Word. They should, moreover, cultivate zealously their aptness to teach the Bible and should improve every opportunity of doing so, to the end that destitute places, mission points, and churches without pastors may be supplied with religious services.

2. Those who fill this office ought to be blameless in life and sound in faith; they should be men of wisdom and discretion; and by the holiness of their walk and conversation should be examples to the flock.
3. Pastor-Elders, the immediate representatives of the people, are chosen by them, that in conjunction with the Pastor, they may exercise government and discipline, and take the oversight of the spiritual interests of the church when called thereunto.
4. It belongs to their office, both severally and jointly, to watch diligently over the flock committed to their charge, that no corruption of doctrine or of morale enter therein. Evils which they cannot correct by private admonition, they should bring to the notice of the Board of Elders.
5. They should visit the people at their homes, especially the sick.
6. They should instruct the ignorant, comfort the mourner, nourish and guard the children of the Church. All those duties which private Christians are bound to discharge by the law of love are especially incumbent upon them by divine vocation, and are to be discharged as official duties. They should pray with and for the people, be careful and diligent in seeking the fruit of the preached Word among the flock.
7. The BOARD OF ELDERS is charged with maintaining the spiritual government of the Church, for which purpose it has power to inquire into the knowledge, principles, and the Christian conduct of the Church members under its care; to censure those found delinquent; to remove them for just cause; to grant letters of dismissal to other churches, which, when given to parents, shall always include the names of their children; to examine, ordain, and install Elders and Deacons on their election by the Church, and to require those officers to devote themselves to their work; to examine the records of the proceedings of the Deacons; to approve and adopt the budget; to approve actions of special importance affecting church property, and calling congregational meetings when necessary; to establish and control Sunday schools and Bible classes with special reference to the children of the Church; to establish and control all special groups in the Church such as men in the Church, Women in the Church, and special Bible Study groups; to promote World missions; to order collections for pious uses; to exercise authority over the time and place of the preaching of the Word; over all other religious services; over the music in the services; and over the uses to which the church building and associated properties may be put; to take the oversight of the singing in the public worship of God, to determine the best measures for promoting the spiritual interests of the Church and Congregation.
8. The Board of Elders shall hold stated meetings at least quarterly. Moreover, the pastor has authority to convene the Elders when he may judge it requisite; and he shall always convene it when requested to do so by any two of the Elders.
9. Every Church Board shall keep an accurate record of its proceedings, which record shall be submitted at least once in every year to the inspection of the Congregation.
10. The Board of Elders shall keep an accurate record of baptisms, of active and inactive members, and of the deaths and dismissions of Church members.
11. Meetings of the Elders shall be opened and closed with prayer.

D. The Deacon

1. The office of Deacon is set forth in the Scriptures as ordinary and perpetual in the Church. The office is one of sympathy and service, after the example of the Lord Jesus; it expresses also the communion of saints, especially in their helping one another in time of need.
2. It is the duty of the Deacons to minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress. It is their duty also to develop the grace of liberality in the members of the church, to devise effective methods of collecting the gifts of the people, and to distribute those gifts among the objects to which they are contributed. They shall have the care of the property of the congregation, both real and personal, and shall keep in proper repair the church edifice and other buildings belonging to the congregation. In matters of special importance affecting the property of the church, they cannot take final action without the approval of the Board of Elders.
3. In the discharge of their duties, the Deacons are under the supervision and authority of the Elders. In a church in which it is impossible for any reason to secure Deacons, the duties of the office shall devolve upon the Elders.
4. To the office of Deacon, which is spiritual in nature, shall be chosen men of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly spirit, warm sympathies, and sound judgment.
5. The Deacons shall be organized as a Board, of which an Elder shall be an advisory member. The Board shall elect a chairman and a secretary from their number. It shall meet separately at least once a quarter and when requested by the Board of Elders. The Board shall determine the number necessary for a quorum.
6. The Board of Deacons shall keep a record of its proceedings, of all funds and their distribution, and shall submit its minutes to the Elders yearly and at other times upon request of the Board of Elders.
7. It is desirable that the Board of Elders and the Board of Deacons meet in joint session once a quarter to confer on matters of common interest.
8. It is often expedient that the Board of Elders should select and appoint godly men and women of the congregation to assist the Deacons in caring for the sick, the widows, the orphans, the prisoners, and others who may be in any distress or need.

Role	Primary Responsibilities
Pastor	Preaching, teaching, ordinances, pastoral care, leadership with Elders
Elder	Governance, teaching, discipline, spiritual oversight, membership care
Deacon	Service, mercy ministries, property care, financial distribution under Elders

Article Nine -- Calling of Pastors

A. Election

1. Pastors shall be elected, when properly engaged, for an indeterminate time by a 75% vote of those present in a duly called congregational meeting announced two (2) weeks in advance for that purpose.
2. The VOTE on the call of a Pastor requires a quorum of 20% of all active membership.
3. Pastors may be called from the pool of church Elders as needed by vote of the Elders and affirmation of the congregation.

B. Termination

1. A termination of the relationship between a Pastor and the Church may be brought about either by resignation or a 75% vote of those present in a duly called congregational meeting announced two (2) weeks in advance for that purpose.
2. The vote on the termination of a Pastor requires a quorum of 20% of the active membership.
3. A two-week notice shall be provided by either party.

Article Ten -- Church Meetings

A. Worship Services

1. The Regular Worship Services of the Church shall normally be held each Sunday morning.
2. The Lord's Supper shall, at a minimum, be observed each quarter.
3. Special meetings concerning missions, evangelism, Christian education, etc., shall be approved and designated by the Board of Elders.

B. Business Meetings

1. The Church will have two (2) congregational meetings each year, normally held in January and July for the purpose of attending to the business of the Church.
2. An order of business for each congregational meeting will be prepared by the Board of Elders and posted electronically and physically in the Church a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the meeting.
3. The first business of each meeting will be to amend and adopt the order of business. The order of business can be changed after adoption by a two-thirds vote of the congregation.
4. Church officers will be elected by secret ballot during the same meeting that these rules are adopted and at the July meeting of each following year.
5. A Moderator shall be elected at the July meeting of each year to serve for one (1) year.
6. A Clerk shall be elected at the July meeting of each year to serve for one (1) year.
 - a. The Clerk shall record the minutes of all congregational meetings.
 - b. The minutes of the congregational meeting will be signed by the Clerk and Moderator, read and approved at the next following meeting.
 - c. A copy of the minutes of all congregational meetings shall be given to the Clerk of the Board of Elders within seven (7) days following the meeting.
7. A Treasurer for the Church General Funds shall be elected at the July meeting to serve for one (1) year.
 - a. The Treasurer shall receive and disburse Church funds according to instructions of the Elders and Deacons, by consent of the congregation, disbursing funds in accordance with an approved budget.
 - b. The Treasurer shall make available monthly and annual financial reports to the Elders. Copies of the annual reports shall be given to the congregation at the January congregational meeting.
 - c. The Treasurer's record shall be made available to the Deacons at any time for audit and may be

requested by the Board of Elders at any time for review.

8. The Board of Elders shall be composed of three (3) Elders and the Senior Pastor.

9. The Elders shall be appointed according to Classes, with three-year terms, excepting the first two (2) classes of 1978 and 1979. At the first meeting, elect the following:

One (1) Elder for three (3) years
One (1) Elder for two (2) years
One (1) Elder for one (1) year

10. The Board of Deacons shall be composed of three (3) Deacons.

11. The Deacons shall be appointed according to Classes, with three-year terms, except that at the first class of Deacons, the procedure noted in Rule 9 shall be used.

12. Deacons will also serve as Trustees.

13. The Elders' and Deacons' record books shall be made available at the January meeting for reference and review by the Congregation.

14. The Elders' and Deacons' records shall contain a copy of this Constitution.

Postscript A - Business Meetings

The usual procedure followed:

Call to Order Devotions
Reading of the Minutes
Standing Committee Reports
Unfinished (old) Business
New Business
Prayer and Adjournment

The order that should be maintained is:

1. All who desire to speak must stand and be recognized by the Chairman before speaking.
2. Only appropriate remarks pertaining to the topic at hand should be made.
3. No one shall speak twice on a given subject until all who desire to do so have spoken once, unless special permission is granted by the Chairman.
4. In matters not specifically dealt with in this constitution, Roberts Rules of Order shall be the standard governing procedure.
5. All committees shall be open to any elder wishing to attend.

Article Eleven -- Miscellaneous

A. Financial Policy

The work of the Church shall be financed only by the Scriptural method: 1 Cor. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 8:1-16. Fundraising activities are generally prohibited on church property. The Board of Elders may provide an exemption on a case-by-case basis where the fundraising promotes the ministry and fellowship of the church. The Church shall teach and promote money management, personal giving, and cooperative giving for all of its members.

B. Ordinations

Any man of strong Christian character and Scripturally qualified may become a candidate for ordination into the office of Elder or Deacon:

1. By recommendation of the Pastor-Elders;
2. By the calling of the Congregation.

D. Amendments

Constitutional amendments may be made only in the following manner:

1. Approval of the proposed amendment by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at any regular or special Congregational Business Meeting.

E. Commitment

1. Every Church officer should reaffirm annually his full agreement with the Doctrinal Statement of Faith and his desire to support the spiritual ministry of the local body.
2. Any officer failing to attend the regularly scheduled meetings, the regular church services, or failing to perform the duties of his office shall, after three (3) months, be relieved of his office by discretionary action of the Board of Elders.

Article Twelve -- Date of Effect

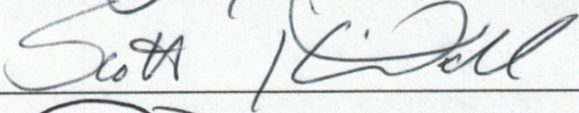
A. Adoption

Motion was made and carried that we adopt this Constitution and By-Laws, Covenant, and Confession of Faith, and that the adoption of these Rules shall be understood to rescind and annul any conflicting Rules in force prior to the date of this adoption.

Dated: February 5, 1978

B. Amended

By the Elders of Bible Fellowship Church and approved by congregational vote on September 28, 2025

Elders	Signature
Pastor Don Trest	
Pastor Scott Kimball	
Pastor Bob Wren	
Elder Jacob Davis	
Elder Roy Jarnagin	