

*to secure and preserve the truths  
and principles of our faith and to  
govern this local church in an orderly  
manner*

## Fairview Covenant Church Constitution & Bylaws

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## CHURCH CONSTITUTION

We establish this Constitution to secure and preserve the truths and principles of our faith and to govern this local church in an orderly manner.

### ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this church is Fairview Covenant Church. This church is incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas,

Fairview Covenant Church is an autonomous local gathering of God's people, which chooses to affiliate with the co-operative program of The Southern Baptist Convention for the purpose of advancing God's kingdom through world missions, mercy ministries, and theological education.

### ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The *foundation* of this church is Christ (1 Cor. 3:11). This church's authority in all its affairs is Scripture (the Old and New Testaments), which is God's Word (Mark 13:31).

The *calling* of this church is to (1) worship God according to His Word, (2) practice the precepts and examples of the church as set forth in the New Testament, (3) sustain its ordinances and doctrines (as found in ARTICLE III), and (4) preach the gospel of salvation which is by faith in Christ alone.

The *identity* of this church flows from the revelation of God's glory in Christ. We exist to worship God (John 4:23), grow in the knowledge of Him (1 Cor. 14:26; 2 Peter 3:18), and spread His glory among all peoples (Matt. 28:18–20; 5:16; 1 Peter 2:9; 3:15).

The *purpose* of this church is to equip God's people to live in a manner "worthy of the gospel" to the glory of God among all peoples (Phil. 1:27).

### ARTICLE III: CONFESSION

This church affirms as its doctrinal statement the New Hampshire Confession of Faith (1853). (See Appendix A)

This church also acknowledges the following documents as helpful guides for maintaining good order and preserving the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3).

The Nicene Creed

The Definition of Chalcedon

The Second London Baptist Confession

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (1978)

The Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (1988)

The Nashville Statement on Biblical Sexuality

### ARTICLE IV: COVENANT

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

We engage by the assistance of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to advance this church in knowledge and holiness; to uphold its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel among all nations.

We engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate our children in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our family and friends; to walk carefully in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct; to avoid all gossip, backbiting, and sinful anger; to seek God's help in abstaining from all practices that bring disrepute to the church and harm to our fellow believers.

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

We engage that, when we move from this place, we will, if possible, unite with a church where we can carry out the articles of this confession and the spirit of this covenant.

## **ARTICLE V: PROPERTY**

In the event of a division (from which we pray God in His mercy will spare us), the property of this church will belong to that group as represents the largest portion of the membership, provided such group is loyal to the Constitution and Bylaws. Otherwise, it will belong to the group remaining loyal to the Constitution and Bylaws, though it may not be the largest group.

If for any reason this church should disband, Grace Community Church (in Glen Rose, TX) and Grace Covenant Church (in Weatherford, TX), will receive any profits upon the disposal of the property.

## **ARTICLE VI: MEMBERSHIP**

The Bible takes church membership seriously. This is inferred from many things, including Paul's example. (1) Paul knows who belongs to each local church, mentioning people by name (Rom. 16:1–16). This implies some sort of formal process whereby members are identified. (2) Paul recognizes elders and deacons in each local church (Phil. 1:1). These church offices are meaningless unless leaders know who is under their charge. (3) Paul speaks of church discipline, culminating in expulsion from the local church (1 Cor. 5:1–7). This makes no sense unless people know who is in the church. (4) Paul encourages the practice of making lists (1 Tim. 5:5–16). Such a procedure is only possible if there's some understanding of who belongs to the church.

Membership is the formal organization of a community of believers in a particular place. We have received Christ as Savior. We have been baptized as a sign that we are one with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. We recognize that we are one body – a new community and humanity. We recognize that a local church is a particular expression of the one body. We covenant with fellow Christians in a local church to live out the reality of the one body.

Thus, the function of the local church is pivotal to all believers. We cultivate love for one another (Col. 3:14). We speak the gospel into one another's life. We believe that God changes people through the gospel, that He transforms people through the gospel, and that He shapes and nurtures people through the gospel. In this context, we use our gifts for mutual edification (Eph. 4:7–16). Christ distributes gifts to all believers (v. 8), "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up of the body of Christ" (v. 12). As a result, the church is edified (vv. 13–16).

All this implies that God has designed the local church for His people's spiritual growth.

The membership of this church consists of those who (1) confess faith in Christ, (2) give evidence of regeneration by living according to the confession and practice of this church, (3) have been baptized as a believer, and (4) are received into its membership according to the Bylaws of this church. Due to the sensitive nature of some issues, Members less the 16 years of age will be non-voting members...

Those who desire to become members must complete the Foundations Course. Furthermore, they are required to submit a membership profile in which they agree to abide by the church's beliefs, positions, and policies as outlined in the Constitution and Bylaws.

If a disagreement in any of these areas should occur, members will hold Fairview Covenant Church and its leadership "harmless." There is no appeal to any court. Membership does not give any proprietary rights in the church, but it entitles all members to vote on those matters submitted to the membership.

## **ARTICLE VII: ORGANIZATION**

The offices of this church are elders and deacons. The elders lovingly shepherd, teach, lead, and equip the members to do the work of the ministry. The deacons lovingly serve the needs of the members.

The leadership rests in the council of elders who are responsible for governing the church, teaching the Word, and shepherding the flock. The elders are equal in authority but may be specialized in function. The elders serve under the authority of God's Word.

Deacons assist the Elders by performing services of counsel, administration, and ministry implementation.

## **ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended by  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of the members present at a duly called members' meeting. Any proposed revision must be presented by the elders in writing to all church members at least two weeks before the scheduled vote.



**ARTICLE IX: FILING**

This Constitution will be kept in the church office.

## APPENDIX A

### New Hampshire Confession of Faith (1853)

#### Of the Scriptures

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

1. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21; 1 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. 13:5; Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:6; Jude 3; Eph. 6:17; Psa. 119:59-60; Phil. 1:9-11

#### Of the True God

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth;<sup>1</sup> inexpressibly glorious in holiness,<sup>2</sup> and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love;<sup>3</sup> that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;<sup>4</sup> equal in every divine perfection,<sup>5</sup> and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.<sup>6</sup>

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### Of the Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker;<sup>1</sup> but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state;<sup>2</sup> in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners,<sup>3</sup> not by constraint, but choice;<sup>4</sup> being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin,<sup>5</sup> without defense or excuse.<sup>6</sup>

1. Gen. 1:27, 31; Eccl. 7:29; Acts 17:26-29; Gen. 2:16-17

2. Gen. 3:6-24; Rom. 5:12

3. Rom. 5:19; John 3:6; Psa. 51:5; Rom. 5:15-19; 8:7
4. Isa. 53:6; Gen. 6:12; Rom. 3:9-18
5. Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 1:18, 32; 2:1-16; Gal. 3:10; Matt. 20:15
6. Ezek. 18:19-20; Rom. 1:20; 3:19; Gal. 3:22

### **Of the Way of Salvation**

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

1. Eph. 2:8; Matt. 18:11 [or Luke 19:10]; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor. 3:5, 7; Acts 15:11
2. John 3:16; 1:1-14; Heb. 4:14; 12:24
3. Phil. 2:6-7; Heb. 2:9, 14; 2 Cor. 5:21
4. Isa. 42:21; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 3:21
5. 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 6. Heb. 1:8, 3; 8:1; Col. 3:1-4
7. Heb. 7:25; Col. 2:9; Heb. 2:18; 7:26; Psa. 89:19; Psa. 34

### **Of Justification**

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ<sup>1</sup> secures to such as believe in Him is Justification;<sup>2</sup> that Justification includes the pardon of sin,<sup>3</sup> and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness;<sup>4</sup> that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood;<sup>5</sup> by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God;<sup>6</sup> that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.<sup>7</sup>

1. John 1:16; Eph. 3:8
2. Acts 13:39; Isa. 53:11-12; Rom. 8:1
3. Rom. 5:9; Zech. 13:1; Matt. 9:6; Acts 10:43
4. Rom. 5:17; Titus 3:5-7; 1 Pet. 3:7; 1 John 2:25; Rom. 5:21
5. Rom. 4:4-5; 5:21; 6:23; Phil. 3:7-9
6. Rom. 5:19; 3:24-26; 4:23-25; 1 John 2:12
7. Rom. 5:1-3, 11; 1 Cor. 1:30-31; Matt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 4:8

### **Of the Freeness of Salvation**

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel;<sup>1</sup> that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith;<sup>2</sup> and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and

voluntary rejection of the gospel;<sup>3</sup> which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.<sup>4</sup>

1. Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; Luke 14:17

2. Rom. 16:25-26; Mark 1:15; Rom. 1:15-17

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

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

### **Of Grace in Regeneration**

We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated or born again;<sup>1</sup> that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind;<sup>2</sup> that it is effected, in a manner above our comprehension, by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth,<sup>3</sup> so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel;<sup>4</sup> and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.<sup>5</sup>

1. John 3:3, 6-7; 1 Cor. 2:14; Rev. 14:3; 21:27

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

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

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

5. 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

### **Of Repentance and Faith**

We believe that Repentance and Faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God;<sup>1</sup> whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ,<sup>2</sup> we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy;<sup>3</sup> at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all sufficient Saviour.<sup>4</sup>

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

2. John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38; 16:30-31

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

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

### **Of God's Purpose of Grace**

We believe that Election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners;<sup>1</sup> that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end;<sup>2</sup> that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable;<sup>3</sup> that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy;<sup>4</sup> that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree;<sup>5</sup> that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel;<sup>6</sup> that it is the foundation of Christian assurance;<sup>7</sup> and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence.<sup>8</sup>

1. 2 Tim. 1:8-9; Eph. 1:3-14; 1 Pet. 1:1-2; Rom. 11:5-6; John 15:16; 1 John 4:19
2. 2 Thess. 2:13-14; Acts 13:48; John 10:16; Matt. 20:16; Acts 15:14
3. 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
4. 1 Cor. 4:7; 1:26-31; Rom. 3:27; 4:16; Col. 3:12; 15:10; 1 Pet. 5:10; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:9; Luke 18:7
5. 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Cor. 9:22; John 6:37-40; 2 Pet. 1:10
6. 1 Thess. 1:4-10
7. Rom. 8:28-31; Isa. 42:16; Rom. 11:29
8. 2 Pet. 1:10-11; Phil. 3:12; Heb. 6:11

### **Of Sanctification**

We believe that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness;<sup>1</sup> that it is a progressive work;<sup>2</sup> that it is begun in regeneration;<sup>3</sup> and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means, especially the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.<sup>4</sup>

1. 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:23; 2 Cor. 7:1; 13:9; Eph. 1:4
2. Prov. 4:18; Heb. 6:1; 2 Pet. 1:5-8; Phil. 3:12-16
3. 1 John 2:29; Rom. 8:5; John 3:6; Phil. 1:9-11
4. Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 4:11-12, 30; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 13:5; Luke 9:23; 11:35; Matt. 26:41; Eph. 6:18

### **Of the Perseverance of Saints**

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end;<sup>1</sup> that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors;<sup>2</sup> that a special Providence watches over their welfare;<sup>3</sup> and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.<sup>4</sup>

1. John 8:31; 1 John 2:27-28; 3:9; 5:18
2. 1 John 2:19; John 13:18; Matt. 13:20-21; John 6:66-69
3. Rom. 8:28; Matt. 6:30-33; Jer. 32:40; Psa. 121:3; 91:11-12
4. Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; Jude 24-25; Heb. 1:14; Heb. 13:5; 1 John 4:4

### **Of the Harmony of the Law and the Gospel**

We believe that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government;<sup>1</sup> that it is holy, just, and good;<sup>2</sup> and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts arises entirely from their love of sin;<sup>3</sup> to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy Law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible Church.<sup>4</sup>

1. Rom. 3:31; Matt. 5:17; Luke 16:17; Rom. 3:20; 4:15
2. Rom. 7:7, 12, 14, 22; Gal. 3:21; Psa. 119
3. Rom. 8:7-8; Josh. 24:19; Jer. 13:23; John 6:44; 5:44

4. Rom. 8:2-4; 10:4; Heb. 8:10; Heb. 12:14; Jude 20-21

### **Of a Gospel Church**

We believe that a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers,<sup>1</sup> associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel;<sup>2</sup> observing the ordinances of Christ;<sup>3</sup> governed by his laws,<sup>4</sup> and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word;<sup>5</sup> that its only scriptural officers are Bishops, or Pastors, and Deacons,<sup>6</sup> whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and Titus.

1. 1 Cor. 1:1-13; Matt. 18:17; Acts 5:11; 8:1; 11:21-23; 1 Cor. 4:17; 14:23; 3 John 9

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

3. 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Matt. 18:15-20; 2 Cor. 2:7; 1 Cor. 4:17

4. 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

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

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

### **Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

We believe that Christian Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer,<sup>1</sup> into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost;<sup>2</sup> to show forth, in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life;<sup>3</sup> that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation; and to the Lord's Supper,<sup>4</sup> in which the members of the church, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ;<sup>5</sup> preceded always by solemn self-examination.<sup>6</sup>

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

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

4. Acts 2:41-42; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts and Epistles

5. 1 Cor. 11:26; Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20

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

### **Of the Christian Sabbath**

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath;<sup>1</sup> and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes,<sup>2</sup> by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private<sup>4</sup> and public;<sup>5</sup> and by preparation for that rest that remaineth for the people of God.<sup>6</sup>

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

2. Exod. 20:8; Rev. 1:10; Psalms 118:24

4. Psalms 118:15

5. Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 11:26

6. Heb. 4:3-11

### Of Civil Government

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

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

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

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

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

### Of the Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked;<sup>1</sup> that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem;<sup>2</sup> while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse;<sup>3</sup> and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.<sup>4</sup>

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

2. 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

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

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

### Of the World to Come

We believe that the end of the world is approaching;<sup>1</sup> that at the last day Christ will descend from heaven,<sup>2</sup> and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution;<sup>3</sup> that a solemn separation will then take place;<sup>4</sup> that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy;<sup>5</sup> and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.<sup>6</sup>

1. 1 Pet. 4:7; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Heb. 1:10-12; Matt. 25:31; Matt. 28:20; 13:39-43; 1 John 2:17; 2 Pet. 3:3-13

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

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

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

5. Matt. 25:31-46; 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

6. 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; 2 Peter 3:11-12





## CHURCH BYLAWS

### ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

All who profess faith in Christ, give evidence of a changed heart, follow Christ's command to be baptized, and affirm the beliefs, principles, and practices of this church (as expressed in its Confession and Covenant) may be received into membership.

Those who are transferring their membership from another church are required to acquire a letter of recommendation from their previous church. We recognize that acquisition of such a letter might not always be possible. Such circumstances might include the dissolution of the previous church, doctrinal error at the previous church, etc.

Anyone who desires to be a member of this church must complete the Foundations Course and sign the church's Covenant and Bylaws.

A member of Fairview Covenant Church may be removed from membership under the following circumstances:

- (1) Upon request for a letter of recommendation from a member who desires to unite with another church. This letter will be sent to the pastor or clerk of the new church.
- (2) Upon withdrawal of membership by this church from a member according to the stipulations of Matthew 18:15–17 and 2 Corinthians 5. See ARTICLE XIII.
- (3) Upon non-attendance. Members who have not participated in the worship of this church for a period of two months (or have not participated regularly for a period of six months) – unless for reasons such as poor health, military service, distant education, etc. – will be considered inactive members. If such members do not provide a satisfactory explanation for their absence, they will be removed from church membership.

### ARTICLE II: GOVERNANCE

This church will convene six members' meetings each year – to be held on the last Wednesday of January, March, May, July, September, November. The only exception would be conflicting events.

The lead pastor will chair these meetings, and the agenda will be set by the elders. The church's participation in and confirmation of key decisions is of utmost importance. At

times, this will include voting, especially on matters related to creating staff positions, making major changes to the church property, adopting a budget, and confirming elders/deacons. This is a way to ensure that the membership assumes ultimate responsibility for the church. “All decisions must be supported by  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the vote of the members present at a duly called members’ meeting.”

If 30% of active members are not present, then there is not a quorum and church business cannot be conducted.

### ARTICLE III: LAY OFFICERS

All officers are members of this church in good standing. They are called and appointed by affirmation of the church membership.

Lay officers are the non-paid elders and deacons of the church. The elders will recognize and interview candidates for service. If deemed suitable, they will present these individuals (at a members’ meeting) for the church’s consideration.

An officer may resign his office at any time if he finds he is no longer able to fulfill his duties and responsibilities.

If a grievance exists against an officer of the church, due to beliefs that are contrary to the New Hampshire Confession of Faith (see Constitution Appendix A) or due to conduct contrary to the Covenant, such a grievance may be brought before the elders by any two members in good standing, following the procedures prescribed in ARTICLE XIII. If the elders, after investigation and consideration, believe the grievance to be true and substantial, then the officer may be removed from office upon the recommendation of the elders and confirmation of the membership.

### ARTICLE IV: REMUNERATED PASTORS AND MINISTERS

**Definition.** Remunerated pastors are the ordained elders of the church, who devote their lives to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church. Remunerated ministers are the non-ordained ministers of the church who serve the church as their primary calling. Both remunerated pastors and ministers are supported financially by the church in return for their labors.

**Duties.** In addition to those described in ARTICLES V and VI, remunerated pastors and ministers perform the duties determined by the elders. These duties will be communicated in

writing at the time of the call to service, and substantial changes will be approved by the elders. The church's call of a pastor is a call to the eldership of the church. Therefore, he must possess all the biblical qualifications of an elder. Remunerated ministers are not necessarily called to the eldership of the church, but as assisting partners in the ministry. Therefore, they are deacons. When appropriate, they may be added to the elders from the deacons.

**Calling.** The elders are responsible for presenting candidates for ministry before the membership for their affirmation and confirmation.

**Termination.** (1) By resignation. The question of terminating the employment of a remunerated pastor or minister may be considered at any time upon the presentation of the pastor's or minister's resignation. (2) Grievance. If a grievance exists against a pastor or minister, either to his teaching as being contrary to the beliefs of the church (as set forth in the ARTICLE III) or his conduct as being unfitting an elder or deacon, such grievance may be brought before the elders by any two members in good standing, following the procedure prescribed in ARTICLE XIII. If, after thorough investigation and consideration, the elders believe the grievance to be true and substantial, then the employment of the pastor or minister may be terminated upon the recommendation of the elders and confirmation of the membership.

## ARTICLE V: ELDERS

**Composition.** The council of elders is composed of lay elders and staff elders. It is always a plurality (more than one) with the number of lay elders (not employed) always exceeding (by at least one) the number of staff elders (employed). The total number of elders is determined by the needs of the church and the qualifications of men in the church.

**Calling.** Candidates will be carefully examined by the elders as to their qualifications and support of the doctrine and practice of the church. A potential elder must have proven himself as a man of character and ability. The following steps are the process by which a man becomes an elder:

- (1) Initiation: he responds to God's work in his life by expressing a desire to serve in a leadership capacity.
- (2) Consultation: the elders meet with him to discuss his qualifications for service, his agreement with the Confession and Constitution of Fairview Covenant Church, the expectations of the ministry, and other areas that may be deemed pertinent and beneficial.
- (4) Confirmation: the elders unanimously agree that he has the potential for leadership and thereby assume responsibility to work with him toward that end.

- (5) **Demonstration:** the elders inform the church (at a members' meeting) that he is under consideration for the leadership position.
- (6) **Presentation:** if his life and service are deemed to be appropriate, he will be presented to the church for evaluation, examination, and affirmation as one whom God has qualified for leadership. The entire congregation will be given a thirty-day period in which to provide input to the elders.
- (7) **Affirmation:** after the elders have acted upon the input of the congregation (if necessary), and if the elders agree that he is indeed qualified for leadership, then the elders will present him at a members' meeting for the church's affirmation and confirmation.
- (8) **Evaluation:** elders will engage in an annual review (by fellow elders) for the purpose of providing mutual accountability and ensuring on-going suitability for the office."

**Qualifications.** See I Timothy 3:1–7, Titus 1:6–9, and 1 Peter 5:1–4. See Appendix A.

**Responsibilities.** The fundamental responsibility of the elders is to devote themselves to prayer and the Word. They are responsible for leading the church, teaching the Word, and tending the flock. Other responsibilities include examining prospective members and acquainting them with the Confession, Constitution, and Foundations Course, overseeing the process of church discipline, examining prospective candidates for office, overseeing the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conducting worship services, administering the ordinances of the gospel, equipping the membership of the church for the work of the ministry, teaching the whole counsel of God both formally and informally, correcting error, overseeing, coordinating and promoting the ministries of the church, and mobilizing the church for local and world mission. The elders seek to establish policies, positions, and practices for Fairview Covenant Church that are consistent with the purposes of the church.

**Organization.** The elders organize themselves as they deem best to achieve the mission of the church. They are equal in authority but may be specialized in function. They must meet at least once per month. Meetings may be held at any location and may be conducted by means of electronic communication. A quorum for meetings of the elders is defined as at least ½ of the elders.

**Decisions.** Decisions are reached after prayerful consideration by the unanimous or majority vote of the council, in a spirit of humility. Whether the decision necessitates a unanimous or majority vote, the elders must have a spirit of unanimity. Any violation of this spirit must be

considered a serious breach of elder qualifications. If it should occur more than once, without genuine repentance, this elder must seek the approval of the council of elders to continue in the office of elder (Titus 3:10).

- (1) Unanimity of all elders is required for matters such as hiring pastoral staff, appointing elders, deacons, or missionaries (to be supported by the missions' budget), amending the Constitution or Bylaws, changing the church's Confession.
- (2) Majority of all elders is required for all other decisions. Those elders in the minority position will yield to the majority position in the spirit of Philippians 2:3, thereby preserving the unity of the elders. Therefore, those elders in the minority (while not necessarily required to publicly agree) must publicly support the decision of the majority. Any violation to this spirit of unity will be dealt with as outlined in the opening paragraph of this section.
- (3) Voting exclusions apply to decisions that directly pertain to any of the elders (such as church discipline, salary review, etc.). These are made at the discretion of the other elders without the participation of the elder in question (other than input required of him).
- (4) Church participation and affirmation are required for decisions on major issues. These will be presented at a duly scheduled members' meeting. Questions related to clarification will be addressed. Questions of an objectionable nature will be directed to one of the elders in private, within one week of the time of the meeting. If the elder, who hears the information relating to the objection, is unable to answer the member's concern, he must take the information to the other elders for consideration.

If the new information prevents the unanimous/majority vote required of the elders, no action will be taken. The congregation will be informed of this process in a manner deemed appropriate by the elders, and no action will be taken on the issue at hand until the required unanimous/majority vote is reached. But after all consideration is given to the input of the congregation, and the required unanimous/majority vote is still the mind of the elders, then the issue will go forward as originally presented.

***Leadership.*** The elders will be chaired by the lead pastor. He will also represent the council to the congregation in business meetings.

## ARTICLE VI: DEACONS

**Composition.** The deacons are both staff ministers and lay deacons. The number of deacons is determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of individuals in the church.

**Qualifications.** Deacons are qualified for the office as specified in 1 Timothy 3:8–12.

**Responsibilities.** Deacons advise and assist the elders in any service that supports and promotes the ministry of the Word, new and existing ministries of the church, and the care for the members of the congregation. Some of their responsibilities are:

- administering funds to assist the poor and needy
- providing aid in times of crisis or distress
- welcoming visitors to the church
- administering the ordinances of the gospel
- assisting fellowship gatherings
- maintaining the church properties
- administering the business affairs of the church that pertain to its material assets

**Organization.** The deacons organize themselves as they determine best to achieve the mission of the church. The elders or the deacons may designate any deacon or group of deacons to specialize in some specific diaconal function. Meetings of the deacons are held as needed.

## ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES AND APPOINTEES

The elders may create committees and positions to which they may delegate a specific ministry responsibility. Such committees and positions will be dissolved upon completion of their mandate. Each committee will have a chairperson, responsible for the overall operation of the committee, appointed by the elders. These committees will exist for a specific time, determined by the elders. They will perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties specifically delegated to them. The general functions of the committees will be:

- to submit recommendations concerning ministries to the elders
- to provide counsel to the elders in their oversight of specific ministries

## ARTICLE VIII: EMPLOYEES

In addition to vocational pastors and ministers, this church may employ additional personnel. The elders are responsible for determining the duties and hiring of such personnel.

## ARTICLE IX: FINANCES

No method of fund-raising, which conflicts with Scripture, will be employed. All donated funds pass through the financial administrator of the church, in order that due record may be made. The deacons assist the financial administrator in accounting for donated funds.

**Contributions.** Membership in this church involves an obligation to support the church and its causes with regular and proportionate giving. Each member is encouraged to give, with tithing as the ideal minimum. Special offerings may be sought by the church, or by any of its organizations, with the approval of the elders. This does not preclude individuals from making special offerings or designated gifts at any time as they deem appropriate.

**Planning.** The financial planning of the church is carried out by means of annual budgets. These are adopted by the church membership upon recommendation of the elders and deacons.

**Accounts.** Financial receipts from all sources are accounted for by the financial administrator according to the purposes for which contributions are designated. The financial administrator disburses these funds promptly according to the financial program of the church as detailed in the budget or other authorized designations. All funds for missions are remitted in accordance with the missions' budget of the church each month.

**Indebtedness.** No note or contract exceeding 1% of the total annual budget, whereby the credit of the church is pledged, will be made except by recommendation of the elders in consultation with the deacons.

## ARTICLE X: FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee consists of Lay Officers appointed by the unanimous vote of the elders present at a duly called elders meeting.

They are invested with the management of financial and legal matters of the church. They have no power to buy, sell, lease, or transfer, or in any way encumber any property of the church without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action. They execute all deeds,

ventures, mortgages, liens, transfers, property insurance, lease contracts, or any other document for and on behalf of the church which have been approved by the church. *As a group*, they fill the function of President and Secretary of the corporation, consistent with BOC Sec 22.231(b) and Sec 22.233.

Finance Committee members are not held personally liable for debts and other obligations assumed by the church.

## **ARTICLE XI: CORPORATE WORSHIP**

Public services are held on the Lord's Day. They include Sunday School for all ages and Worship. On Wednesday evenings, the church gathers for prayer and fellowship. Other services (e.g., youth studies, men's studies, women's studies, etc.) may be scheduled as the advancement of the work of the church requires.

## **ARTICLE XII: ORGANIZATION OF MEMBERS FOR MINISTRY**

Members of this church have the liberty to participate in and organize themselves for ministry, provided that such participation does not conflict with the Constitution. Any organization may seek church sanction from the elders as an official ministry of Fairview Covenant Church. Such sanction will be granted provided that (1) the object, purpose, belief and conduct of the organization and its members is consistent with the Constitution, and (2) the primary officers of the organization are members of the church. Sanction by the elders does not necessarily imply support of the organization by the church with personnel, finances, or facilities. Such support may be requested as provided by the leadership of the church.

## **ARTICLE XIII: DISCIPLINE**

All proceedings will be conducted in prayer, marked by Christian kindness and forbearance under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

***Policy.*** Each member of the body of Christ is responsible to live righteously and to encourage righteous behavior in other believers. Accountability is a Christian obligation that extends beyond the membership of the local church. This process begins with self-examination and a spirit of humility (Gal. 6:1–5). Believers are instructed to beware of their own sins, to practice repentance, and to be quick to seek reconciliation with offended individuals (Matt. 5:23–25; 7:1–5). The members of Fairview Covenant Church have a special relationship to one other. Consequently, THEY have the privilege of experiencing the full expression of love and care for the local body as outlined in Scripture and as detailed below.



Church discipline is a clear directive in Scripture. It is intended to restore an erring member (2 Cor. 2:5–8), to purify the church (1 Cor. 5:6–8), to warn other members about the dangers of sinful behavior or teaching (Deut. 19:20; Acts 5:11; 2 Cor. 7:11), and to demonstrate the reality of righteous living to the world (Eph. 4:22–24). Discipline is exercised with compassion for the erring member and a sincere desire to seek that person’s repentance, reconciliation, and (if possible) restoration to the fellowship of the local church (Matt. 18:12–14).

Discipline does not entitle the elders to abuse their authority over the members of the church (1 Peter 5:1–3). Specific guidelines are followed that identify the reason and process for church discipline.

The members of Fairview Covenant Church belong to a local expression of the one body of Christ and share a common purpose and mission. They are mutually accountable to each other, to encourage godly living (Heb. 10:23–25). Discipline begins with individual accountability that is the responsibility of every member. Members are encouraged to take this responsibility seriously.

Scripture is clear that the motives of the individual(s) dealing with the erring member must be pure before Christ and His church.

- They are to avoid vengeance and presumption (Gal. 6:1).
- They are not to be motivated by hostility or anger, but by a loving concern for the erring member (2 Thess. 3:15).
- They are to approach the erring member with heart-felt sorrow and sincere concern (1 Cor. 5:2; 2 Cor. 2:4).
- They are to be ready to grant restoration to the erring member when repentance occurs (Luke 17:1–10; 2 Cor. 2:5–8).

**Offenses.** No church member is above accountability (1 Tim. 5:19–22). Discipline is not God’s method for making the church sinless. Scripture defines certain deviations from the truth as grounds for formal discipline. Sin that damages the church, weakens its testimony, or promotes disunity, constitutes an offense that necessitates formal discipline. These sins fall under the following categories:

- (1) False teaching constitutes a deliberate departure from the foundational doctrines of Scripture (Titus 3:10; Rev. 2:14), as defined in this church’s Constitution (specifically ARTICLE III).

- (2) Apostasy constitutes a public denial of the essential truths of God's Word (e.g., the inspired Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the final authority for belief and behavior; the Trinity; the complete humanity and deity of Christ; the utter sinfulness of all humanity; the incarnation of Christ; Christ's substitutionary atonement as the only way of salvation; the bodily resurrection and return of Christ; salvation by God's grace through faith in Christ; the eternal damnation of the lost and the eternal glorification of the saved). These essential truths are reflected in this church's Constitution (Gal. 2:11–14; 1 John 2:19).
- (3) Divisiveness undermines the unity of Fairview Covenant Church either between members or against God's established authority in the church (Phil. 4:2–3; 1 Thess. 5:14).
- (3) Immorality brings shame on the testimony of Christ and the local church (1 Cor. 5:11; 6:9–11; 1 Thess. 4:3–8). It pollutes the church and disrupts its mission. Scripture denounces sexual impurity. These sins include adultery, homosexuality, and every other kind of sexual deviancy or impurity that Scripture calls fornication (*porneia*). Such behavior is not to be tolerated among God's people (Rom. 1:26–27).

**Procedure.** Church discipline is to be handled prayerfully, carefully, and justly. Below are the steps of accountability and discipline (Matt. 18:15–20).

- (1) Arrange a private meeting with the offender. Humbly confront the person with the nature of the offense. If the person repents, the matter is closed (Matt. 18:15; Luke 17:3). Scripture does not specify the number of times that an offender should be confronted. Believers should be longsuffering (1 Cor. 13:4–8; 1 Peter 4:8). If there is no repentance, then there is a responsibility to move to the next step.
- (2) Set up another private meeting with one or two witnesses present (Matt. 18:16). This step should never be taken hastily, but after prayerful consideration. If repentance occurs, the offender should seek forgiveness from the circle of offense, and no more. It is important to understand who qualifies as a witness and what their function is in the disciplinary process.

Biblically, a witness is a person who bears testimony of another's wrongdoing based on first-hand knowledge. A person is not constituted as a witness who bears testimony based on hearsay, gossip, or second-hand knowledge (Deut. 19:15–19). The Bible condemns false witnesses (Exod. 20:13). Accusations not substantiated by two or three witnesses must be left to the One who knows all things and judges righteously (Num. 35:30; Ps. 51:3–4).

It is the function of a witness to ensure that the offense is clearly and impartially presented and that nothing is left unsaid. Witnesses recognize that they are accountable to God for their motives and actions (Matt. 18:20).

- (3) At this point, the matter must be brought by the elders to the members of Fairview Covenant Church (Matt. 18:17). The entire membership has a responsibility, as opportunity provides, to call the offender to repentance. A suitable period of time will be established by the elders in order to optimize the fullest effect of the witness of the entire membership, to allow for the work of the Lord and to provide time for repentance.

If there is repentance, the church should be quick to respond with grace and forgiveness (2 Cor. 2:5–8). While repentance and reconciliation are instantaneous, consequences may still be necessary given the nature of the offense.

- (4) As defined in Matthew 18:17, the unrepentant offender will be considered a “pagan or a tax collector.” The offender is likened to a “pagan,” which signifies that the person is outside the community of God’s grace and blessing. The offender is also likened to a “tax collector,” which signifies that the person is untrustworthy and potentially dangerous.

This constitutes a removal from church membership, resulting in a recognition that the unrepentant offender is outside the realm of God’s blessing (1 Cor. 5:1–13). Common grounds for friendship have been removed. The church has a responsibility to act in unison, calling the person to repentance, so as not to undermine the biblical process or the severe temporal consequences of the person’s obstinate behavior. It is hoped that there will be repentance and reconciliation, because of the loving application of this biblical mandate.

The action of the church carries the highest authority. It is binding as clearly stated in Matthew 18:18–20. There can be no appeal to any court because of this action (1 Cor. 6:1–2). A member may not resign his/her membership, to avoid church discipline.

***Integrity.*** In all matters of church discipline, the members are expected to hold the knowledge with integrity, avoiding gossip and the defamation of character (Eph. 4:31–32; James 4:11). Church discipline is an internal affair, which must not be paraded before the world.

#### ARTICLE XIV: AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended by  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of the members present at a duly called members' meeting. Any proposed revision must be presented to all church members at least two weeks before the scheduled vote.

## Appendix A

### Qualifications of Elders/Deacons

The office of elder/overseer is a noble task (1 Tim. 3:1). He acts on Christ's behalf by shepherding His people. An elder must be able to teach (1 Tim. 3:2). He must hold "firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it" (Titus 1:9). This includes two things. (1) He must be able to give instruction in sound doctrine. (2) He must be able to refute those who contradict it.

Given the importance of this office, Paul provides specific qualifications. Most of them are related to character. An overseer must be beyond reproach (1 Tim. 3:2). This is a blanket statement, which applies to all that follows.

<i>Elders (1 Tim. 3:1–7)</i>	<i>Elders (Titus 1:5–9)</i>	<i>Deacons (1 Tim. 3:8–13)</i>
Above reproach (v 2)	Above reproach (v 6, 7)	Blameless (v 10)
Husband of one wife (v 2)	Husband of one wife (v 6)	Husband of one wife (v 12)
Sober-minded (v 2)	Disciplined (v 8)	Dignified (v 8)
Self-controlled (v 2)	Self-controlled (v 8)	Not double-tongued (v 8)
Respectable (v 2)	Lover of good (v 8)	
Hospitable (v 2)	Hospitable (v 8)	
Able to teach (v 2)	Able to give instruction (v 9)	
Not a drunkard (v 3)	Not a drunkard (v 7)	Not addicted to wine (v 8)
Not violent, but gentle (v 3)	Not violent (v 7)	
Not quarrelsome (v 3)	Not quick-tempered (v 7)	
Not a lover of money (v 3)	Not greedy for gain (v 7)	Not greedy for gain (v 8)

Manage family well (v 4)

Children are faithful (v 6)

Manage family well (v 12)

Not a recent convert (v 6)

Tested (v 10)

Respected by outsiders (v 7)

Not open to ridicule (v 6)

Not arrogant (v 7)

Five key questions to ask of prospective elders:

1. *Are you a one-woman man? (1 Tim. 3:2)*

An overseer must be “the husband of one wife.” What does this mean? (1) An overseer must be married. Not likely, as Paul would have said: “An overseer must be married.” (2) An overseer must not be guilty of polygamy. Not likely, as polygamy was outlawed in the Roman Empire. (3) An overseer must not be remarried, after the death of his wife. Not likely, as this is inconsistent with the rest of Scripture. (4) An overseer must not be divorced, or he must not be married to a divorced woman. It is very possible that Paul prohibits divorced men from holding office. (5) An overseer must be faithful to his wife. Morally? Emotionally? Financially? Spiritually? Physically? Practically?

2. *Does your love for God wield the greatest influence upon your affections? (1 Tim. 3:2-3)*

When we love God, our desire and delight are fixed on Him. This moderates our affections. (1) It moderates our attitude toward people. We are hospitable. (2) It moderates our pursuit of pleasure. We avoid drunkenness. (3) It moderates our indulgence of anger. We are not violent, but gentle. (4) It moderates our handling of conflict. We are not quarrelsome. (5) It moderates our use of money. We are not greedy.

How do you know when the Spirit is active in someone's life? It isn't by the gifts of the Spirit. The church at Corinth had plenty of gifts, but Paul rebukes them as carnal – not spiritual. It's by the fruit of the Spirit. In these verses, Paul describes a Spirit-filled man.

3. *Is your household well managed?* (1 Tim. 3:4–5)

If a man is incapable of maintaining order in his home, it is unlikely that he will have any success in the church. How do we keep our children submissive? “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). The term *nouthesia* (instruction) is a compound word: *nous* (mind) and *tithemi* (to put). It means “to put in the mind.”

4. *Do your roots go deep?* (1 Tim. 3:6)

He must not be a recent convert. Why not? He might “become puffed up with conceit.” Pride comes before a fall.

- When it comes to the church’s history and confessions, he lacks knowledge. Therefore, he has nothing against which to test his own understanding.
- When it comes to the Christian’s journey and trials, he lacks experience. He doesn’t know what it means to be a Christian in the home, workplace, or community. How can he lead others into unfamiliar territory?
- When it comes to the Word’s profundity and intricacies, he lacks understanding. He doesn’t know how to comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable.
- When it comes to his own wisdom and abilities, he lacks perspective. Moses spent 40 years in Egypt and 40 years in Midian, before God called him. Admittedly, there’s something contagious about youthful enthusiasm, but it is no substitute for the quiet, mature, humble, patient, steady, unassuming man, who has been well-tested by fire.

*5. What do people say about you? (1 Tim. 3:7)*

“He must be well thought of by outsiders.” Why? It reveals true character.

**Fairview Covenant Church**

**Membership Statement**

I have read Fairview Covenant Church's Confession, Constitution, and Bylaws (including Article XIII of the Bylaws on church discipline). I confirm my agreement with the content of these documents and to all the procedures outlined in Article XIII.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and return it to the church office. Thank you.