

1 **CONSTITUTION**

2 *of the*

3 **ARLINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH**

4 ARLINGTON, V.A.

5
6 **Preamble**

7
8 Since it pleased Almighty God, by His Holy Spirit, to call certain of His servants
9 to unite here, for the worship of God and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ; and

10 Whereas we, the members of Arlington, Baptist Church having searched the
11 Scriptures under the guidance of His Spirit, have recognized the need to constitute
12 ourselves to more closely conform to His will for the Church in this age and prepare
13 ourselves for greater efforts in His name;

14 Now therefore we, the members of Arlington Baptist Church, do hereby organize
15 ourselves in accord with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and adopt this
16 Constitution as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the
17 character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated
18 in the standards set forth in the Statement of Faith (1853) and Covenant of this church.

19
20 **Article I – Name**

21
22 This body shall be organized as a church known as “Arlington Baptist Church.”

23
24 **Article II – Purpose**

25
26 This church exists by the grace of God, for the glory of God, which shall be the
27 ultimate purpose in all its activities. This church glorifies God by loving Him and
28 obeying His commands through:

- 29
- 30 Worshipping Him;
- 31 Equipping the saints through Bible instruction and study;
- 32 Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and personal
- 33 evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of Holy
- 34 Scripture;
- 35 Encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work; local, domestic, and
- 36 international;
- 37 Administering the ordinances of baptism and communion;
- 38 Encouraging Biblical fellowship among believers;
- 39 Serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical,
- 40 emotional, and spiritual needs, in the name of Jesus Christ; and
- 41 Calling fellow churches to biblical faithfulness and purity through instruction and
- 42 encouragement about the nature of the local church.

1
2 **Article III – Statement of Faith**
3

4 The church adopts the following as its statement of faith.
5

6 **1. Of the Scriptures**

7 We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a
8 perfect treasure of heavenly instruction;¹ that it has God for its author, salvation for its
9 end,² and truth without any mixture of error for its matter;³ that it reveals the principles
10 by which God will judge us;⁴ and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world,
11 the true center of Christian union,⁵ and the supreme standard by which all human
12 conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.⁶
13

14 **2. Of the True God**

15 We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite,
16 intelligent Spirit, whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven
17 and earth;⁷ inexpressibly glorious in holiness,⁸ and worthy of all possible honor,
18 confidence, and love;⁹ that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father,
19 the Son, and the Holy Ghost;¹⁰ equal in every divine perfection,¹¹ and executing distinct
20 but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.¹²
21

22 **3. Of the Fall of Man**

23 We believe that man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker;¹³ but by
24 voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state;¹⁴ in consequence of which all
25 mankind are now sinners,¹⁵ not by constraint, but choice;¹⁶ being by nature utterly void of
26 that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under
27 just condemnation to eternal ruin,¹⁷ without defense or excuse.¹⁸
28
29

4. Of the Way of Salvation

¹ 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Sam. 23:2; Acts 1:16; 3:21; John 10:35; Luke 16:29-31; Psa. 119:11; Rom. 3:1-2

² 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; Acts 11:14; Rom. 1:16; Mark 16:16; John 5:38-39

³ Prov. 30:5-6; John 17:17; Rev. 22:18-19; Rom. 3:4

⁴ Rom. 2:12; John 12:47-48; 1 Cor. 4:3-4; Luke 10:10-16; 12:47-48

⁵ Phil. 3:16; Eph. 4:3-6; Phil. 2:1-2; 1 Cor. 1:10; 1 Pet. 4:11

⁶ 1 John 4:1; Isa. 8:20; 1 Thess. 5:21; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:6; Jude 3:5; Eph. 6:17; Psa. 119:59-60; Phil. 1:9-11

⁷ John 4:24; Psa. 147:5; 83:18; Heb. 3:4; Rom. 1:20; Jer. 10:10

⁸ Exod. 15:11; Isa. 6:3; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Rev. 4:6-8

⁹ Mark 12:30; Rev. 4:11; Matt. 10:37; Jer. 2:12-13

¹⁰ Matt. 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 1 John 5:7

¹¹ John 10:30; 5:17; 14:23; 17:5, 10; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6

¹² Eph. 2:18; 2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4-5; comp. 2, 7

¹³ Gen. 1:27, 31; Eccl. 7:29; Acts 16:26; Gen. 2:16

¹⁴ Gen. 3:6-24; Rom. 5:12

¹⁵ Rom. 5:19; John 3:6; Psa. 51:5; Rom. 5:15-19; 8:7

¹⁶ Isa. 53:6; Gen. 6:12; Rom. 3:9-18

¹⁷ Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 1:18, 32; 2:1-16; Gal. 3:10; Matt. 20:15

¹⁸ Ezek. 18:19-20; Rom. 1:20; 3:19; Gal. 3:22

1 We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace,¹⁹ through the
2 mediatorial offices of the Son of God;²⁰ who by the appointment of the Father, freely
3 took upon him our nature, yet without sin;²¹ honored the divine law by his personal
4 obedience,²² and by his death made a full atonement for our sins;²³ that having risen from
5 the dead, he is now enthroned in heaven;²⁴ and uniting in his wonderful person the
6 tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is every way qualified to be a suitable, a
7 compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.²⁵

8 9 **5. Of Justification**

10 We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ²⁶ secures to such as believe
11 in him is Justification;²⁷ that Justification includes the pardon of sin,²⁸ and the promise of
12 eternal life on principles of righteousness;²⁹ that it is bestowed, not in consideration of
13 any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the
14 Redeemer's blood;³⁰ by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to
15 us of God;³¹ that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and
16 secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.³²

17 18 **6. Of the Freeness of Salvation**

19 We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel;³³ that
20 it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith;³⁴
21 and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own
22 inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel;³⁵ which rejection involves him
23 in an aggravated condemnation.³⁶

24 25 **7. Of Grace in Regeneration**

26 We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born
27 again;³⁷ that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind;³⁸ that it is
28 effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in

¹⁹ Eph. 2:5; Matt. 18:11; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; Acts 15:11

²⁰ John 3:16; 1:1-14; Heb. 4:14; 12:24

²¹ Phil. 2:6-7; Heb. 2:9, 14; 2 Cor. 5:21

²² Isa. 42:21; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 3:21

²³ Isa. 53:4-5; Matt. 20:28; Rom. 4:25; 3:21-26; 1 John 4:10; 2:2; 1 Cor. 15:1-3; Heb. 9:13-15

²⁴ Heb. 1:8, 3; 8:1; Col. 3:1-4

²⁵ Heb. 7:25; Col. 2:9; Heb. 2:18; 7:26; Psa. 89:19; Psa. 14

²⁶ John 1:16; Eph. 3:8

²⁷ Acts 13:39; Isa. 3:11-12; Rom. 8:1

²⁸ Rom. 5:9; Zech. 13:1; Matt. 9:6; Acts 10:43

²⁹ Rom. 5:17; Titus 3:5-6; 1 Pet. 3:7; 1 John 2:25; Rom. 5:21

³⁰ Rom. 4:4-5; 5:21; 6:23; Phil. 3:7-9

³¹ Rom. 5:19; 3:24-26; 4:23-25; 1 John 2:12

³² Rom. 5:1-3, 11; 1 Cor. 1:30-31; Matt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 4:8

³³ Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; Luke 14:17

³⁴ Rom. 16:26; Mark 1:15; Rom. 1:15-17

³⁵ John 5:40; Matt. 23:37; Rom. 9:32; Prov. 1:24; Acts 13:46

³⁶ John 3:19; Matt. 11:20; Luke 19:27; 2 Thess. 1:8

³⁷ John 3:3, 6-7; 1 Cor. 1:14; Rev. 8:7-9; 21:27

³⁸ 2 Cor. 5:17; Ezek. 36:26; Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:28-29; 5:5; 1 John 4:7

1 connection with divine truth,³⁹ so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel;⁴⁰
2 and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, and faith, and
3 newness of life.⁴¹

4 5 **8. Of Repentance and Faith**

6 We believe that Repentance and Faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable
7 graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God;⁴² whereby being deeply
8 convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ,⁴³
9 we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy,⁴⁴ at the
10 same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and
11 relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior.⁴⁵

12 13 **9. Of God's Purpose of Grace**

14 We believe that Election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he
15 graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners;⁴⁶ that being perfectly consistent with
16 the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end;⁴⁷ that it
17 is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy,
18 and unchangeable;⁴⁸ that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love,
19 prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy;⁴⁹ that it encourages the
20 use of means in the highest degree;⁵⁰ that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who
21 truly believe the gospel;⁵¹ that it is the foundation of Christian assurance;⁵² and that to
22 ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence.⁵³

23 24 **10. Of Sanctification**

25 We believe that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of
26 God, we are made partakers of his holiness;⁵⁴ that it is a progressive work;⁵⁵ that it is
27 begun in regeneration;⁵⁶ and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence
28 and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the

³⁹ John 3:8; 1:13; James 1:16-18; 1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 2:13

⁴⁰ 1 Pet. 1:22-25; 1 John 5:1; Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:9-11

⁴¹ Eph. 5:9; Rom. 8:9; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 3:14-21; Matt. 3:8-10; 7:20; 1 John 5:4, 18

⁴² Mark 1:15; Acts 11:18; Eph. 2:8; 1 John 5:1

⁴³ John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38; 16:30-31

⁴⁴ Luke 18:13; 15:18-21; James 4:7-10; 2 Cor. 7:11; Rom. 10:12-13; Psalms 51

⁴⁵ Rom. 10:9-11; Acts 3:22-23; Heb. 4:14; Psalms 2:6; Heb. 1:8; 8:25; 2 Tim. 1:12

⁴⁶ 2 Tim. 1:8-9; Eph. 1:3-14; 1 Pet. 1:1-2; Rom. 11:5-6; John 15:15; 1 John 4:19; Hos. 12:9

⁴⁷ 2 Thess. 2:13-14; Acts 13:48; John 10:16; Matt. 20:16; Acts 15:14

⁴⁸ Exod. 33:18-19; Matt. 20:15; Eph. 1:11; Rom. 9:23-24; Jer. 31:3; Rom. 11:28-29; James 1:17-18; 2 Tim. 1:9; Rom. 11:32-36

⁴⁹ 1 Cor. 4:7; 1:26-31; Rom. 3:27; 4:16; Col. 3:12; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; 15:10; 1 Pet. 5:10; Acts 1:24; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:9; Luke 18:7; John 15:16; Eph. 1:16; 1 Thess. 2:12

⁵⁰ 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Cor. 9:22; Rom. 8:28-30; John 6:37-40; 2 Pet. 1:10

⁵¹ 1 Thess. 1:4-10

⁵² Rom. 8:28-30; Isa. 42:16; Rom. 11:29

⁵³ 2 Pet. 1:10-11; Phil. 3:12; Heb. 6:11

⁵⁴ 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:23; 2 Cor. 7:1; 13:9; Eph. 1:4

⁵⁵ Prov. 4:18; 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 6:1; 2 Pet. 1:5-8; Phil. 3:12-16

⁵⁶ John 2:29; Rom. 8:5; John 3:6; Phil. 1:9-11; Eph. 1:13-14

1 appointed means – especially the word of God, self-examination, self-denial,
2 watchfulness, and prayer.⁵⁷

4 **11. Of the Perseverance of Saints**

5 We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end;⁵⁸ that their
6 persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from
7 superficial professors;⁵⁹ that a special Providence watches over their welfare;⁶⁰ and they
8 are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.⁶¹

10 **12. Of the Harmony of the Law and the Gospel**

11 We believe that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral
12 government;⁶² that it is holy, just, and good;⁶³ and that the inability which the Scriptures
13 ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts arises entirely from their love of sin;⁶⁴ to
14 deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience
15 to the holy Law, is one great end of the gospel, and of the means of grace connected with
16 the establishment of the visible church.⁶⁵

18 **13. Of a Gospel Church**

19 We believe that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized
20 believers,⁶⁶ associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel;⁶⁷ observing
21 the ordinances of Christ;⁶⁸ governed by his laws,⁶⁹ and exercising the gifts, rights, and
22 privileges invested in them by his Word;⁷⁰ that its only scriptural officers are Bishops, or
23 Pastors, and Deacons,⁷¹ whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the
24 Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

26 **14. Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

27 We believe that Christian Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer,⁷² into
28 the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost;⁷³ to show forth, in a solemn and
29 beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in our

⁵⁷ Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 13:5; Luke 11:35; 9:23; Matt. 26:41; Eph. 6:18; 4:30

⁵⁸ John 8:31; 1 John 2:27-28; 3:9; 5:18

⁵⁹ 1 John 2:19; John 13:18; Matt. 13:20-21; John 6:66-69; Job 17:9

⁶⁰ Rom. 8:28; Matt. 6:30-33; Jer. 32:40; Psa. 121:3; 91:11-12

⁶¹ Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; Jude 24-25; Heb. 1:14; 2 Kings 6:16; Heb. 13:5; 1 John 4:4

⁶² Rom. 3:31; Matt. 5:17; Luke 16:17; Rom. 3:20; 4:15

⁶³ Rom. 7:12, 7, 14, 22; Gal. 3:21; Psa. 119

⁶⁴ Rom. 8:7-8; Josh. 24:19; Jer. 13:23; John 6:44; 5:44

⁶⁵ Rom. 8:2, 4; 10:4; 1 Tim. 1:5; Heb. 8:10; Jude 20-21; Heb. 12:14; Matt. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 12:28

⁶⁶ 1 Cor. 1:1-13; Matt. 18:17; Acts 5:11; 8:1; 11:31; 1 Cor. 4:17; 14:23; 3 John 9; 1 Tim. 3:5

⁶⁷ Acts 2:41-42; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 5:12-13

⁶⁸ 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17-20; 1 Cor. 11:23; Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor 5:6; 2 Cor. 2:7; 1 Cor. 4:17

⁶⁹ Matt. 28:20; John 14:15; 15:12; 1 John 4:21; John 14:21; 1 Thess. 4.2; 2 John 6; Gal. 6:2; all the Epistles

⁷⁰ Eph. 4:7; 1 Cor. 14:12; Phil. 1:27; 1 Cor. 12:14

⁷¹ Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; 15:22; 1 Tim. 3; Titus 1

⁷² Acts 8:36-39; Matt. 3:5-6; John 3:22-23; 4:1-2; Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:12; 16:32-34; 18:8

⁷³ Matt. 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; Gal. 3:27-28

1 death to sin and resurrection to a new life;⁷⁴ that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a
2 church relation; and to the Lord's Supper,⁷⁵ in which the members of the church, by the
3 sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ;⁷⁶
4 preceded always by solemn self-examination.⁷⁷

6 **15. Of the Christian Sabbath**

7 We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath,⁷⁸
8 and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes,⁷⁹ by the devout observance of all the means
9 of grace, both private⁸⁰ and public;⁸¹ by preparation for that rest that remaineth for the
10 people of God.⁸²

12 **16. Of Sexuality and Marriage**

13 We believe that God wonderfully creates each person as immutably male or
14 female and that these two distinct, complementary sexes each bear the image of God⁸³
15 and should never be denied or confused⁸⁴; the language of gender reflects God's creation
16 of each person as male or female; gender is not an additional category of identity
17 separable from a person's created sex;⁸⁵ marriage was created and instituted by God for
18 the good of his creatures and creation⁸⁶ in order to display his gracious love⁸⁷ and to teach
19 the world about how he would unite himself to his redeemed people through Jesus
20 Christ;⁸⁸ marriage is a single, exclusive, covenant union, intended to be life-long, entered
21 into by one man and one woman to which God bears witness;⁸⁹ such a union is the sole
22 context for sexual intimacy and procreation;⁹⁰ any form of sexual expression or desire
23 outside of God's good design is immoral, sinful, and offensive to God.⁹¹

25 **17. Of Civil Government**

⁷⁴ Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; Acts 22:16

⁷⁵ Acts 2:41-42; Matt. 28:19-20

⁷⁶ 1 Cor. 11:26; Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20

⁷⁷ 1 Cor. 11:28; 5:1, 8; 10:3-32; 11:17-32; John 6:26-71

⁷⁸ Acts 20:7; Gen. 2:3; Col. 2:16-17; Mark 2:27; John 20:19; 1 Cor. 16:1-2

⁷⁹ Exod. 20:8; Rev. 1:10; Psa. 118:24

⁸⁰ Psa. 119:15

⁸¹ Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 11:26, 13:44; Lev. 19:30; Luke 4:16; Acts 17:2, 3; Psa. 26:8; 87:3

⁸² Heb. 4:3-11

⁸³ Gen. 1:26-28, 31a, 5:2; Matt. 19:4; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10

⁸⁴ Deut. 22:5; Matt. 19:4-6; 1 Cor. 11:11-12, 14-15, 14:33; Eph. 5:22-33; 1 Tim. 2:9-15, 1 Pet. 3:1-7

⁸⁵ Exod. 20:16; Prov. 12:22, 14:5; Zech. 8:16; Jer. 9:3, 5-6; Is. 5:20, 59:13; Eph 4:25; Col 3:9; Rev. 21:8, 22:15

⁸⁶ Gen. 1:26-28, 2:4-25, 9:1; Mal. 2:15

⁸⁷ Isa. 54:5; Ezek. 16:6-14; Hos. 2:14-16; Eph. 5:25, 32

⁸⁸ 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:31-32; Rev. 19:7-9

⁸⁹ Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18; Job 31:1; Mal. 2:14, Matt. 5:28, 5:31-32, 19:3-12, Mark 10:2-12; Rom. 7:2-3, 1 Cor. 7:39

⁹⁰ Gen. 1:28; Gen. 4:1; Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18; Job 31:1; Psa. 127:3; Prov. 5:8, 5:19-20; Mal. 2:15; Matt. 5:28; 1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-9; Heb. 13:4

⁹¹ Gen. 19:1-29, Lev. 18:1-30, 20:10-21; Deut. 5:21, 22:5; 2 Kgs. 23:7; Prov. 2:16-20, 5:15-20, 6:25, 7:5-22, 21:10; Amos 2:7; Matt. 5:27-30, 15:18-20; Mark 6:18, 7:20-23; Rom. 1:21-31, 13:13-14; 1 Cor. 5:1, 6:9-10, 7:36-38; Gal. 5:16-24; Eph. 4:17-24, 5:3-4; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:3-7; 1 Tim. 1:9-10; 2 Tim. 2:22; Jam. 1:13-15; 2 Pet. 2:14; Jude 6-7; Rev. 2:20-23, 21:8, 22:15

1 We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and
2 good order of human society;⁹² and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously
3 honored and obeyed;⁹³ except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus
4 Christ⁹⁴ who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.⁹⁵
5

6 **18. Of the Righteous and the Wicked**

7 We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous
8 and the wicked;⁹⁶ that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord
9 Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem;⁹⁷ while all
10 such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the
11 curse;⁹⁸ and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.⁹⁹
12

13 **19. Of the World to Come**

14 We believe that the end of the world is approaching;¹⁰⁰ that at the last day Christ
15 will descend from heaven,¹⁰¹ and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution;¹⁰² that
16 a solemn separation will then take place;¹⁰³ that the wicked will be adjudged to endless
17 punishment, and the righteous to endless joy;¹⁰⁴ and that this judgment will fix forever
18 the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.¹⁰⁵
19

20 Based on the New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith (1853).

21 **Article IV – Church Covenant**

22
23
24 Having, as we trust, been brought by divine grace to repent and believe in the Lord
25 Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to Him, and having been baptized upon our
26 profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do
27 now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully covenant with each other.
28

29 We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.¹⁰⁶
30

⁹² Rom. 13:1-7; Deut. 16:18; 1 Sam. 23:3; Exod. 18:23; Jer. 30:21

⁹³ Matt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13; 1 Tim. 2:1-8

⁹⁴ Acts 5:29; Matt. 10:28; Dan. 3:15-18; 6:7-10; Acts 4:18-20

⁹⁵ Matt. 23:10; Rom. 14:4; Rev. 19:16; Psa. 72:11; Psa. 2; Rom. 14:9-13

⁹⁶ Mal. 3:18; Prov. 12:26; Isa. 5:20; Gen. 18:23; Jer. 15:19; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 6:16

⁹⁷ Rom. 1:17; 7:6; 1 John 2:29; 3:7; Rom. 6:18, 22; 1 Cor. 11:32; Prov. 11:31; 1 Pet. 4:17-18

⁹⁸ 1 John 5:19; Gal. 3:10; John 3:36; Isa. 57:21; Psa. 10:4; Isa 55:6-7

⁹⁹ Prov. 14:32; Luke 16:25; John 8:21-24; Prov. 10:24; Luke 12:4-5; 9:23-26; John 12:25-26; Eccl. 3:17; Matt. 7:13-14

¹⁰⁰ 1 Pet. 4:7; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Heb. 1:10-12; Matt. 24:35; 1 John 2:17; Matt. 28:20; 13:39-40; 2 Pet. 3:3-13

¹⁰¹ Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; Acts 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-11

¹⁰² Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:12-59; Luke 14:14; Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29; 6:40; 11:25-26; 2 Tim. 1:10; Acts 10:42

¹⁰³ Matt. 13:49, 37-43; 24:30-31; 25:31-33

¹⁰⁴ Matt. 25:35-41; Rev. 22:11; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Mark 9:43-48; 2 Pet. 2:9; Jude 7; Phil. 3:19; Rom. 6:32; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; John 4:36; 2 Cor. 4:18

¹⁰⁵ Rom. 3:5-6; 2 Thess. 1:6-12; Heb. 6:1-2; 1 Cor. 4:5; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:2-16; Rev. 20:11-12; 1 John 2:28; 4:17

¹⁰⁶ Psalms 133:1; Ephesians 4:3; Philippians 2:2-3

1 We will walk together in brotherly love, as becomes the members of a Christian
2 church; exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully
3 admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require.¹⁰⁷
4

5 We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for
6 ourselves and others.¹⁰⁸
7

8 We will endeavor to bring up such as may at any time be under our care, in the
9 nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example to seek the
10 salvation of our family and friends.¹⁰⁹
11

12 We will rejoice at each other's happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy
13 to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.¹¹⁰
14

15 We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and
16 worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and
17 raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation now to lead a
18 new and holy life.¹¹¹
19

20 We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this
21 church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. We will
22 contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the
23 church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.¹¹²
24

25 We will, when we move from this place, unite with some other church as soon as
26 possible, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's
27 Word.¹¹³
28

29 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the
30 Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.¹¹⁴
31

32 **Article V – Membership**

33

34 Section 1 – Qualifications

35 To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be a believer in Jesus
36 Christ and give evidence of regeneration, have been baptized, in obedience to Christ,
37 following his or her regeneration, and wholeheartedly believe in the Christian faith as
38 revealed in the Bible. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of scripture as
39 expressed in the Statement of Faith and must promise to keep the commitments expressed

¹⁰⁷ Romans 12:10; 15:14

¹⁰⁸ Hebrews 10:24-25; Ephesians 6:18

¹⁰⁹ Matthew 28:19-20; Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 1:28-29; Titus 2:7

¹¹⁰ Romans 12:15; Galatians 6:2

¹¹¹ Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:4; Philippians 2:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22; Titus 2:11-12; 1 Peter 1:14-16

¹¹² 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-3; 9:6-7; Philippians 1:27; 1 Timothy 5:17-18

¹¹³ Hebrews 10:25

¹¹⁴ 2 Corinthians 13:14

1 in the Church Covenant. The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's
2 qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's
3 profession of faith, or such other evidence, as the elders deem appropriate.
4

5 Section 2 – Admission of Members

6 To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the
7 elders for admission and accepted by vote of the members at any regular or special
8 meeting of the members, and shall at that point relinquish their membership in other
9 churches.
10

11 Section 3 – Duties and Privileges of Membership

12 In accordance with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member
13 shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of
14 the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources
15 each has received from God. Only members shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of
16 the church; non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the elders.
17 Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and
18 professional consultation.

19 Under Christ, this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the
20 privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and vote on the
21 election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters
22 as may be submitted to a vote.
23

24 Section 4 – On Church Discipline

25 Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties as embodied in the
26 Church Covenant or Constitution or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord
27 Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be
28 subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the
29 instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18: 15–17 and the example of scripture. Church
30 discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition
31 has failed.

32 Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation,
33 suspension from communion for a definite period, deposition from office, and
34 excommunication (see Matthew 18: 15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3: 14–15; 1 Timothy 5: 19–
35 20; 1 Corinthians 5: 4–5).

36 The purpose of such discipline should be for the repentance, reconciliation, and
37 spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (see Proverbs 15: 5; 29: 15; I
38 Corinthians 4: 14; Ephesians 6: 4; I Timothy 3: 4–5; Hebrews 12: 1–11;
39 Psalm 119: 115; 141: 5; Proverbs 17: 10; 25: 12; 27: 5; Ecclesiastes 7: 5;
40 Matthew 7: 26–27; 18: 15–17; Luke 17: 3; Acts 2: 40; I Corinthians 5: 5;
41 Galatians 6: 1–5; II Thessalonians 3: 6, 14–15; I Timothy 1: 20; Titus 1:
42 13–14; James 1: 22);

43 For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to
44 them (see Proverbs 13: 20; Romans 15: 14; I Corinthians 5: 11; 15: 33;
45 Colossians 3: 16; I Thessalonians 5: 14 [note this is written to the whole

1 church, not just to leaders]; I Timothy 5: 20; Titus 1: 11; Hebrews 10: 24–
2 25);

3 For the purity of the church as a whole (see I Corinthians 5: 6–7; II Corinthians
4 13: 10; Ephesians 5: 27; II John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21: 2);

5 For the good of our corporate witness to non–Christians (see Proverbs 28: 7;
6 Matthew 5: 13–16; John 13: 35; Acts 5: 1–14; Ephesians 5: 11; I Timothy
7 3: 7; II Peter 2: 2; I John 3: 10); and

8 Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (see
9 Deuteronomy 5: 11; I Kings 11: 2; II Chronicles 19: 2; Ezra 6: 21;
10 Nehemiah 9: 2; Isaiah 52: 11; Ezekiel 36: 20; Matthew 5: 16; John 15: 8;
11 18: 17, 25; Romans 2: 24; 15: 5–6; II Corinthians 6: 14–7: 1; Ephesians 1:
12 4; 5: 27; I Peter 2: 12).

13 14 Section 5 – Termination of Membership

15 The church shall recognize the termination of a person’s membership following
16 his or her death, and may do so after a person has voluntarily resigned or joined with
17 another church. Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (as
18 defined in Section 4), at the recommendation of the elders and upon the vote of at least
19 two-thirds of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members.

20 The church shall have authority to refuse a member’s voluntary resignation or
21 transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a
22 process of church discipline, or for any other biblical reason.

23 24 **Article VI – Worship Services and Meetings**

25 26 Section 1 – Worship Meetings

27 Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day, and may be held at other times as
28 the elders recommend and the church determines.

29 30 Section 2 – Members’ Meetings

31 In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust,
32 openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord
33 Jesus Christ.

34 There shall be a regular members’ meeting at least every other month, at some
35 time apart from a public worship service agreed upon by the membership.

36 An elder designated by the elders shall preside as moderator at all members’
37 meetings of the church. The elders shall see that the stated meetings of the church are
38 regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible
39 members.

40 Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum
41 shall be understood to be met by those members present. All votes shall be tallied based
42 on the number of votes cast by members present.

43 A budget shall be approved by the membership at the November members’
44 meeting prior to the start of the fiscal year on January 1. Prior to this approval a budget
45 for the next fiscal year shall be presented to the membership for review at the September
46 members’ meeting.

1 At any regular or special members' meeting, officers may be elected and positions
2 filled as needed, so long as all relevant constitutional requirements have been met.

3 Special members' meetings may be called as required by the elders, or at the
4 written request, submitted to the elders, of five percent of the voting membership. The
5 date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at all public services
6 of the church within two weeks preceding the meeting. In the event of a written request
7 from the members, the elders shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of
8 their receipt of the request.

9 10 **Article VII – Officers**

11 Section 1 – Summary

12 The Biblical offices in the church are elders (also referred to as pastors or
13 bishops) and deacons. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative positions
14 under this constitution of clerk and treasurer. All officers must be members of this
15 church prior to assuming their responsibilities.
16

17 Section 2 – Elders

18 The elders shall be comprised of not less than three men who satisfy the
19 qualifications for the office of elder set forth in I Timothy 3: 1–7 and Titus 1: 6–9. A
20 majority of the active eldership shall be composed of church members who do not receive
21 their primary remuneration from the church, and no elder shall hold the office of deacon
22 during his tenure.
23

24 Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and
25 resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6: 1–6 and I
26 Peter 5: 1–4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by
27 teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock.

28 The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in
29 accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. These men shall be received
30 as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders. This recognition shall be
31 reaffirmed by the church triennially. After an elder, other than the senior or associate
32 pastor(s), has served two consecutive three-year terms, he may only be elected to the
33 office of elder after at least one year.

34 An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any
35 two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express
36 such concern to the elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be
37 done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18: 15–17 and I
38 Timothy 5: 17–21. Any of the elders may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the
39 members at any members' meeting of the church.

40 The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective
41 members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions,
42 oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct
43 worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the
44 membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice,
45 admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and
46 promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The

1 elders are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including
2 outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions.

3 The elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in
4 fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders may also propose funding for new paid staff
5 positions. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill the positions of senior and
6 associate pastor. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall
7 reside in the hands of those with hiring authority for that position.

8 The elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and
9 evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be
10 delegated to another staff member. At least three (3) elders shall be chosen to also serve
11 as directors in accordance with Article VIII, Section 2 and Article XI,

12 Each year the elders, after consultation with the deacons, the deaconesses, and the
13 membership, shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be
14 presented for discussion at a specially-called budget meeting and called up for a vote at
15 the following members' meeting. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the
16 church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.

17 The elders shall elect a chairman of elders' meetings and shall also elect one of
18 their number to serve as moderator of members' meetings.

19 Section 3 – The Senior Pastor

20 The senior pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder
21 described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted
22 and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

23 His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation
24 set out in Article VII, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article VIII,
25 Section 3.

26 He shall preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and
27 communion, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth
28 in the constitution.

29 In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor the elders shall assume
30 responsibility for his duties, any of which may be delegated.

31 Section 4 – Associate Pastors

32 The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the senior pastor is
33 that of associate.

34 An associate pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder
35 described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted
36 and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

37 His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation
38 set out in Article VII, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article VIII,
39 Section 4.

40 He shall assist the senior pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall
41 perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor, or as set forth in the
42 constitution, or which may be specifically assigned to him by the congregation.
43
44

1 In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor for defined periods of time (such
2 as sabbatical or illness), the associate pastor(s) shall assume the responsibility for his
3 duties under the oversight of the elders.
4

5 Section 5 – Deacons & Deaconesses

6 The office of deacon is described in I Timothy 3: 8–13 and Acts 6: 1–7. The
7 church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men
8 and women who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess
9 particular gifts of service. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His
10 church and set apart as deacons and deaconesses. They shall be elected to one term
11 lasting for a maximum of three years and may only be elected to another term after one
12 year.

13 Deacons and deaconesses shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to
14 the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help
15 others and those with gifts of administration.

16 The deacons and deaconesses shall receive, hold, and disburse a fund for
17 benevolence, reporting on its use to the elders at their request, and reporting to the church
18 its total receipts and total disbursements only.

19 The deacons and deaconesses, with the agreement of the elders, may establish
20 unpaid administrative positions or committees of members to assist them in fulfilling
21 their responsibilities in the church.
22

23 Section 6 – Clerk

24 It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special
25 members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to
26 render reports as requested by the pastor, the elders, the deacons, or the church.

27 The clerk shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to
28 serve a term of one year.

29 In the absence or incapacity of the clerk the elders shall appoint a member to
30 perform the duties of the church clerk.

31 The church clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this
32 constitution shall be available for all church members.
33

34 Section 7 – Treasurer

35 The treasurer, who shall not be an active elder, deacon, or paid church staff
36 member, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in
37 such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer shall also
38 be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues and
39 expenses of the church at each members' meeting. The responsibility may be delegated
40 with the approval of the elders. The treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate
41 accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and
42 that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the
43 church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The
44 treasurer shall render to the elders annually, or whenever they may require it, an account
45 of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial condition of the church.

1 Section 4 – Calling of Associate Pastor

2 In the calling of any man to the position of associate pastor, the same basic
3 process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be
4 given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential associate pastor
5 and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders
6 that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted
7 assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a
8 man to be called as associate pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to
9 membership of him and his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning
10 services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members’ meeting.

11
12 **Article IX – Dispute Resolution**

13
14 Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to
15 resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (see, e.g.,
16 Matthew 18: 15–20, I Corinthians 6: 1–8), the church shall require its members to resolve
17 conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on
18 the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage
19 the use of biblically based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside
20 the church, whether or not Christian, and whether individuals or corporate entities.

21
22 **Article X – Indemnification**

23
24 Section 1 – Mandatory Indemnification

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

32
33 Section 2 – Permissive Indemnification

34 At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who
35 acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church’s
36 best interest and not unlawful.

37
38 Section 3 – Procedure

39 If a quorum of the elders is not available for an indemnification determination
40 because of the number of elders seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may
41 be made by the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

42
43 **Article XI - Church Corporation**

44
45 For purposes of the corporation laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia:

