Constitution of Columbia Bible Church
Adopted June 20th, 1977
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Red Underlined = Original Intent, Not in Constitution

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COLUMBIA
BIBLE CHURCH

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this Church shall be Columbia Bible Church, a Washington State Corporation, having its principal place of worship in Tri-Cities, Washington, Counties of Benton and Franklin, State of Washington, herein after referred to as this Church.

Our name is Columbia Bible Church, a Corporation of the State of Washington. We are a corporation because it is a convenient legal entity for holding property and entering contracts. We do not represent the State of Washington and the state does not interfere with our function. Our membership is the corporation. The first section of the Constitution (i.e. excluding the Bylaws) is filed with the state as the Articles of Incorporation.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of this Church is to stand unequivocally for the fundamentals of the Faith as contained in the Holy Scriptures; 2 Tim 3:16

To present the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ at home and abroad to those who have not believed in Him as their personal Savior; Matt 28:19

To teach the Holy Scriptures for the edification of those who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior; and to equip the saints for ministry, to encourage use of their spiritual gifts and build families and relationships that follow the Lord. 2 Pet 3:18; Eph. 2:10, 4:12

To do all things decently and in order, with love, unto edifying in the name of and for the honor and glory of our Savior Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. 1 Cor. 10:31, 14:26, 40, 16:14, Col 3:17-23

ARTICLE III - TENETS

1. The Government of this Church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, is not and shall not be subject to any external ecclesiastical authority. This Church may establish relations and maintain fellowship with other organizations of like belief. No financial support shall be given through this Church to any organization or worker when the doctrinal position of that organization or worker contradicts any portion of sections A through F of the Statement of Faith of this Church's Constitution.
2. This Church shall not coerce anyone to become a member. Nonmembers are welcome to participate in the fellowship. Those who desire to affiliate with this Church as a member may do so by complying with the provisions of Article V of this Constitution.
3. This Church shall not solicit gifts from unbelievers nor coerce funds or pledges from believers.

ARTICLE IV – GOVERNMENT

The government of this Church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, is vested in its members, herein after referred to as Members.

The authority of the Pastor, Deacons, Officers, and Committees is derived from the Articles of this Constitution, or by resolution of the Members decided in accordance with this Constitution at a duly called Business Meeting. Any authority not so granted is specifically reserved in the Members.

We believe that the Bible allows for doing church leadership (government) in different ways. As in God allowing Israel to have kings, even though He knew that it wouldn't be best for them over the long run. Our goal is to have our form of church leadership to act as servants before the congregation and Lord. With a proper set of checks and balances in obeying the Lord. With the ultimate authority resting in the membership under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
Our constitution is an orderly structure of rules and conditions under which this group of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ is organized to serve God as a local Church. Paraphrasing Abraham Lincoln, the function of Columbia Bible Church is of the members, by the members and for the members. The Pastor and Deacons serve the members and the members serve God. The constitution provides a strong system of checks and balances to ensure that no single person, group or faction can overrule the membership as a whole. The government of this Church is said to be vested in the members, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Specific authority is granted to the Pastor and Deacons by the members as provided in the constitution or by direct approval of specific proposals at business meetings. This forces the membership to take active responsibility for conduct of our ministry and prevents the church from being ruled by the Pastor or a dictatorial Deacon Board.

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP

A. A PERSON SHALL QUALIFY FOR MEMBERSHIP WHO:

1. Confesses the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior;
2. Is at least eighteen (18) years of age;
3. Accepts conscientiously without reservation Sections A through J of Article VII of this Constitution, the Statement of Faith;
4. Agrees to be governed in church affiliation by this Constitution and its duly adopted amendments;
5. Recognizes and accepts the authority of the Pastor-Teacher in this Church;
6. Applies for membership and, upon due examination by at least two members of the Deacon Board, is approved for membership by the Deacon Board. The Deacon Board shall not be obligated to accept any person as a member.

Qualifications for membership are intended to protect the integrity of this church. Members must be believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who accept the core of our Statement of Faith and accept the authority of our Pastor. It is our intent that new believers can be members without knowing or accepting all the doctrines included in the full Statement of Faith, as long as he or she submits to the Pastor on the issues. The Deacon Board has the authority and responsibility to guard against an unlikely hostile take-over by a group actively promoting contrary doctrines by denying membership for any reason they deem appropriate before God. We leave the final protection of membership before God in the Deacon's hands in order to deny membership to anyone they deem as not appropriate before God.

B. RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

1. Any person who meets the qualifications of this Article, shall be received as a Member into the fellowship of this Church.
2. Members have the right to attend and vote at any duly called Business Meeting of this Church and to submit petitions as provided in this Constitution.
3. Members have the privilege of holding elected or appointed office in this Church for which they are qualified in accordance with this Constitution.
4. Members have the responsibility to see that the Church functions in a way that glorifies God and to help with Church operation and ministry.

C. MEMBERSHIP ROLL

1. It shall be the duty of the Deacon Board to examine the membership roll at least annually. Any Member who has been absent for a period of three consecutive months or longer, and who fails to give satisfactory reason for such absence to the Deacon Board, may be removed from membership.
2. Any Member may be voluntarily removed from membership by submitting a written request to the Deacon Board or making a verbal request to at least two members of the Deacon Board.
3. A former Member may be reinstated by a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Deacon Board.
4. All changes to the membership role shall be made at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Deacon Board and recorded in the minutes thereof.

D. DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS

1. Any Member who fails to meet the Membership qualifications in Article V, Section A, of this Constitution, or gives just cause in conduct contrary to biblical principles, may be subject to dismissal.
2. All charges recommending dismissal shall be submitted to the Deacon Board in writing and signed by the accuser(s). "At such time, the Deacon Board will consider applying Matthew 18:15-17 and implement if appropriate."
3. A Member shall be dismissed by the vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Deacon Board in a duly called meeting at which he or she may be represented by two other Members, introduce evidence, present and cross-examine witnesses. The accused Member shall be presented with the written charges at least thirty (30) days prior to such meeting.

ARTICLE VI - BUSINESS MEETINGS

A. PLACE AND ANNOUNCEMENT

1. All business meetings of the Members shall be held at the principal place of worship of this Church, unless otherwise specified in the notice of the meeting.
2. Announcement of a business meeting shall be given from the pulpit on two (2) Sundays immediately preceding the meeting, and the notice and agenda of the meeting shall be posted on the church bulletin board on the two (2) Sundays immediately prior to the meeting. Announcement and posting may be reduced to the Sunday prior to the meeting by unanimous consent of the Deacon Board.

B. ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

There shall be an Annual Business Meeting of the Members before April 1st of each calendar year, the exact date to be determined by the Deacon Board.

C. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

Special business meetings of the Members shall be called by the Secretary of the Deacon Board upon request from the Pastor, a majority of the Deacons, or upon written request of at least twenty percent (20%) of the Members.

D. QUORUM AND CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

1. A quorum for the transaction of any business shall be fifty percent (50%) of the Members. The quorum may be reduced to forty percent (40%) of the Members by a vote of at least three fourths (3/4) of the Members present. The quorum may also be reduced to thirty percent (30%) of the Members by a vote of at least (90%) of the Members present.

There have been rare instances where a quorum was not met on the first count and one case where a meeting had to be rescheduled for lack of quorum.
To provide some flexibility the quorum may be lowered to 40% of the Members by a 3/4 vote, or 30% by a 90% vote of Members present. We believe this is a fair balance as the church grows between the need for active participation by the membership and the need to conduct business expeditiously.

2. The agenda of all business meetings of the Members shall include at least the following: opening and closing prayer, proof of notice of meeting and quorum, description of the business for which meeting was called, and reports and elections as required by this Constitution. Items of business for the agenda shall be determined by the Deacon Board or by written request of at least twenty percent (20%) of the Members.
3. The President of the Deacon Board, or other member of the Deacon Board chosen by the Deacon Board shall act as Chairman at all business meetings.
4. In the transaction of business, protocol shall be determined by the Chairman based on courtesy, respect, and Article II last sentence of this Constitution, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall be used as guidance at the discretion of the Chairman.
5. In case of dispute in the conduct of the meeting, the meeting may be adjourned by a vote of at least two thirds (2/3) of the Members present and voting. All prior votes at such meeting shall be nullified, In the case of such adjournment, all Business meetings held within the next three months shall be governed by Roberts' Rules of Order, Revised, "unless otherwise provided" in all points not prescribed by this Constitution.

Motions are limited to those items on the published meeting agenda to prevent any group hijacking a business meeting.
This does not require motions to be verbatim statements posted in the agenda, but they must at least be germane to the stated items of business. For example, an agenda item to authorize construction of a new storage shed would authorize motions on its location, financing, building method, paint color, etc., but not a motion to build a new auditorium. Votes on such "off-agenda" motions may be taken, but are only advisory.
If the rules break down so badly, or are manipulated so overtly that the conduct of the meeting is disputed, we want the members to just stop and start over as if the meeting never occurred. A disputed meeting may be adjourned on a motion passed by a 2/3 vote that also nullifies all the motions approved in the meeting. Hopefully, the meeting can be re-scheduled after the contention that disrupted the original meeting is resolved.

Special note: Adjournment by this provision should not be done lightly! Any future business meeting held within the next three months is required to be conducted strictly by the full Roberts Rules of Order, Revised, "unless otherwise provided" in all points prescribed by this constitution. Which means that ultimately the membership can decide how the meeting will be conducted.

6. The minutes of all business meetings of the Members shall be posted on the Church bulletin board within two (2) weeks following the meeting. Additions and corrections to the minutes shall be submitted in writing to the Deacon Board within the two (2) following weeks for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Deacon Board and shall be reported in the minutes of said meeting.

E. VOTING

1. The Chairman shall determine the method of voting, except that the following shall be by secret ballot: the election or removal of Deacons; purchase, sale, or transfer of real or personal property, and the calling or dismissal of a Pastor or Assistant Pastor.
2. Only Members present when the vote is called for may vote. Absentee or proxy votes shall not be counted.
3. Except in the election of a Deacon, the vote of a majority of Members present and voting shall prevail unless the vote of a greater number is required by law, this Constitution, or within the motion itself. A supermajority required by this Constitution may also be increased within the motion. Election of Deacons is covered in the Bylaws, Article III, Section B.
4. Advisory polls may be taken at any meeting, but no motion may be voted upon unless the specific topic is stated in the agenda of the meeting.

Motions are limited to those items on the published meeting agenda to prevent any group hijacking a business meeting.

This does not require motions to be verbatim statements posted in the agenda, but they must at least be germane to the stated items of business. For example, an agenda item to authorize construction of a new storage shed would authorize motions on its location, financing, building method, paint color, etc., but not a motion to build a new auditorium. Votes on such "off-agenda" motions may be taken, but are only advisory.

> *Special note: When it comes to phrasing motions, following a procedure, or interpreting the constitution, every group has a "lawyer", and everyone has a tendency to become one. Such lawyers are overly concerned with semantics and like to argue about what other people might possibly think a word means. Such arguments are a disruptive waste of time that could be better spent in discerning God's will.*

The method of voting is up to the Chairman of the meeting and, in the case of a voice vote, or show of hands, his decision is final. However, we intend for the most important decisions, including election or removal of Deacons, call or dismissal of a pastor, or purchase of property, for example, be voted by secret ballot.

A member may also move for a secret ballot on any vote. We do not allow absentee or proxy voting to ensure that each member has the same authority and responsibility for conduct of business. Only those who have heard all the discussion are fully informed to vote.

ARTICLE VII - STATEMENT OF FAITH

A. PLENARY AND VERBAL INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES

We believe the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be God-breathed (a), plenary (every word) (b), verbal (consisting of words) (c), and inerrant in the original writings (d). They are the supreme and final authority in faith and life (e).

a. 1Cor 14:37; 2:9-10; 2Tim 3:16; 2Pet 1:21; 3:15-16.
b. Mt 5:18; 2Tim 3:16
c. Mat 4:4; John 6:63.
d. John 17:17; Tit 1:2-3; Heb. 6:17-18
e. Ps 19:7-11; Ps 119:11; Isa 55:11; Mat 5:17-18; John 10:35; Rom 15:4; 2Tim 3:16-17.

B. SALVATION BY FAITH ALONE

We believe that salvation is received by means of personal faith in Jesus Christ alone without benefit of or requirement for works (a), that it is accomplished as a grace gift by God the Father (b) through the work of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross (c).

a. John 3:16-18; Rom 3:19-28; 4:5; 5:1; Gal 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9; I John 5:11-13.
b. John 3:16; 6:40; Rom 5:8; Eph. 2:8; 2Tim 1:8-9.
c. John 3:16; 14:6; Rom 5:5-11; 1Cor 15:1-4.

C. SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ, perfect and without sin (a), died as a substitutionary sacrifice on the cross (b), bearing punishment for all the sins of the entire world, past, present and future (c).

a. 2 Cor. 5:21; 1Pet 1:18-19; 2:22; 3:18; 1 John 3:5.
b. Rom 3:23-26; 5:6-8; 1Cor 15:3-4.
c. 2 Cor. 5:14-21; 1Tim 2:5-6; 1John 2:2.

D. THE GODHEAD

We believe in the one (a) eternal Almighty God (b) existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (c). They are co-eternal (d) and coequal as to nature, attributes, and perfection (e).

a. Deut. 4:35; 6:4; Isa 45:5-6; James 2:19.
b. Ps 90:2; John 1:1; Heb.6:13; Rev.1:8.
c. Isa 48:16-17; Mat 3:16-17; 28:19; 2Cor 13:14; 1 John 5:7.
d. Gen 1:1-2; John 1:1.
e. Isa 48:16; John 5:17-18; 10:30; 1 John 5:7.

E. DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe that the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary (a), lived a sinless life, did not possess a sinful nature (b), and is both true God and true man (c).

a. Isa 7:14; Mat 1:18; Luke 1:34-35.
b. 2Cor 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1John 3:5.
c. John 1:1-3, 1:14, 10:30; Phil 2:5-7; Heb. 2:17.

F. RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe that the physical body of Jesus Christ was resurrected (a) and ascended into heaven (b) where He is our Advocate and High Priest (c).

a. John 20:26-27; 1Cor 15:3-8.
b. Luke 24:50-52; Acts 1:9-11; 1Pet 3:21-22.
c. Rom 8:34, Heb. 7:24-25, 8:1, 1 John 2:1

G. SPIRITUALITY

Just as salvation is by grace though faith, so also the whole Christian way of life is by grace through faith. We believe that spirituality is an absolute condition in the life of a believer in the present age wherein he is filled or controlled by the Holy Spirit, walking in love and fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that spirituality is distinct from maturity; that a believer becomes carnal through an act of mental, verbal, or overt sin; and that spirituality or fellowship with Christ is restored solely by personal confession of that sin to God the Father.

John 15:7-8; Rom 6:11-13; 2 Cor. 5:6-7; Gal 5:16; Eph. 5:15-20; I John 1:9.

H. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BELIEVERS

It is God's will that every believer should grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ by the regular and frequent intake of Bible Doctrine. This is the basis of glorifying Jesus Christ in the angelic conflict (a).
Every believer has been called with a holy calling to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit, and so to live in the spirit that they should not fulfill the lust of the flesh; but the flesh being still in us to the end of the earthly life, needs to be kept constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest itself to dishonor His name (b).

a. John 17:14-17; Mat 4:4; Eph. 4:11-16; 2Pet 3:18.
b. Rom 8:12-13; 13:14; Gal 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; 5:18; Col 3:1-10.

I. SATAN

We believe that Satan is a created being who exists in personality and reality. He is the enemy of both God and of believers. He is the leader of a group of fallen angels.

Job 1:6-7; Mat 4:2-11; 25:41; Acts 5:3; 1Pet 5:8; Rev 12:7-10.

J. ETERNAL STATE

We believe that all those who have reached the age of accountability according to God who do not believe in God's provision of redemption through the death of Christ are eternally separated from God (a); they will be cast into the Lake of Fire where they will not be annihilated but will be punished with everlasting torment (b). We believe in a literal heaven (c). The Church-age believers pass immediately into God's presence at death (d).

a. Luke 16:19-26; John 3:17-18; 5:25-29; Rom. 1:18-21; 2 Sam. 12:20-23; Is. 7:14-16.
b. Mat 25:41; Rev 20:14-15, 21:8.
c. Acts 7:55-56; Phil 3:20; 1Thes 4:16; Rev.21:1-4.
d. John 14:3; 2Cor 5:8; 1Thes 4:17.

K. RAPTURE AND RESURRECTION

Believers who have died remain in heaven in conscious bliss until the resurrection of their glorified bodies at the Rapture when body and soul will be united and remain with the Lord forever (a). Old Testament and Tribulation believers will receive their resurrection bodies at the Second Advent (b).

a. 1Cor 15:42-58; Phil 3:20-21; 1Thes 4:13-18.
b. Dan 12:1-2; Rev 20:4-6.

L. THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is God. He is a distinct person of the Godhead who convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (a); regenerates those who believe (b); baptizes them into the body of Christ (c); indwells all believers of the present age (d); seals them unto the day of redemption (e); is the only source of power for acceptable worship and service (f); is the infallible interpreter of Holy Scripture (g); is ever present to testify concerning Jesus Christ (h). It should be the desire of every believer to be controlled by the Holy Spirit (i).

a. John 14:16-17; 16:7-11; 1John 5:7.
b. John 3:5-6; Tit 3:4-5.
c. 1Cor 12:12,13.
d. John 14:16-17; Rom 8:9-11; 1Cor 3:16; 6:19.
e. 2Cor 1:21-22; Eph. 4:30.
f. Acts 1:8; Rom 8:26-27; Gal 5:16-25.
g. John 14:26; 1Cor 2:9-16.
h. John 16:12-15; 1Pet 1:10-12.
i. Eph. 5:18.

M. ETERNAL SECURITY

We believe that all believers everywhere, once saved, shall be kept saved forever.

John 5:24; 10:28-29; Rom 8:1; 8:38-39; 1 John 5:13; Jude 24-25.

N. GREAT TRIBULATION

We believe that the present age will end and will be followed by Daniel's seventieth week (a). The Abomination of Desolation spoken by Daniel the prophet will appear in the middle of the seventieth week (b). The appearance of the Abomination of Desolation will begin the most terrible time ever known in history, called "The Great Tribulation" (c). The Great Tribulation is finally climaxed by the visible and personal return of Jesus Christ to set up his Kingdom (d).

a. Dan 9:24-27.
b. Dan 9:27; Mat 24:15.
c. Jer. 30:7; Dan 12:1; Mat 24:21-22.
d. Zech. 14:1-9; Mat 24:29-30; 2Thes 1:5-10.

O. MAN CREATED AND FALLEN

We believe that the immaterial part of man was created in the image of God but the first man, Adam, willfully sinned and fell from God's grace (a). In Adam, all men have inherited a sinful nature and all men have sinned and have incurred spiritual death, which is separation from God. Thus, all men now are alienated from God and remain totally unable to redeem themselves (b). Those who reach moral responsibility are held accountable for their sinfulness in thought, word, and deed (c). Through Jesus Christ, God created man and all that has come into being (man, animals and the universe did not evolve) (d).

a. Gen 1:26-27.
b. Gen 2:17; Ps 51:5; Rom 3:23; 5:12; 6:23; 7:17-25; Eph. 2:1-3.
c. Rom 2:1-15; Jas 2:10.
d. Gen 1:1-2:3; Ps 139:15-16; Col 1:16.

P. THE CHURCH - UNIVERSAL AND LOCAL

We believe that the Church Universal, which is the Body and Bride of Christ, includes the whole company of believers from Pentecost to the Rapture and that Jesus Christ is the Head and the Bridegroom (a).

We believe that the local church is any autonomous group of believers in Christ, in one geographical location, united in the Spirit, who meet together for instruction in the Word of God, prayer, observance of the Lord's supper, and observance of the ordinance of baptism by immersion (b). We believe that the mission of the Church is to glorify God and to present Jesus Christ to the world (c).

a. 2Cor 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; Col 1:24.
b. Mat 3:13-16; Acts 20:7; 1Cor 1:2, 11:23-29.
c. John 15:15-16; 1Cor 10:31; Phil 2:15-16.

Q. SPIRITUAL GIFTS

We believe that God the Holy Spirit, in grace and apart from human merit, sovereignly bestows spiritual gifts to believers in this dispensation. Some of the permanent spiritual gifts which exist today are: pastor-teacher, evangelist, administrator, helper, giving and showing of mercy.

We further believe that the temporary spiritual gifts ceased with completion of the Canon of Scripture, and these were: apostleship, prophecy, speaking in tongues, interpreting tongues, healing, and working of miracles.

Rom 12:4-8; 1Cor 12:1-11, 27-31; 13:8-10; Eph. 4:7, 11-16; 1Pet 4:10-11.

R. DISPENSATIONAL VIEWPOINT

This Church, by virtue of a consistent literal interpretation of the Scriptures, is Dispensational, Pre-millennial, and Evangelical. The English word dispensation comes from the Greek word oikonomia , which means "stewardship." A Dispensation or Stewardship is a distinguishable economy or period in the outworking of God's purpose(a). We believe that Israel always denotes the physical posterity of Jacob, and is never to be confused with the church (b).

a. Col 1:24-26; Eph. 1:9-10; 3:2-6.
b. 1 Cor.10:32; Rom 10:1, 11:1,25-28

S. DEATH OF CHRIST

We believe there are two aspects of the death of Christ - spiritual death and physical death. The spiritual death of Christ is the three hours on the cross during which He was judged in our place for the sins of the world to accomplish redemption (a). Physical death was the point when Christ voluntarily yielded up His soul and spirit after the work of redemption was completed. The physical death was a necessary part of the total work of Christ on the cross from numerous standpoints, including: the verification of the fact that redemption had been accomplished; the necessity for a bodily resurrection of the God-man as the First Fruits of the resurrection; the fulfillment of the covenants to Israel; Headship of the Church (b).

a. Mat 27:45-46; Luke 23:44-45; Rom 3:24-25; 5:8-9; 2Cor 5:21; Eph. 1:7; 1Pet 1:18-19.
b. Mat 27:50; Mk 15:37; Luke 1:31-33; 23:46; John 19:30; Acts 2:30-33; Rom 4:25; 1Cor 15:22-23; Eph. 1:20-23; Col 1:18.

T. Marriage, Sexuality, and the Family

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably created (each person) mankind in His image and assigned biological sex to His people, male (man) and female (woman) creating them sexually and biologically different, but with equal personal dignity and value (Genesis 1:26-28). These two distinct, complementary sexes together and individually reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). We believe that marriage was ordained by God at creation as the sacred and lifelong union of one biological man and one biological woman. All sexual relations must therefore be reserved for that union. Christian marriage is to be a representation of Christ's relationship to His church (Genesis 2:18-24; Matthew 19:1-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 5:22-33; Hebrews 13:4). Therefore, we believe that God has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage which is between one biological man and one biological woman.

Biblically unacceptable forms of sexual conduct include but are not limited to adultery, fornication, homosexual conduct, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and pornography (Ex. 22:19, Lev. 18:6-23, Deut. 27:20, Mat. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10,18; Heb.13:4). We believe that children are a blessing from the Lord, and that all human life including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death is sacred and worthy of protection from the moment of conception (Psalm 127; 128; 139:13-16). We are therefore called to value all human life. We believe God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption (Gen. 2:21-24; Josh. 24:15; Eph. 6:1-4; 1 Tim. 3:1-5). We believe that God offers forgiveness and restoration to all living Christians who confess their sin and seek forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:9). We believe that we need to express compassion, love, kindness, and respect. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes unjustly directed toward any individual are not in accordance with the Scripture, nor our beliefs at Columbia Bible Church. Holding people to a Biblical authority does not constitute hateful behavior, if it is done with love and kindness. We are committed to handling all such matters with an attitude of humility and grace (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31; 1 John 3:14-15; Ephesians 4:31).

U. Evolution vs. Creationism

We believe, God created the Heavens and Earth and all living and nonliving things. We hold that the various original life forms (kinds), including mankind were made by direct, supernatural acts of God over a six, 24-hour day period, and not by natural processes over millions years.

We reject the theory (notion) that human beings evolved from other life forms. We believe that God created Adam and Eve and that the entire human race has descended from them (Gen.1:1-3:20; Psalm 139:15-16; Acts 17:26; Col. 1:16). We hold that the account of origins presented in Genesis 1-12 is a simple but factual presentation of actual historical events.

ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS

A. TIME AND METHOD OF ADOPTION

These Articles of Incorporation may be amended by a vote of at least three-fourths (3/4) of the Members present and voting at any Annual Business Meeting. Proposed amendments to the Articles of Incorporation shall not be amended.

B. REQUIREMENTS

No amendment shall be voted upon unless:

1. a detailed description of the amendment has been submitted to each Member at least four (4) weeks prior to the Annual Business Meeting (one submittal per family unit shall suffice);
2. the vote on the amendment is announced from the pulpit on at least four (4) Sundays prior to the Annual Business Meeting;
3. it has been approved by at least 3/4 of the Deacon Board or submitted by a petition signed by not less that fifty percent (50%) of the Members.

Amendments to this Constitution are intended to be rare and very carefully considered. In line with this we recommend that the motion to accept future amendments require a supermajority of 90% as all have been done in the past. The constitution can only be amended at an annual business meeting and proposed amendments cannot themselves be amended. Anyone proposing an amendment to the Constitution must educate and seek the approval of the membership well in advance of the meeting. Amendments may be proposed by any member. But before being voted on they must be approved by the Deacon Board or requested by a petition signed by at least 50% of the Members. Consistent with the seriousness of amending the Constitution, this petition requirement has the same rigor as calling a meeting to dismiss the Pastor. We strongly recommend that for any amendment(s) or important motion(s) to give members much advance notice, and the reasons for doing so.

ARTICLE IX - DISSOLUTION

This Church shall be dissolved as a corporation of the State of Washington upon a vote of at least three-fourths (3/4) of the Members present and voting at a duly called Business Meeting. A four (4) week prior notice in writing to all members must be given prior to a vote for dissolution.
The method of disbursement of funds after satisfying all outstanding financial obligations shall be included in the notice and may be amended during the meeting by a vote of a majority of Members present and voting prior to the vote on the dissolution motion itself. Upon dissolving, any funds remaining after satisfying any outstanding financial obligations shall be disbursed as specified. Specified funds will be disbursed to a non-profit tax-exempt organization(s).

BYLAWS

PREAMBLE

These Bylaws are adopted for the Church government. No bylaws shall be effective that are contrary to the Articles of Incorporation of this Church.

ARTICLE I - PASTOR

1. The Pastor shall watch over the spiritual life of this Church, preach and teach the Word, administer the ordinances and have charge of the worship services. He will have final authority, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in all matters relating in any way to Bible Doctrine, except in those concerning the Statement of Faith.
   The Church Membership guided by the Holy Spirit has final authority to interpret and or amend the Statement of Faith. He shall be a voting member of the Deacon Board, Church Membership, and all committees.
2. He shall conscientiously and without reservation accept the Constitution of this Church, as amended, in its entirety.
3. A candidate for Pastor shall be considered only after he has subscribed in writing to the Constitution of this Church. He shall be recommended to the Members by a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the total number of Deacons in a duly called meeting of the Deacons, or by written petition signed by at least one half (1/2) of the Members.
   A candidate for Pastor so recommended shall be called to serve by a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Members present and voting at a duly called Business Meeting.
4. The Pastor may be recommended for dismissal by a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the total number of Deacons in a duly called meeting of the Deacons, or by written petition signed by at least one half (1/2) of the Members. If recommended for dismissal, the services of the Pastor shall be terminated by a vote of at least two thirds (2/3) of the Members present and voting in a duly called Business Meeting. At least thirty (30) days prior to such meeting, the Pastor shall be notified in writing of the reason(s) for the recommended dismissal, and at his election may be represented by two Members, introduce evidence, present and cross-examine witnesses.

- The Pastor is acknowledged as the spiritual leader, but the Statement of Faith can be changed only by a 3/4 vote of the members at an Annual Business Meeting. The Pastor is a member of the Deacon Board, but has only one vote and he is not counted in the board's quorum.

Though calling a pastor to serve requires a 2/3 majority vote, we recommend a supermajority of at least 90% for this very important decision where the unity of the church is being tested.
The primary work of the Pastor is teaching the Word of God, administering the Lord's Supper, Baptism, and Marriage, and guiding the spiritual life of the church. He is the final authority on matters of Bible Doctrine, but does not dictate church business. This is reserved in the membership as delegated to the Deacon Board of which the Pastor is a member. This separation of powers is a unique feature of our Constitution and has served God's purposes well for over 40 years.

Special note: While the Pastor is a member of and has a vote on the Deacon Board, the quorum is preferably at least 2/3 of the deacons, and supermajority requirements for their votes are always stated as "2/3 of the deacons", for example. This is a subtle separation of power that allows the Pastor to influence simple majority votes, but not those issues reserved for decision by the deacons. We prefer that all decisions be made unanimously with the pastor's approval if possible.

ARTICLE II - ASSISTANT PASTOR

1. The Assistant Pastor(s) shall have duties and responsibilities as defined by the Pastor. Unless the Deacon Board disapproves.
2. He shall conscientiously and without reservation accept the Constitution of this Church, as amended, in its entirety.
3. The Assistant Pastor(s) shall be called in the same manner as the Pastor.
4. The Assistant Pastor(s) shall be dismissed in the same manner as the Pastor or upon written request by the Pastor approved by a vote of 2/3 of the Deacons at a duly called meeting.

The qualification requirements and manner of calling the Pastor and Assistant Pastor are the same. We made them the same because their influence and testimony would likely be similar. However, the Pastor's authority and responsibility are specifically stated, while those of the Assistant Pastor(s) are to be defined by the Pastor. Hence the Assistant Pastor(s) serves under the direction of the Pastor. Unless the Deacon Board disapproves.

The Pastor also has a vote on the Deacon Board and all committees while the Assistant Pastor(s) does not. We wanted the Pastor to be clearly in charge and the Assistant Pastor(s) to be clearly his assistant to avoid any potential for a power struggle.

More importantly, while the Pastor may only be dismissed by a large supermajority of the Members at a business meeting, the Assistant Pastor (s) may also be dismissed by request of the Pastor approved by the Deacons.

There can only be one Pastor and the Assistant Pastor(s) must work diligently and enthusiastically under his authority. No conflict or competition can be allowed.

If it does occur, the Pastor must have the authority, with Deacon approval, to dismiss the Assistant Pastor(s)without causing the trauma of a "trial" before the full membership.

ARTICLE III - DEACONS

A. NOMINATION

1. The nominating committee for Deacons shall consist of the elected Deacons and the Pastor. The proceedings of the nominating committee shall be unrecorded and confidential.

2. Two candidates for Deacon shall be nominated by the nominating committee. The two candidates so nominated, who have accepted such nomination,
shall be announced at least 30 days prior to the Business meeting at which Deacons are to be elected. When electing two Deacons, four candidates shall be nominated, and when three, then six.
3. An exception to paragraph two above is that one additional candidate may be nominated per position by a written petition signed by at least one fourth (1/4) of the Members and submitted to the Deacon Board not less than ten (10) days prior to the Business meeting at which Deacons are to be elected.
4. Names of persons nominated, who have accepted such nomination, shall be included in the agenda for the Business meeting at which the election is to be held.
5. A Deacon must conscientiously accept the Constitution of this Church, as amended, in its entirety and shall conform to the Biblical qualifications for that office as stated in the following passages:

The Deacons do the work of organizing and maintaining the ministry of Columbia Bible Church. Three to Seven Deacons serve rotating three-year terms to prevent a permanent group of ruling "elders". Unless the Holy Spirit directs us to re-elect a Deacon(s) to serve a consecutive term(s). We believe that some Deacons may also take on the role of an Elder/Overseer as described in the Bible. Deacon candidates for the Annual Business Meeting are nominated by the sitting Deacon Board. It is the only business the constitution allows to be done in secret. But this much can be told. The Pastor usually reviews the Biblical qualifications (summarized in Acts 6:3 and 1 Tim 3:8-12) and the membership list is screened against them.

One additional Deacon candidate per position (who meets the requirements for office) may also be nominated directly by petition of one fourth of the members. This prevents a faction from keeping control of the Deacon Board. The Deacon Board must receive the nominating petition at least 10 days prior to the scheduled business meeting at which deacons are to be elected.

Similarly, the two candidates nominated by the sitting Deacon Board must be published at least 30 days prior to this meeting so the members can decide in time whether to nominate a third candidate.

B. ELECTION

1. The Deacon shall be elected who receives the largest number of votes of the Members present and voting at the Annual Business Meeting or a duly called Special Business Meeting of the Members.
   a. Votes may be cast for one, or if more than one, in order of preference for as many candidates as positions being filled on one ballot of the duly nominated candidates. No write-ins or absentee votes, except for nursery and Sunday school staff present in the building, shall be counted.
   b. A tie vote between candidates shall be decided on a coin toss by the Chairman.
2. Each Deacon shall be elected for a term not exceeding three (3) years, or until his successor is elected.
   A Deacon who has served a three (3) year term shall be eligible for immediate reelection. The term of approximately one-third (1/3) of the Deacons shall expire each year. If more than one Deacon is being elected, then votes shall be cast sequentially for each position.
3. The number of Deacons shall be not less than three (3), and not more than seven (7). The vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Members present and voting at a duly called Business Meeting shall be required to change the number between three (3) and seven (7) from the existing number of Deacons.

The deacon candidate(s) elected is the one who receives the most votes. If there is a tie vote, the tie is broken by a coin toss by the Chairman.

We believe this is authorized by Proverbs 16:33, *The **lot** is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD. If the number of candidate(s) equals the number of open positions, then one will have the option to vote no on a candidate.*

Article Three-Deacons-section B. number one a. intends for one vote only to take place for Deacon, whether for one, two, or three. By putting them in order of preference. So that if one is electing two or three Deacons then the one with the most votes will be elected, and then their name crossed off, and the one receiving the most votes then will be elected, and so on if three.

C. REMOVAL

1. A Deacon or any officer of this Church may be removed from office by the vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Members present and voting at a duly called Business Meeting.
2. A Deacon may voluntarily remove himself from office by submitting his resignation in writing or stating his resignation verbally to at least two members of the Deacon Board.
3. The office of Deacon shall be considered vacant upon the occurrence of any one of the following: Death, resignation, refusal to serve, removal from office, or absence from three (3) consecutive meetings of the Deacon Board without satisfactory excuse.
4. A vacancy shall be filled by election of a Deacon by the Members at a duly called Business Meeting. A Deacon so elected shall serve the unexpired term of his predecessor.

ARTICLE IV - BOARD OF DEACONS

A. MEETINGS

1. The Board of Deacons shall consist of the elected Deacons and the Pastor.
2. A regular meeting of the Deacon Board shall be held not later than thirty (30) days after the annual meeting of Members for the purpose of electing Officers of the Deacon Board. Other regular meetings shall be held at such times and places as the Deacon Board may determine but at least once a month.
3. A special meeting of the Deacon Board may be called any time at the request of the Pastor, the President of the Deacon Board, or the majority of the Deacons.
4. A quorum for conduct of business at a meeting of the Deacon Board shall be two-thirds (2/3) of the total number of Deacons. The quorum may be reduced to fifty percent (50%) of the total number of Deacons with a unanimous vote.

   The acts of the majority present and voting shall be the act of the Deacon Board unless otherwise specifically required by law, by this Constitution, or within the motion itself. No member of the Deacon Board shall vote on any motion deciding his own salary, reimbursement, or any other compensation.
5. All meetings of the Deacon Board shall be held at the principal place of worship of this Church unless otherwise specified in the notice of the meeting.
6. Notice of a regular or special meeting of the Deacon Board shall be given at least three (3) days prior to such meeting. Notice may be waived by unanimous consent of the Deacons. The purpose of the meeting need not be stated in such notice.
7. The minutes of all meetings of the Deacon Board shall be posted on the Church bulletin board within two (2) weeks following the meeting.

B. OFFICERS

1. The Board of Deacons shall elect one of their number (except the Pastor) to be President, one to be Secretary, and one to be Treasurer.
2. The President shall be responsible for the convening of all Deacon Board meetings; special and annual church business meetings; presiding over these meetings as Chairman, and preparation of the order of business for these meetings.
3. The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping the minutes of the business meetings of the Members and the Deacon Board; issuing notice of all business meetings of the Members and the Deacon Board; acting as custodian of the Corporate records; keeping current a roster of all Members with addresses; maintaining a record of attendance at the Deacon Board meetings; preparing and signing instruments authorized by the Deacon Board or Members, and preparing the agenda of all business meetings of the Members.

4. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the handling of all church funds; payment and disbursement of all church debts, including payroll; preparation and presentation of all financial reports or documents and proper keeping of books of account. He shall annually disclose an income and expense account verified by at least one other Member who is not a member of the Deacon Board and was not a member of the Deacon Board during the period that the accounts being verified were recorded.
5. The responsibilities of a Deacon who is absent shall be assumed by those present.

C. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

General responsibilities of the Board of Deacons in addition to the above shall include; coordination and use of all physical facilities for church services or meetings; selection of church ushers and attendants; overall administration of the Sunday School, youth programs and nursery; church publicity; forming committees; hire and discharge of employees (except the Pastor); determination of salaries; authorizing the use of church facilities for any spiritual or secular purposes; and execute all instructions by the Members adopted in a duly called Business Meeting.

- The Deacon Board has authority to conduct church business, but it does so at the pleasure of the membership, and Deacons serve terms of only three years unless nominated and re-elected. Major contracts, loans, large purchases, and which missionaries to support, among other items, must be authorized by the membership before the deacons can act.

The Board of Deacons consists of the elected Deacons and the Pastor, though the Pastor need not be present for a quorum. Deacons' meetings are intended to be fully open (except for nominating deacon candidates) to the congregation. For this reason, they are to be held at the church, notice is posted well in advance, and minutes of the meeting are required to be posted within two weeks.

Special note: The Minutes of Deacons' meetings are the primary means of communicating Deacon Board decisions, actions, and deliberations. All members should read these minutes with interest! If they are not posted within the required two weeks, ask one of your Deacons to do so immediately!

Though the Deacon Board may have the authority to make a decision, they should defer sensitive or important ones it to the membership. Deacons need to have the attitude of a servant! We also recommend that all Deacon Board decisions be unanimous as much as possible.

If one deacon is in firm opposition, earnest discussion and prayer is much more effective than a contentious vote! We recommend that the Deacon Board pray often during meetings, not just at opening and closing, but serious, around-the-table-twice prayer sessions asking God to influence the decision. We have seen powerful results from this as the Pastor can attest.

ARTICLE V - MISSIONARIES

1. Support of missions or missionaries for more than three months by this Church, and termination of such support, shall be decided by a vote of at least three-fourths (3/4) of the Members present and voting at a duly called Business Meeting.
2. The money amount of support and schedule of payment shall be determined by the Deacon Board.
3. No mission or missionary shall be supported unless the Deacon Board confirms that the doctrinal position of such mission or missionary conforms with the Articles of Incorporation, Article VII, the Statement of Faith, Sections A-F.

Missionaries have always been a sensitive issue. There are strong emotional bonds between missionaries and the congregation. This is why votes to support or withdraw support from a missionary require the highest (3/4) supermajority in the constitution. Once approved, the Constitution doesn't specify any term limits and support could continue indefinitely. However, we have established a 4-year support cycle for each missionary by specifying the number of years in the motion to support. Thus, the Deacons and members must periodically review and approve support of each missionary with the required 3/4 supermajority.

> *Special note: Our policy has been to support a few missionaries well, rather than giving a little to many. This requires considerable discipline. There are many very worthy causes deserving our attention, but we must not commit support to all who come to our door. We must also remember that prayer is more important than money.*

Whenever missionaries are voted upon, the Deacon Board must formally confirm that they accept the statement of faith sections A through F. The confirmation should be kept on file for members to review. Once support is approved by the members, the Deacon Board sets the amount. This gives the Deacons the flexibility to handle church financial problems, or to terminate support if a missionary should go so far astray biblically that immediate action is required.

A vote by the membership on the amount of financial support is only advisory. From time to time the church has the opportunity to support children from the congregation, and sometimes members themselves, on short-term missions. If these missions are more than three months, they are "missionary support" and must meet the same requirements as for the outside long-term missions. *Special note: The conditions and procedures described here do not apply to private contributions by members. Each person is completely free to support any mission anywhere in any fashion.*

ARTICLE VI - CHURCH PROPERTY

The following transactions by the Deacon Board acting on behalf of the Corporation shall require specific instruction and authority given by a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Members present and voting at a duly called Business Meeting:

1. Contracting for loans;
2. Contracting for leases longer than one year;
3. Purchase of real or personal property at a cost of more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the previous year's total annual income;
4. Sale of real property;
5. Sale of personal property which has a market value more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the previous year's total annual income.

ARTICLE VII - AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended with the same procedure and requirements as amendments to the Articles of Incorporation.