



# **New Covenant**

**BIBLE CHURCH**

**Constitution**

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## Preamble

New Covenant Bible Church was formed on March 28, 2010, as a general not-for-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Illinois.

## Article I: Mission of the Church

New Covenant Bible Church exists to bring glory to God through Spirit-transformed lives by the beauty and power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## Article II: Statement of Faith

(Adapted from the Confessional Statement of the Gospel Coalition)

### 1. The Triune God

We believe in one God,<sup>1</sup> eternally existing in three equally and fully divine Persons: the Father,<sup>2</sup> the Son,<sup>3</sup> and the Holy Spirit,<sup>4</sup> who know, love, and glorify one another.<sup>5</sup> This one true and living God is infinitely perfect both in his love<sup>6</sup> and in his holiness.<sup>7</sup> He is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible, and is therefore worthy to receive all glory and adoration.<sup>8</sup> Immortal and eternal,<sup>9</sup> he perfectly and exhaustively knows the end from the beginning,<sup>10</sup> sustains<sup>11</sup> and sovereignly rules over all things,<sup>12</sup> and providentially brings about his eternal good purposes to redeem a people for himself and restore his fallen creation,<sup>13</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Exod 15:11; 20:2–3; Deut 4:35, 39; 6:4–5; 32:39; 1 Kings 8:60; Isa 44:6–8; 45:5–6, 14, 21–22; 46:9; John 17:3; Rom 3:30; 1 Cor 8:6; Eph 4:6; 1 Tim 2:5; Jas 2:19

<sup>2</sup> John 13:3; 20:17; Rom 1:7; 15:6; 1 Cor 15:24; Phil 2:11; Jas 1:27; 2 Pet 1:17; Rev 1:6

<sup>3</sup> Isa 9:6; John 1:1, 18; 20:28; Rom 9:5; Col 1:19; 2:9; Titus 2:13; Heb 1:3, 8–10; 2 Pet 1:1; 1 John 5:20

<sup>4</sup> Acts 5:3–4; 1 Cor 3:16; Heb 9:14

<sup>5</sup> Matt 3:17; 17:5; John 3:35; 5:20; 8:54; 13:32; 14:31; 16:14; 17:1, 5, 24

<sup>6</sup> 1 John 4:8–10, 16

<sup>7</sup> Exod 15:11; Lev 11:44–45; 19:2; 20:26; Josh 24:19; 1 Sam 2:2; Ps 22:3; 99:3, 5, 9; Isa 6:3; 57:15; 1 Pet 1:16; Rev 4:8; 15:4

<sup>8</sup> Gen 1:1; Neh 9:6; Ps 90:2; Isa 40:26, 28; 45:18; Jer 10:12; John 1:3; Acts 4:24; 14:15; 17:24; 1 Cor 8:6; Eph 3:9; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2; 11:3; Rev 4:11; 10:6; 14:7

<sup>9</sup> Gen 21:33; Deut 33:27; Ps 90:2; Isa 40:28; 1 Tim 1:17; Heb 9:14

<sup>10</sup> Isa 46:10; 1 John 3:20

<sup>11</sup> Col 1:17; Heb 1:3

<sup>12</sup> Ps 103:19; Dan 4:35; Matt 10:29–30; Rom 11:36

<sup>13</sup> Gen 50:20; Eph 1:11; 3:11

<sup>14</sup> Isa 48:11; Eph 1:6, 12, 14

## 2. Revelation

We believe that God has graciously disclosed his existence and power in the created order,<sup>15</sup> and has supremely revealed himself to fallen human beings in the person of his Son, the incarnate Word.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, this God is a speaking God who by his Spirit has graciously disclosed himself in human words: we believe that God has inspired the words preserved in the Scriptures, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, which are both record and means of his saving work in the world.<sup>17</sup> These writings alone constitute the verbally inspired Word of God, which is utterly authoritative<sup>18</sup> and without error in the original writings,<sup>19</sup> complete in its revelation of his will for salvation, sufficient for all that God requires us to believe and do,<sup>20</sup> and final in its authority over every domain of knowledge to which it speaks. We confess that both our finitude and our sinfulness preclude the possibility of knowing God's truth exhaustively, but we affirm that, enlightened by the Spirit of God,<sup>21</sup> we can know God's revealed truth truly. The Bible is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it teaches; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; and trusted, as God's pledge, in all that it promises. As God's people hear, believe, and do the Word, they are equipped as disciples of Christ and witnesses to the gospel.<sup>22</sup>

## 3. Creation of Humanity

We believe that God created human beings, male and female, in his own image.<sup>23</sup> Adam and Eve belonged to the created order that God himself declared to be very good,<sup>24</sup> serving as God's agents to care for, manage, and govern creation, living in holy and devoted fellowship with their Maker.<sup>25</sup> Men and women, equally made in the image of God, enjoy equal access to God by faith in Christ Jesus and are both called to engagement in family, church, and civic life.<sup>26</sup> Adam and Eve were made to complement each other in a one-flesh union that establishes the only normative pattern of sexual relations for men and women,<sup>27</sup> such that marriage (an exclusive union between one man and one woman) ultimately serves as a type of the union between Christ and his church.<sup>28</sup> In God's wise purposes, men and women are interdependent, not simply interchangeable; they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. God ordains that they assume distinctive roles which reflect the loving relationship between Christ and the church, the husband exercising headship in a way that displays the caring,

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<sup>15</sup> Ps 19:1–6; Acts 14:17; Rom 1:19–20

<sup>16</sup> John 1:1; Heb 1:1–2; Rev 19:13

<sup>17</sup> 2 Tim 3:16; James 1:18; 1 Pet 1:23; 2 Pet 1:19–21

<sup>18</sup> John 10:35

<sup>19</sup> Ps 12:6; Prov 30:5; John 10:35; 17:17; Titus 1:2; Heb 6:18

<sup>20</sup> 2 Tim 3:15–17; cf Jas 1:18; 1 Pet 1:23

<sup>21</sup> 1 Cor 2:13–15; Eph 1:17–18; 1 John 2:20–21, 27

<sup>22</sup> Matt 28:18–20

<sup>23</sup> Gen 1:26–27; 5:1–2; 9:6; Jas 3:9

<sup>24</sup> Gen 1:31

<sup>25</sup> Gen 1:28–30; 2:15–20

<sup>26</sup> Gal 3:28

<sup>27</sup> Gen 2:18–24; Matt 19:6; 1 Cor 6:16–7:5; 11:11–12

<sup>28</sup> Eph 5:22–32

sacrificial love of Christ,<sup>29</sup> and the wife submitting to her husband in a way that models the love of the church for her Lord.<sup>30</sup> In the ministry of the church, both men and women are encouraged to serve Christ and to be developed to their full potential in the manifold ministries of the people of God.<sup>31</sup> The distinctive leadership role within the church given to qualified men is grounded in creation, fall, and redemption.<sup>32</sup>

#### 4. The Fall

We believe that Adam, made in the image of God, distorted that image and forfeited his original blessedness—for himself and all his progeny—by choosing to sin against God in response to Satan’s temptation.<sup>33</sup> As a result, all of creation is subjected to futility and all human beings are alienated from God, corrupted in every aspect of their being (e.g., physically, mentally, volitionally, emotionally, spiritually)<sup>34</sup> and condemned finally and irrevocably to death<sup>35</sup>—apart from God’s own gracious intervention.<sup>36</sup> The supreme need of all human beings is to be reconciled to God and saved from his just and holy wrath;<sup>37</sup> the only hope of all human beings is the undeserved love of this same God, who alone can rescue us and restore us to himself.<sup>38</sup>

#### 5. The Plan of God

We believe that from all eternity God determined in grace to save a great multitude of guilty sinners from every tribe and language and people and nation,<sup>39</sup> and to this end foreknew them and chose them.<sup>40</sup> We believe that God justifies and sanctifies those who by grace have faith in Jesus, and that he will one day glorify them<sup>41</sup>—all to the praise of his glorious grace.<sup>42</sup> In love God commands and implores all people to repent and believe,<sup>43</sup> having set his saving love on those he has chosen and having ordained Christ to be their Redeemer.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> 1 Cor 11:3; Eph 5:25–33; Col 3:19; 1 Tim 3:4–5, 12; 1 Pet 3:7

<sup>30</sup> Eph 5:22–24, 33; Col 3:18; 1 Tim 2:9–12; Titus 2:4; 1 Pet 3:1–6

<sup>31</sup> 1 Cor 12:7, 11; 1 Pet 4:10

<sup>32</sup> 1 Cor 14:33–36; 1 Tim 2:11–14; 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9

<sup>33</sup> Gen 3; Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 15:21–22

<sup>34</sup> Gen 6:5; Pss 58:3; 130:3; 143:2; Ecc 7:20; 9:3; Isa 1:6; 64:6; Jer 13:23; 17:9; John 8:34; Rom 1:18–3:20, 23; 8:5–8; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 4:17–19; Titus 1:15; Jas 3:2; 1 John 1:8, 10

<sup>35</sup> Isa 59:2; Rom 1:18; 5:16, 18; 6:23; 8:6, 10

<sup>36</sup> Matt 7:17–18; John 3:3, 5; 6:44, 65; Rom 8:7–8; 1 Cor 2:14

<sup>37</sup> John 3:36; Rom 1:18; 2:5, 8; 5:9; 9:22; Eph 2:3; Col 3:6; 1 Thess 1:10; 2:16; 5:9

<sup>38</sup> Matt 19:25–26; Eph 2:1–10

<sup>39</sup> Rev 5:9; 7:9–10

<sup>40</sup> Acts 13:48; Rom 9:6–23; 11:5–6; 1 Cor 1:27–31; Eph 1:4–14; 1 Thess 1:4–5; 2 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 1:9; 1 Pet 1:1–2

<sup>41</sup> Rom 5–8 (esp 8:29–30); Phil 1:6; 3:21; Col 3:3–4; Heb 9:28; 1 John 3:2–3

<sup>42</sup> Eph 1:6, 12, 14; 1 Thess 1:2, 4; 2 Thess 2:13

<sup>43</sup> Isa 45:22; Matt 9:13; 11:28; 22:1–14; Luke 14:16–24; John 7:37; Rev 22:17

<sup>44</sup> Matt 1:21; John 6:37, 44, 65; Rom 5:6–10; Eph 5:25

## 6. The Gospel

We believe that the gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ—God’s very wisdom.<sup>45</sup> Utter folly to the world, even though it is the power of God to those who are being saved,<sup>46</sup> this good news is christological, centering on the cross and resurrection: the gospel is not proclaimed if Christ is not proclaimed, and the authentic Christ has not been proclaimed if his death and resurrection are not central (the message is “Christ died for our sins . . . [and] was raised”).<sup>47</sup> This good news is biblical (his death and resurrection are according to the Scriptures),<sup>48</sup> theological and salvific (Christ died for our sins, to reconcile us to God),<sup>49</sup> historical (if the saving events did not happen, our faith is worthless, we are still in our sins, and we are to be pitied more than all others),<sup>50</sup> apostolic (the message was entrusted to and transmitted by the apostles, who were witnesses of these saving events),<sup>51</sup> and intensely personal (where it is received, believed, and held firmly, individual persons are saved).<sup>52</sup>

## 7. Salvation in Christ

We believe that, moved by love and in obedience to his Father,<sup>53</sup> the eternal Son<sup>54</sup> became human: the Word became flesh, fully God and fully human being, one Person in two natures.<sup>55</sup> The man Jesus, the promised Messiah of Israel, was conceived through the miraculous agency of the Holy Spirit, and was born of the virgin Mary.<sup>56</sup> He perfectly obeyed his heavenly Father,<sup>57</sup> lived a sinless life,<sup>58</sup> performed miraculous signs, was crucified under Pontius Pilate,<sup>59</sup> arose bodily from the dead on the third day,<sup>60</sup> and ascended into heaven.<sup>61</sup> As the mediatorial King, he is seated at the right hand of God the Father, exercising God’s sovereign rule in heaven and on earth,<sup>62</sup> and is our High Priest and righteous Advocate.<sup>63</sup> We believe that by his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus Christ acted as our representative and substitute.<sup>64</sup> He did this so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.<sup>65</sup> on

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<sup>45</sup> 1 Cor 1:24, 30

<sup>46</sup> Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18–31

<sup>47</sup> 1 Cor 15:3–4; Matt 1:23; John 5:23; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rev 4–5

<sup>48</sup> 1 Cor 15:3–4; Luke 24:27, 44–46

<sup>49</sup> 1 Cor 15:2–3, 15; Rom 4:25; 5:1–11; 2 Cor 5:18–19; Gal 1:4; 1 Pet 3:18

<sup>50</sup> 1 Cor 15:13–19

<sup>51</sup> Luke 24:48; Acts 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 5:30–32; 10:39–41; 1 Cor 15:5–11

<sup>52</sup> 1 Cor 15:1–2, 11

<sup>53</sup> John 5:30; 6:38; 8:28–29; 14:31; 15:10; Heb 10:5–7

<sup>54</sup> Isa 9:6; John 1:1–2; 8:58; 17:5, 24; Col 1:17; Rev 1:17

<sup>55</sup> John 1:14; Rom 1:3–4; 9:5; Phil 2:7; Col 2:9; 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 2:14

<sup>56</sup> Isa 7:14; Matt 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38; Gal 4:4

<sup>57</sup> Matt 26:39–43; Luke 12:50; John 6:38; 18:11; Rom 5:19; Phil 2:7–8; Heb 5:8; 10:5–7

<sup>58</sup> John 8:29, 46; 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet 2:22; 1 John 3:5

<sup>59</sup> Matt 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 18:28–19:42; Acts 3:13–15; 4:27–28; 13:28; 1 Tim 6:13; cf Luke 3:1; 13:1

<sup>60</sup> Matt 28; Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24; John 20–21; Act 10:41; 1 Cor 15

<sup>61</sup> Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9–11

<sup>62</sup> Luke 22:69; Acts 2:33–34; 5:31; 7:55–56; Rom 8:34; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22

<sup>63</sup> Rom 8:34; Heb 2:17; 3:1; 4:14–15; 5:5, 10; 6:20; 7:25–26; 8:1; 9:11, 24; 10:21–22; 1 John 2:1

<sup>64</sup> Isa 53:6, 12; Matt 20:28; Mark 10:45; John 1:29; 11:50–51; Rom 5:6–8; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13; Phil 3:9; 1 Tim 2:6; Titus 2:14; Heb 9:26, 28; 1 Pet 2:24; 3:18

<sup>65</sup> 2 Cor 5:21

the cross he canceled sin,<sup>66</sup> propitiated God,<sup>67</sup> and, by bearing the full penalty of our sins, reconciled to God all those who believe.<sup>68</sup> By his resurrection Christ Jesus was vindicated by his Father,<sup>69</sup> broke the power of death and defeated Satan who once had power over it,<sup>70</sup> and brought everlasting life to all his people;<sup>71</sup> by his ascension he has been forever exalted as Lord<sup>72</sup> and has prepared a place for us to be with him.<sup>73</sup> We believe that salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved.<sup>74</sup> Because God chose the lowly things of this world, the despised things, the things that are not, to nullify the things that are, no human being can ever boast before him—Christ Jesus our Savior has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness, and redemption.<sup>75</sup>

## 8. The Justification of Sinners

We believe that Christ, by his obedience and death, fully discharged the debt of all those who are justified. By his sacrificial death on the cross, he bore in our place the punishment due us for our sins, making a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice on our behalf.<sup>76</sup> By his perfect obedience, in life and in death, he satisfied the just demands of God on our behalf, since by faith alone that perfect obedience is credited to all who trust in Christ alone for their acceptance with God.<sup>77</sup> Inasmuch as Christ was given by the Father for us, and his obedience and punishment were accepted in place of our own, freely and not for anything in us, this justification is solely of free grace, in order that both the exact justice and the rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners. We believe that a zeal for obedience flows from this free justification.<sup>78</sup>

## 9. The Power of the Holy Spirit

We believe that this salvation, attested in all Scripture and secured by Jesus Christ, is applied to his people by the Holy Spirit. Sent by the Father and the Son,<sup>79</sup> the Holy Spirit glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>80</sup> and, as the other Paraclete, is present with and in believers.<sup>81</sup> He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment,<sup>82</sup> and by his powerful and mysterious work regenerates spiritually dead sinners, awakening them to

<sup>66</sup> Isa 53:10; Eph 5:2; 1 Cor 5:7; Heb 9:26

<sup>67</sup> Rom 3:25; Heb 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10

<sup>68</sup> Rom 5:1–11; 2 Cor 5:18–21; Eph 2:16; Col 1:20

<sup>69</sup> Acts 3:15; 4:10; 17:31; Rom 1:4; 1 Thess 1:10

<sup>70</sup> John 12:31; 16:11; 1 Cor 15:51–57; Col 2:13–15; Heb 2:14–15; 1 John 3:8

<sup>71</sup> Rom 4:24–25; 1 Cor 6:14; 15:12–57; 2 Cor 4:14; Eph 2:5–6; 1 Pet 1:3

<sup>72</sup> Acts 2:36; Phil 2:9–11

<sup>73</sup> John 14:3

<sup>74</sup> Acts 4:12

<sup>75</sup> 1 Cor 1:26–30

<sup>76</sup> Rom 5:15–19; 2 Cor 5:21

<sup>77</sup> Rom 3:21–5:1; 5:9; Gal 2:15–16; 3:8, 11, 24

<sup>78</sup> Rom 1:5; 6:1–23; 16:26; Eph 2:10; Titus 2:14; Jas 2:14–26

<sup>79</sup> John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7

<sup>80</sup> John 16:14; cf 15:26; Acts 5:32; 1 Cor 12:3; 1 John 4:2

<sup>81</sup> John 14:16–17; Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 6:19

<sup>82</sup> John 16:8–11

repentance and faith,<sup>83</sup> sealing their union with the Lord Jesus,<sup>84</sup> such that they are justified before God by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. By the Spirit's agency, believers are renewed,<sup>85</sup> sanctified,<sup>86</sup> and adopted into God's family;<sup>87</sup> they participate in the divine nature and receive his sovereignly distributed gifts.<sup>88</sup> The Holy Spirit is himself the down payment of the promised inheritance,<sup>89</sup> and in this age indwells, intercedes for, guides,<sup>90</sup> instructs,<sup>91</sup> equips, revives,<sup>92</sup> comforts, and empowers<sup>93</sup> believers for Christ-like living and service.

## 10. The Kingdom of God

We believe that those who have been saved by the grace of God through union with Christ by faith and through regeneration by the Holy Spirit enter the kingdom of God<sup>94</sup> and delight in the blessings of the new covenant: the forgiveness of sins; the inward transformation that awakens a desire to glorify, trust, and obey God; and the prospect of the glory yet to be revealed.<sup>95</sup> Good works constitute indispensable evidence of saving grace.<sup>96</sup> Living as salt in a world that is decaying and light in a world that is dark, believers should neither withdraw into seclusion from the world, nor become indistinguishable from it:<sup>97</sup> rather, we are to do good to the city,<sup>98</sup> for all the glory and honor of the nations is to be offered up to the living God.<sup>99</sup> Recognizing whose created order this is, and because we are citizens of God's kingdom, we are to love our neighbors as ourselves,<sup>100</sup> doing good to all, especially to those who belong to the household of God.<sup>101</sup> The kingdom of God, already present but not fully realized, is the exercise of God's sovereignty in the world toward the eventual redemption of all creation.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> John 1:13; 3:3–8; Eph 2:1–6; Col 2:13; Titus 3:5; Jas 1:18; 1 Pet 1:23

<sup>84</sup> Matt 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16; 1 Cor 12:13; 2 Cor 1:22; cf Rom 6:1–4; Gal 3:27; Eph 1:13; 4:5; 4:30; Col 2:12

<sup>85</sup> Titus 3:5

<sup>86</sup> Rom 7:6; 8:13; 1 Cor 6:11; 2 Cor 3:18; Gal 5:22–23; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2

<sup>87</sup> John 1:12–13; Rom 8:15–17, 23; Gal 4:4–6; Eph 1:5–6

<sup>88</sup> 1 Cor 12:7–11

<sup>89</sup> Rom 8:23; Eph 1:14; 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5

<sup>90</sup> Rom 8:4, 14; Gal 5:16, 18

<sup>91</sup> 1 Cor 2:12–15; Eph 1:17–19; cf Matt 10:20; John 14:26; 16:13

<sup>92</sup> John 3:3–8; 6:63; 2 Cor 3:6

<sup>93</sup> Acts 1:8; Rom 8:4, 13; 1 Cor 2:4; Phil 1:19

<sup>94</sup> Matt 5:20; 7:21; 18:3; 19:23–24; Mark 9:47; 10:23–25; Luke 18:24–25; John 3:5; Acts 14:22

<sup>95</sup> Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; Rom 11:27; 1 Cor 11:23–26; 2 Cor 3:6–18; Heb 8:1–13; 9:15–22; 10:15–18; 13:20–21

<sup>96</sup> John 14:15; Eph 2:10; Jas 2:14–26; 1 John 2:2–6, 9–11, 15–17, 19, 29; 3:3, 6–9, 14–15, 24; 4:7, 12, 16, 20; 5:4, 18

<sup>97</sup> Matt 5:13–16; 1 Cor 5:9–10; 1 John 2:15–17

<sup>98</sup> Jer 29:7

<sup>99</sup> Rev 21:26

<sup>100</sup> Rom 13:9–10; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8

<sup>101</sup> Gal 6:10

<sup>102</sup> Matt 12:28; 13; 28:18; Mark 4; Luke 11:20; John 3:3, 5; Rom 14:17; 1 Cor 4:20; 6:9–10; 15:24–28; Gal 5:21; Eph 5:5; Col 1:13



## 11. God's New Covenant People

We believe that God's new covenant people have already come to the heavenly Jerusalem;<sup>103</sup> they are already seated with Christ in the heavenlies.<sup>104</sup> This universal church<sup>105</sup> is manifest in local churches<sup>106</sup> of which Christ is the only Head;<sup>107</sup> thus each local church is, in fact, the church, the household of God, the assembly of the living God, and the pillar and foundation of the truth.<sup>108</sup> The church is the body of Christ,<sup>109</sup> the apple of his eye, graven on his hands, and he has pledged himself to her forever.<sup>110</sup> The church is distinguished by her gospel message, her sacred ordinances, her discipline,<sup>111</sup> her great mission,<sup>112</sup> and, above all, by her love for God,<sup>113</sup> and by her members' love for one another<sup>114</sup> and for the world.<sup>115</sup> Crucially, this gospel we cherish has both personal and corporate dimensions, neither of which may properly be overlooked. Christ Jesus is our peace: he has not only brought about peace with God, but also peace between alienated peoples.<sup>116</sup> His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both Jew and Gentile to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.<sup>117</sup> The church serves as a sign of God's future new world when its members live for the service of one another and their neighbors, rather than for self-focus. The church is the corporate dwelling place of God's Spirit,<sup>118</sup> and the continuing witness to God in the world.<sup>119</sup>

## 12. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that baptism is the initiation ordinance for Christians. Believers are baptized in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to beautifully show our death to sin and resurrection to new life through our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior. As such, we believe it is most clearly portrayed by immersion. We believe that the Lord's Supper is the regular gathering of believers in Jesus to commemorate the dying love of Christ by eating the bread and drinking the cup. We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are both ordained by the Lord Jesus himself.<sup>120</sup> The former is

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<sup>103</sup> Heb 12:22

<sup>104</sup> Eph 2:6

<sup>105</sup> Matt 16:18; Acts 8:3; 9:31; 1 Cor 10:32; 11:22; 12:28; 15:9; Gal 1:13; Eph 1:22–23; 3:10, 21; 4:4; 5:23–25, 27, 32; Phil 3:6; Heb 12:23

<sup>106</sup> Matt 18:17; Acts 13:1; Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 4:17; 7:17; 16:19; 2 Cor 11:8; Col 4:15–16

<sup>107</sup> Eph 4:15–16; 5:23; cf 1:22–23

<sup>108</sup> Eph 2:19; 1 Tim 3:15; 1 Pet 4:17

<sup>109</sup> 1 Cor 12:12–27; Eph 1:22–23; 4:15–16; Col 2:19

<sup>110</sup> Eph 5:25–32

<sup>111</sup> Matt 18:15–17; 1 Cor 5; 2 Cor 2:6–8; 2 Thess 3:6, 14–15

<sup>112</sup> Matt 28:19–20

<sup>113</sup> Matt 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27; John 8:42; Rom 8:28; 1 Cor 2:9; 16:22; Eph 6:24; Jas 1:12; 2:5; 1 Pet 1:8; 1 John 2:15; 5:2–3

<sup>114</sup> John 13:34–35; 15:12, 17; Rom 12:9–10, 13; 13:8–10; 1 Cor 16:14; Gal 5:13–14; 1 Thess 3:12; 4:9; Heb 13:1; Jas 2:8; 1 Pet 1:22; 2:17; 3:8; 1 John 2:7–11, 19; 3:10–18; 4:7–8, 11–12, 16–21; 2 John 5

<sup>115</sup> Matt 5:43–47; Luke 6:27–36; Rom 12:14, 17–21

<sup>116</sup> Eph 2:11–22; cf Rom 5:1–11; 2 Cor 5:18–21; Col 1:20

<sup>117</sup> Eph 2:15–16

<sup>118</sup> 1 Cor 3:16–17; Eph 2:22;

<sup>119</sup> Matt 5:13–16; 28:19–20

<sup>120</sup> Matt 28:19; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Cor 11:23–26

connected with the entrance of believers into the new covenant community,<sup>121</sup> and the latter with ongoing covenant renewal.<sup>122</sup> Together they serve as God's pledge to us and a means of his sanctifying grace, as well as our public vows of submission to the once crucified and now resurrected Christ and our anticipation of his return and the consummation of all things.

### **13. The Restoration of All Things**

We believe in the personal, glorious, and bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ with his holy angels,<sup>123</sup> when he will exercise his role as final Judge<sup>124</sup> and his kingdom will be consummated.<sup>125</sup> We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the just and the unjust—the unjust to judgment and eternal conscious punishment in hell, as our Lord himself taught,<sup>126</sup> and the just to eternal blessedness in the presence of him who sits on the throne and of the Lamb, in the new heaven and the new earth, the home of righteousness.<sup>127</sup> On that day the Bride of Christ, composed of believers from all ages, will be presented faultless before God by the obedience, suffering and triumph of Christ, all sin purged and its wretched effects forever banished.<sup>128</sup> God will be all in all<sup>129</sup> and his people will be enthralled by the immediacy of his ineffable holiness,<sup>130</sup> and everything will be to the praise of his glorious grace.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Acts 2:38; Rom 6:2–5; Col 2:12

<sup>122</sup> Matt 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Cor 10:16–17; 11:23–26

<sup>123</sup> Matt 16:27; 24:44; 25:31; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Phil 3:20; 1 Thess 4:16; 2 Thess 1:7; Titus 2:13; Heb 9:28; Jas 5:8; 2 Pet 3:10; 1 John 3:2; Jude 14; Rev 1:7; 22:7, 12, 20

<sup>124</sup> Matt 25:31–46; John 5:26–27; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Rom 2:5; 1 Cor 4:5; 2 Tim 4:1; Jas 5:8–9

<sup>125</sup> 1 Cor 15:24–28

<sup>126</sup> Matt 5:22, 29–30; 8:12; 10:28; 13:42; 18:8–9; 22:13; 23:15, 33; 24:51; 25:30, 41, 46; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 3:17; 12:5; 2 Thess 1:9; 2 Pet 2:17; Jude 13; Rev 14:9–11; 20:11–15; 21:8

<sup>127</sup> Isa 65:17, 22; Dan 12:2; Matt 25:34; John 5:29; Rom 8:19–23; Heb 1:10–12; 1 Pet 3:22; 2 Pet 2:12–13; 3:11–13; Rev 21:1–5; 22:3

<sup>128</sup> Rom 8:17, 23–24, 30; Eph 5:25–27; Rev 19:7; 21:2, 9

<sup>129</sup> 1 Cor 15:28

<sup>130</sup> Rev 7:9–12; 19:1–8; cf 4:8–11; 5:8–14; 11:15–18; 15:2–4; 16:5–7

<sup>131</sup> Eph 1:6, 12, 14

### **Article III: Church Covenant**

Having been brought by God's grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, we now, depending upon the Holy Spirit, establish this covenant with one another.

In all we do, we will aim to glorify and enjoy the God of our salvation, from whom and through whom and to whom are all things: to Him be all glory forever! (1 Cor. 10:31; Rom. 11:36)

We will eagerly maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace by walking together in love and in the Spirit and by putting away all bitterness, anger, and injurious speech. (Eph. 4:3; Gal. 5:16, 25; Eph. 4:29, 31)

With humility and gentleness, patience and love, we will be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us. (Eph. 4:1-2; Luke 17:3; Col. 3:13; 1 Thess. 5:11; 1 Pet. 1:22)

We will carry each other's burdens, rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep. (Gal. 6:2; Rom. 12:15)

We will train our children in the instruction of the Lord, seeking to walk in a way that adorns the gospel of Christ before our family, friends, and neighbors. (Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4; 1 Pet. 3:1)

We will strive to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age, as we wait for the blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. (Gal. 5:22-24; Titus 2:12; 1 Pet. 1:14)

We will not neglect to gather together, but will support and treasure the biblical preaching of the whole counsel of God, the faithful observance of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the loving exercise of church discipline. (Heb. 10:25; 2 Tim. 4:2; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 11:26; Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor. 5:13)

We will contribute cheerfully and generously to the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the advancement of the gospel both to our neighbors and the nations. (Matt. 28:19; Luke 12:33; 2 Cor. 9:7)

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

In all these things, we rely on our God who has made a new and everlasting covenant with us, saying:



“They shall be my people, and I will be their God. I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. . . . I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. I will rejoice in doing them good . . . with all my heart and all my soul.” (Jer. 32:38–41)

In and because of Jesus we pray, Amen.

## **Article IV: Membership**

### **4.1 Establishment**

The membership of New Covenant Bible Church shall consist of persons whose applications have been approved and accepted by the Elder Council after having given testimony of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to members of the Elder Council. Following their acceptance, new members will be introduced and welcomed by the congregation at a regular worship service

### **4.2 Benefits**

Membership bears witness to one’s spiritual rebirth and membership in the universal body of Christ, proclaims personal convictions and beliefs, expresses mutual interdependence with other Christians, provides for protective and corrective discipline, gives the right to vote, and allows service in various roles withheld from nonmembers.

### **4.3 Qualifications**

Members of New Covenant Bible Church must be persons who give a clear testimony and evidence of saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. While not an absolute requirement, we highly encourage believer baptism prior to membership. Because of the responsibilities and accountability involved with church membership, members must be at least sixteen years of age.

### **4.4 Applications**

Applicants shall be expected to attend a membership class, complete appropriate application forms, agree to abide by the doctrines and principles of the church as set forth in Articles I, II and III and support the policies of the Church as set forth in the remainder of the constitution, and be interviewed by two elders (pastoral or lay), who shall then recommend to the Elder Council those who qualify for membership. With the Elder Council’s approval, applicants will become members of New Covenant Bible Church.



#### **4.5 Duties of Membership**

Members of New Covenant Bible Church are expected to support the church in fulfilling its mission (Article I) through the faithful stewardship of their skills, time, energy, and financial resources.

#### **4.6 Discipline of Members**

All members of New Covenant Bible Church are expected to conduct their lives in a manner that adorns the gospel of Jesus Christ. Such conduct includes moral purity, personal honesty, promotion of church unity, and biblical fidelity. Members are to be consistent examples of authentic Christianity as they seek to emulate the character of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 8:28–29, 16:17–18; 1 Cor. 6:9–10; Gal. 5:22–23; Eph. 4:3, 25, 5:18; 2 Tim. 3:1–17; Titus 3:10–11)

##### ***Purposes of Discipline***

The church is commanded to discipline its members when they engage in unrepentant, habitual sin. Church discipline has multiple protective and restorative purposes, including the following:

1. Encouraging the sinning member to receive loving correction and to repent, thus restoring fellowship with Christ and the church;
2. Warning other members against such sin;
3. Upholding and maintaining the moral purity and blameless testimony of the church. (Matt. 18:15–18; 1 Cor. 5:1–13; 2 Cor. 2:6–11, 7:8–10; 1 Tim. 5:19–20; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14–15)

##### ***Process of Discipline***

Should any member depart from the standard of Scripture and engage in conduct which conflicts with biblical principles of holiness and dishonors the name of our Lord, the steps of discipline outlined in the Scriptures shall be followed as necessary to accomplish the purposes stated above:

1. Private reproof of sinning member;
2. Reproof before two or three witnesses;
3. Public reproof before the Church;
4. Termination of membership with possible disassociation and severance of fellowship.

The entire process of church discipline outlined above shall be carried out and enforced in a spirit of Christian love, care, and sensitivity. (Matt. 18:16–18; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:1–13; Gal. 6:1; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14–15; 1 Tim. 6:3–5; Titus 3:10)



**Enactment of Discipline.** It is hoped that the preliminary steps of discipline outlined above will result in repentance on the part of the sinning member. However, if there is no indication of repentance after these steps are taken, the sinning person's membership shall be terminated. Such termination of membership shall be decided by the Elder Council after due consideration and prayer. The reason for termination shall be stated in a pastoral letter and delivered to the terminated member. The act of termination shall also be communicated to the congregation.

**Agreement of Members to Submit to the Process of Church Discipline.**

Every person who maintains membership in this Church explicitly consents to submit to the process of church discipline outlined above.

**4.7 Termination or Transfer**

Members in good standing moving from one location to another shall, at their request, be given letters stating their standing in the Church and indicating their termination of membership. A member failing to share in the fellowship and responsibilities of the Church for a period of one year without just cause shall, after due personal counsel, forfeit membership.

**Article V: Church Leadership – Elder Council**

**5.1 Introduction/Definitions**

New Covenant Bible Church shall be governed by an Elder Council made up of pastors and lay elders. For purposes of this constitution, pastors are overseers who hold pastoral staff positions at New Covenant Bible Church, and lay elders are overseers who are not employed by the church in a pastoral function.

**5.2 Composition**

No more than one-half of the Elder Council shall be pastors at any one time (assuming qualifications are met). Should a situation arise in which the lay elder to pastor ratio falls below 1:1, the Elder Council will have one year in which to appoint new lay elders in order to restore the balance on the Elder Council. Pastors and lay elders shall have equal voting privileges on the Elder Council but may be specialized in function.

**5.3 Qualifications**

The pastors and lay elders shall be members of the church, in agreement with the doctrines and principles of the church as set forth in Articles I, II and III and support the policies of the Church as set forth in the remainder of the constitution. They shall be men whose lives conform to the biblical



qualifications presented in 1 Tim. 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9; and 1 Pet. 5:1–3.

#### **5.4 Duties**

The Elder Council is responsible for lovingly governing the church, teaching the Word of God and tenderly shepherding the flock as overseers (1 Peter 5:1–3). Specifically, these responsibilities include:

1. Giving themselves to diligent study and fervent prayer;
2. Consistently offering their lives as examples to the flock;
3. Developing contexts for both the equipping and the work of the saints in order to present them to God as mature in Christ;
4. Mobilizing the church to the world through mercy and evangelistic ministry;
5. Instructing and examining baptism and membership candidates;
6. Admonishing and/or disciplining members when needed;
7. Caring for the sick, elderly, hurting, non-participating, etc.;
8. Promoting prayer within the fellowship;
9. Presiding over and serving the communion elements at the corporate observance of the Lord's Supper;
10. Supervising the deacons' distribution of the benevolence fund;
11. Establishing strategic long-term goals and objectives for New Covenant Bible Church;
12. Clarifying and guarding church doctrine and/or practices, including the formulation of consequent church policies;
13. Advising and evaluating the pastoral staff, including the preparation and/or revision of job descriptions;
14. Appointing the Pastoral Search Committee when it becomes necessary to seek a Lead Pastor;
15. Participating regularly and actively in the service and ministry of the church;
16. Overseeing a training program to cultivate young men aspiring to leadership and to maintain an orderly succession of elders.

#### **5.5 Supervisory Responsibilities**

The Elder Council shall oversee members and organizations within the church and relationships with other churches and organizations outside the church. They shall not permit the church to join any organization without prior congregational approval.

The Elder Council shall have supervision over all legal and fiscal affairs of the church.

1. It shall not encumber the church with loan, transfer, or sale or purchase of real estate without affirmation by majority vote of the membership



present at a constitutionally called Membership Meeting.

2. The elders shall have authority to control the expenditures of the budget affirmed by the membership present at a Membership Meeting. They may increase or decrease any departmental annual budget by 10% without congregational affirmation.

#### **5.6 Officers**

The Elder Council shall elect a Chairman and Secretary from its own membership.

1. The Chairman (or designee) shall serve at all meetings of the Elder Council and the membership.
2. The Secretary (or designee) shall keep minutes of all meetings of the Elder Council and the membership.

#### **5.7 Meetings**

Generally, the Elder Council shall meet at least once each month. Special meetings may be called by the Chairman, Lead Pastor, or a majority of the members of the council.

#### **5.8 Quorum**

A simple majority of the Elder Council membership shall constitute a quorum.

#### **5.9 Removal from Office**

The cessation of any Elder Council member's service may occur under any of the following conditions:

1. Resignation
2. Release

Any member of the Elder Council may be removed from office by reason of failure to meet the qualifications of his office, behavior that is injurious to the church, gross negligence or inability to fulfill his responsibilities.

If a church member believes an elder is morally or doctrinally unfit for office, the scriptural requirement for him is clear: he or she is to approach that elder individually first, and then with one or two others. If the problem remains, then the individual, with two or three witnesses should come to the Elder Council and present the charges (Matt. 18:15–16; 1 Tim. 5:19). The Elder Council would then, after conducting a diligent review with all interested parties, decide to sustain or overrule the charges. If the Elder Council sustains the charges, it could rebuke the man in the presence of the congregation, remove him from

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office, or both (1 Tim. 5:20, 3:1–7; Titus 1:6–9) depending on the gravity of the charges and the man’s response to correction.

## **Article VI: Church Leadership – Lead Pastor**

### **6.1 Selection**

The Lead Pastor shall be selected by the Elder Council and affirmed by the Members of the Church at a Special Membership Meeting called by the Elder Council. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time. An announcement of a special meeting shall be given at the services on two preceding Sundays. Provided there is a quorum, (at least one third of the active membership) a minimum of three fourths of the votes cast by Active Members must be affirmative in order to extend a call. The Elder Council can, at its discretion, require a higher percentage than the minimum.

### **6.2 Qualifications**

The Lead Pastor of New Covenant Bible Church must be a man who gives clear evidence of a call to the ministry of the gospel. He must meet the character and spiritual qualifications outlined in Scripture and be equipped to be the spiritual leader of the Church. He must be in agreement with the doctrines and principles of the Church as set forth in Articles I, II, and III and support the policies of the Church as set forth in the remainder of the constitution.

### **6.3 Duties**

The Lead Pastor shall be responsible, along with the pastors and lay elders, for shepherding the people of New Covenant Bible Church and for overseeing its ministries. His primary responsibilities will be to provide leadership for the church and staff, and to serve as a preaching/teaching elder (Acts 6:4; 1 Tim. 5:17; Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:9), thereby “equipping the saints for the work of ministry” (Eph. 4:12). He shall be directly accountable to the lay elders, who will advise, assist, and evaluate him in his work.



#### **6.4 Removal from Office**

The cessation of the Lead Pastor's relationship with the church shall be considered at any time when any of the following conditions occur:

A. Resignation

B. Release (Note: The conditions discussed for the cessation of any Elder Council Member's service in 5.9 apply to the LeadPastor)

1. If it should be recognized that the Lead Pastor fails to meet the qualifications of his office, or is otherwise injurious to the church, grossly negligent, or unable to fulfill his responsibilities, he may be removed from office by agreement of at least three-fourths of the Elder Council (excluding the Lead Pastor). As a matter of due diligence, the Elder Council will be required to involve the counsel of impartial godly leaders outside the Church before making the serious determination to dismiss the Lead Pastor.

The Elder Council shall determine the details of cessation, including issues related to timing and severance.

#### **6.5 Pastoral Search Committee**

In the event that a new Lead Pastor is to be called, the Elder Council shall appoint, with representation from the pastors and/or lay elders, a Pastoral Search Committee which shall work with the Elder Council in seeking a new Lead Pastor. The Elder Council will, when appropriate, bring the recommendation to the church membership.

#### **6.6 Interim Pastor**

In the event the church is making a change in Lead Pastor, the Elder Council may appoint an Interim Pastor who meets the same qualifications outlined in 6.2. He shall normally preside no longer than a one-year term.

### **Article VII: Church Leadership – Pastoral Staff**

#### **7.1 Qualifications**

The basic qualifications of any pastoral staff member shall be the same as for a member of the Elder Council (5.3) He must be in agreement with the doctrines and principles of the Church as set forth in Articles I, II, and III and support the policies of the Church as set forth in the remainder of the constitution. In addition, the gifts and experience of the individual under consideration shall match the needs of the church and the duties of the position. Each pastor appointed will automatically serve as a member of the Elder Council.



**7.2 Creation of a new pastoral position**

When a new pastoral staff position is needed, the Elder Council will convey the need and a proposed ministry description to the membership for affirmation. The Elder Council will call a Special Membership Meeting to approve the proposed position. Approval requires a simple majority of the votes cast by Active Members, provided that there is a quorum (at least one-third of the Active Membership).

When the Elder Council chooses to eliminate a pastoral staff position, it will notify the membership of the decision.

**7.3 Filling a vacant or a new pastoral position**

The Elder Council will select a suitable candidate and recommend him to the membership for affirmation. Affirmation of a pastoral candidate requires a minimum of three fourths of the votes cast by Active Members, provided that there is a quorum (at least one-third of the Active Membership). The Elder Council can, at its discretion, require a higher percentage than the minimum.

**7.4 Tenure**

The term of service is indefinite, and may be terminated by either the staff member or the Elder Council.

**7.5 Removal from Office**

The stipulations discussed for the cessation of any Elder Council member's service in 5.9 apply to any pastor.

**7.6 Duties**

The Elder Council shall ensure that there is a ministry description for all current pastoral staff positions and shall prepare a ministry description for any new pastoral position.

**7.7 Accountability**

All pastors are directly accountable to the Lead Pastor, and ultimately responsible to the Elder Council.

## Article VIII: Church Leadership – Lay Elders

### 8.1 Qualifications

The lay elders shall be members of the church, in agreement with the doctrines and principles of the church as set forth in Articles I, II and III and support the policies of the Church as set forth in the remainder of the constitution. They shall be men whose lives conform to the biblical qualifications presented in 1 Tim. 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9; and 1 Pet. 5:1–3.

### 8.2 Selection/Tenure

Each lay elder of the Elder Council shall be affirmed by the membership for a three-year term.

1. Prospective lay elders can be recommended by the Elder Council, or self-nominated if a man believes God is calling him to the role of lay elder. All lay elder candidates will be examined by the Elder Council. Names of the candidates will be published at least four weeks prior to the affirmation vote in order for the congregation to provide feedback. If there is an objection to the candidate, the Elder Council must be contacted before the Membership Meeting. If the Elder Council finds him worthy, he will be presented to the church membership for its vote of affirmation.
2. A minimum of three-quarters of the votes cast by the active members is needed to affirm the Elder Councils recommendation, provided that there is a quorum (at least one-third of the Active Membership). The Elder Council can, at its discretion, require a higher percentage than the minimum to appoint a lay elder candidate.
3. Each lay elder must be reaffirmed by the congregation every three years.
4. The term of office shall normally commence following the third-quarter Membership Meeting (12.3).

### 8.3 Removal from Office

The stipulations discussed for the cessation of any Elder Council member's service in 5.9 apply to any lay elder.



## **Article IX: Church Leadership – Deacons**

### **9.1 Qualifications**

Deacons are model servants in the life of our church who are installed to assist the Elder Council. Deacons may be men or women; they must be members of the church whose lives conform to the qualifications as specified in I Timothy 3:8-13 (cf. Acts 6:1-7), who have gifts of service, and wholeheartedly agree with the mission and theology of New Covenant Bible Church. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons.

### **9.2 Selection & Tenure**

1. The Elder Council will select the prospective deacons. The number of deacons shall be determined based upon the needs of the ministry in the church.

2. Names of the candidates will be published at least four weeks prior to the affirmation vote in order for the congregation to provide feedback. A minimum of three-quarters of the votes cast by the active members is needed to affirm the Elder Council's recommendation, provided that there is a quorum (at least one-third of the active membership).

3. A deacon's term of service shall be indefinite but may be discontinued at any time by his or her own decision or by a decision of the Elder Council.

### **9.3 Responsibilities**

Deacons assist the elders in areas of service that support and promote the ministry of the Word, the ministries of the church, the care of members and attenders of the congregation, the administration of a benevolence fund (Love in Action Fund), and the management of church property. The deacons may be organized in the most fitting way to accomplish the mission of the church.

### **9.4 Treasurer**

The Elder Council will appoint the Church Treasurer. The Church Treasurer shall meet the spiritual qualifications of a deacon, be a member with appropriate skills in the area of finance, and go through the process to become a deacon. Their specific role is to serve on the financial subcommittee.

## Article X: Other Support Staff

### 10. Selection:

1 The Elder Council shall have the discretion to hire or appoint support staff (e.g., interns, ministry directors, secretaries, custodians) as deemed necessary. The support staff shall abide by the doctrines and principles of the church as set forth in Articles I, II and III and support the policies of the Church as set forth in the remainder of the constitution.

### 10. Tenure

2 The term of service will be indefinite and may be terminated by either the staff member or the Elder Council with a thirty-day notice, or at any time that is mutually agreeable.

## Article XI: Church Ordinances

### 11.1 Baptism

The candidate for baptism will be interviewed for approval by representatives from the Elder Council. The candidate must make a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ. The baptism will be administered by a member of the Elder Council, or by one designated by them. The mode of baptism normally practiced shall be immersion.

### 11.2 The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least monthly or as often as the Elder Council designates. Any believer is welcome to participate in this ordinance as a celebration and remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ and of his death, burial, and resurrection. The scriptural condition is that the believer examine him or herself so as not to partake in an unworthy manner (e.g., in rebellion, arrogance, or with un-confessed sin in his or her life). The Elder Council shall have the right to withhold the elements from those who are undergoing church discipline. (Matt. 26:20–29; Mark 14:12–25; Luke 22:7–20; 1 Cor. 11:17–34)



## **Article XII: Church Meetings**

### **12.1 Church Year**

The church year shall be from September 1 through August 31. (Effective 2021)

### **12.2 Voting Membership**

All members of the church shall be eligible to vote in a Membership Meeting.

### **12.3 Regular Membership Meetings:**

There will be at least two regular Membership Meetings held each year.

1. **Second Quarter (Dec-Feb) Membership Meeting:** A Membership Meeting shall be held during the second quarter in order to affirm elders and deacons (when required) and to transact any other necessary business.
2. **Fourth Quarter (June-Aug) Membership Meeting:** A Membership Meeting shall be held during the fourth quarter to adopt a church budget for the fiscal year and to transact any other necessary business. Any document (i.e. Budget) requiring affirmation by the congregation must be made available to the congregation at least two weeks prior to the affirmation vote.

### **12.4 Special Membership Meetings**

Special Membership Meetings may be called by the Elder Council.

### **12.5 Announcement of Membership Meetings**

A public announcement of all regular Membership Meetings shall be made at least fourteen days in advance. Special meetings may be called by giving public announcement of at least seven days in advance. The announcement of either a Membership Meeting or Special Meeting shall be made by a member of the Elder Council in the Sunday worship service. The announcement will include the purpose of the meeting.

### **12.6 Voting Policy**

A quorum shall consist of no less than one-fourth of the membership. A majority vote of those members voting (in person plus absentee ballots) shall be required in all church decisions and elections, except as specified elsewhere. The Elder Council reserves the right to require ballots be signed depending on facts and circumstances.

Absentee ballots may be requested by a voting member of the congregation whose circumstances preclude attendance at the meeting; however, the ballot must be signed.

### **Article XIII: Corporate Officers**

#### **13.1 Corporate Officers**

The Chairman of the Elder Council, the Secretary of the Elder Council, and the Church Treasurer shall serve as the corporate officers of the church in legal matters.

### **Article XIV: Amendment of Constitution**

#### **14.1 Amendment of Constitution**

This Constitution may be amended by two-thirds vote at any regular or special meeting of the membership, providing announcement of the proposed revision has been made at least one month prior to when the meeting is called.

### **Article XV: Dissolution of the Church**

#### **15.1 Requirements for Dissolution**

New Covenant Bible Church may be dissolved after the Elder Council gives its approval and by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the church.

#### **15.2 Disposal of Property**

In the event of dissolution, after all debts are paid, the remaining church property (or properties), both real and personal, and all proceeds there from, shall be given without cost to one or more like-minded churches and/or non-denominational, evangelical, tax-exempt religious organizations. The recipient organization(s) shall be recommended by the Elder Council and approved by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the church.

### **Article XVI: Facility Usage Policy**

#### **16.1 Facility Usage Policy**

At New Covenant Bible Church, we recognize our facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of our members





and attenders. We desire that our facilities be used to advance the mission of the church and to bring God glory. Although our facilities are not open to the public, we occasionally make our facilities available to approved non-members as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

But facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups advancing or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in our Statement of Faith and Constitution. Nor may church facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the church's faith or moral teachings. The pastoral staff must approve all uses of church facilities, and the Elders are the final decision-maker concerning use of church facilities.

#### **16.2 *Approved Users and Priority of Use***

Priority shall be given to church members, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, or sponsored activities of the church. Church facilities and equipment will be made available to non-members or outside groups meeting the following qualifications:

1. Groups or persons requesting facility use must affirm that their planned uses of the facilities are consistent with the church's faith and practice.
2. The group or person seeking facility use must submit a signed "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form.
3. The group or person seeking facility use must be willing to take responsibility for the facilities and equipment used and must agree to abide by the church's rules of conduct for facility use and any additional instructions given by church staff.

Amended by congregational affirmation on February 24, 2013.

Amended by congregational affirmation on January 24, 2016.

Amended by congregational affirmation on December 15, 2020.

Amended by congregational affirmation on January 30, 2022

Amended by congregational affirmation on May 21, 2023