

**THE
CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS
OF THE
FAITH BIBLE CHURCH
LIVONIA, MICHIGAN**

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July 21, 1989-April 30, 2015



34541 Five Mile Rd · Livonia, MI 48154
734-464-7990 · info@fbclivonia.com
www.fbclivonia.com

THE CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS
OF THE
FAITH BIBLE CHURCH
LIVONIA, MICHIGAN

Adopted: July 21, 1989
Amended: 10/24/1993,
3/28/1999, 7/28/2013,
and 4/26/2015

PREAMBLE

We the members of the Faith Bible Church of Livonia establish the following articles to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I Name and Origin

Faith Bible Church of Livonia is the result of the merger of Bethany Bible Church of Livonia and Grace Baptist Church of Detroit on September 13, 1987.

ARTICLE II Purpose

The purpose of this church is to glorify God in promoting His worship, the preaching of his word, the administration of the ordinances, the maintenance of Christian fellowship and discipline, the edification of believers and the evangelization of the world.

ARTICLE III An Affirmation of Our Faith

The ultimate authority in all matters of faith and practice is the Bible alone, which truth is clearly set forth in item one of our Affirmation of Faith. The articles below, adopted by the Baptist General Conference in 1951, are an excellent summary of “the things most surely believed among us” (Luke 1:1).

1. The Word of God We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscript, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
2. The Trinity We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons; that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the word of creation, providence and redemption.

3. God the Father We believe in God, the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He hears and answers prayer and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

4. Jesus Christ We believe in Jesus Christ, God's Only Begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth.

5. The Holy Spirit We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding comforter, helper, teacher and guide.

6. Regeneration We believe that all men are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

7. The Church We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of giving the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

8. Christian Conduct We believe that a Christian should live for the glory of God and the well-being of his fellowmen; that his conduct should be blameless before the world; that he should be a faithful steward of his possessions; and that he should seek to realize for himself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ.

9. The Ordinances We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church, baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

10. Religious Liberty We believe that every human being has direct relations with God, and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority; that therefore Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the other.

11. Church Cooperation We believe that local churches can best promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with one another in a denominational organization. Such an organization whether a regional or district conference, exists and functions by the will of the churches. Cooperation in a conference is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. Churches may likewise cooperate with interdenominational fellowships on a voluntary independent basis.

12. The Last Things We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal felicity of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked.

13. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate compan-

ionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. God's Word indicates how husbands and wives should relate to one another in the home. Ephesians 5:21 states that Christians should "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." Mutual submission means that Christian husbands and wives must respect and honor one another, acknowledge one another's gifts, mobilize one another's strengths and build one another up. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church, and a wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to endeavor to bring up their children in the instruction and training of the Lord, and by teaching God's Word and a consistent lifestyle example to seek their salvation and growth in grace and godly wisdom. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

ARTICLE IV Our Church Covenant

The covenant by which this church exists and which every member accepts is as follows:

Having been led, by the Holy Spirit of God, to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and to confess Him as Lord, and on confession of this faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joy-

fully covenant with one another, as one body in Christ to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him.

We promise by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to forsake the ways of sin and to walk together in Christian love and in the paths of righteousness. With this in view we engage to strive together for both the peace and purity of this church; to faithfully attend its worship services and steadfastly cherish and hold its ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute, as faithful stewards, such time, talent and money, in the measure that God prospers each of us, that the responsibility for the work of the local church and the world-wide ministry of spreading the Gospel be faithfully and effectively discharged.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions, to teach the Bible to our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to be exemplary in our deportment; to avoid unkind words and unrighteous anger; to recognize and guard our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit and to abstain from every form of evil; to combine zeal and knowledge in our efforts to advance the cause of our Savior; to make Christ first in all things both spiritual and temporal.

We further engage to give and receive admonition with meekness and affection; to remember each other in prayer, and to aid each other in case of sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and, mindful of the Scriptures, to seek it without delay; to encourage one another in the blessed hope of our Lord's return.

We moreover engage that when we move from

this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some local church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of the Word of God.

ARTICLE V Affiliation

We believe that this church can best promote the cause of Jesus Christ in cooperation with other churches of like faith. Such cooperation is on a voluntary basis and must be of such a nature that the autonomy of this church is maintained at all times. This church shall be affiliated with the Michigan Baptist General Conference and the Baptist General conference.

ARTICLE VI Membership

Section 1 Qualifications The membership of this church shall consist of those who confess Jesus Christ to be the Son of God and who through faith and repentance have acknowledged Him as Savior and Lord. They shall have publicly testified to their confession of faith through baptism by immersion.

They shall be committed to discovering, developing and deploying their Holy Spirit endowed gifts so as to have a ministering function as part of this local body. They shall also express fully agreement with the Affirmation of Faith as outlined in Article III of this constitution and promise to earnestly endeavor to live by the spirit of the covenant set forth in Article IV.

Section 2 Rights and Privileges Any eligible member may participate and vote in any business meeting of the church and may participate in the calling of a special business meeting (See Article XI). The right to vote shall be vested in active members 16 years of age or older.

In the event that a member is dissatisfied with any general procedure of any department of the church, he has the right to take his concern to the Elders. If not given a hearing, or if not satisfied with the decision rendered, he has the privilege of presenting the matter at a regular or specially called congregational busi-

ness meeting.

The foregoing does not preclude any member bringing any item before the church at any regular or specially called business meeting.

Section 3 Admission to Membership Persons are to be receive into membership in the following manner:

- A. Prior to application for membership all candidates shall attend a membership-inquiry class where the faith and practice of this church are carefully explained. Attendance at this class shall not be required of former members.
- B. After completing written application each candidate shall appear before a committee of the Elders. This committee shall inquire into and satisfy itself regarding the applicant's profession of faith and his support of this constitution. Special attention shall be given to Articles III and IV.
- C. Upon a satisfactory interview, the Board of Elders shall recommend to the church that the candidate be received into membership.
- D. Each candidate shall appear before the congregation at any regular service or business meeting. Upon favorable action by the congregation he shall be received into membership when any of the following criteria is met: baptism by immersion, upon presentation of a letter from another Baptist church certifying baptism by immersion, or by a state attesting to previous baptism by immersion on profession of faith.

Time will be allowed for objections or questions to be raised by any member concerning the applicant's manner of life or doctrine. If no objection is raised which the Elders consider valid, the person will be publicly received into the membership at a stated

meeting of the church. The Elders may postpone the reception of a person into membership until proper investigation can be made concerning objections which, in their judgment, are sufficiently serious.

Section 4 Types of Membership Each member of the church is a vital part of the body and has a unique function to the life of that body. Practical considerations require that certain distinctions be recognized in the membership of this church.

- A. **Active Members** All who are received into the membership of the church according to the procedures set forth in Section 3 of this article shall be considered active members in good standing and entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership.
- B. **Non-Resident Members** Members who move away from our area and who cannot find another local church with which they can conscientiously unite will, at their request, be retained as non-resident members for two years, subject to review by the Elders.
- C. **Inactive Members** Any member who has been absent from our church for a period of six months without showing any interest by communicating with the church, and contributing to its support, may be declared inactive by the Board of Elders. Persons on the inactive roll shall not be counted as members for quorum purposes and shall forfeit all voting privileges.

However, inactive members may be restored to active status by action of the Board of Elders. Upon the recommendation of the Board of Elders to the church, persons remaining on the inactive membership list for one year shall be removed from church membership. Such persons will be advised two months prior to this action.

Section 5 Grievances Grievances between members shall

be dealt with in accordance with the procedure set forth in the 18th chapter of Matthew, and no public complaint shall be heard, unless this course has been pursued. Charges, when made, shall be in writing, signed by at least two members in good standing and shall be submitted to the Elders.

Section 6 Discipline of Members Members of this church who err in doctrine or conduct shall be subject to dismissal according to Matthew 18:15-18. Before dismissal, however, it is the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of the erring member's misconduct to warn and to correct the erring member. If the erring member does not heed this warning, then it is incumbent upon the board of Elders to admonish him or her. If the erring member continues in a course of misconduct, the board of Elders shall recommend to the church that the erring person be removed from membership. The purpose of this action is for repentance and restoration of this member. (I Corinthians 5)

Section 7 Termination of Membership

- A. By physical death
- B. By transfer. When requested, the Elders shall grant to a departing member in good standing a letter of transfer to another Baptist church or a letter of recommendation to an evangelical church.
- C. By exclusion. See Article VI, Section 4, Paragraph C.
- D. By request. Any member who requests it may be dismissed from the membership after due consultation with the Elders. In such cases no congregational approval of the action shall be necessary; the Elders shall announce to the congregation that such a person has requested to be removed from membership.
- E. By Dismissal. See Article VI, Section 6

Article VII Government of the Church

The government of the church is invested in the body of the believers who compose it and it shall exercise its authority through duly convened congregational meetings and through its duly elected Board of Elders.

The authority of the congregation assembled in a duly convened congregational meeting of the church alone will have the authority in the following matters:

1. The election, reaffirmation and when necessary the removal from office of Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses. (See Article VIII Section B and C)
2. The amending of this constitution. (See Article XIV)
3. The reception and dismissal of members. (See Article VI)
4. The adoption and/or amendment of the annual budget.
5. The Church's affiliation with the Baptist General Conference and the Michigan Baptist General Conference. (See Article V)
6. The calling and dismissal of pastoral staff. (See Article IX)
7. All legal matters.
8. Any item that the church in a congregational meeting shall deem to be the sole authority of the church's membership.

ARTICLE VIII Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses

Section 1 General Statement

Jesus Christ alone is the Head of His church (Colossians 1:18). It is evident, however, that no society of men can function effectively without officers and guidelines of some kind. The Church of Jesus Christ is no exception to this principle. So that

all things may be done properly and in order (I Corinthians 14:30) a plurality of qualified persons are to be chosen by the congregation to fill the offices of Elder (Acts 14:23), Deacon (I Tim. 3:8-10), and Deaconesses (I Tim. 3:11).

Section 2 The Office of Elder

- A. Qualification of Elders An Elder must be one who is a member in good standing who has reached the age of 25 years and who as nearly as possible meets the standards set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-4. The term “Elders”, “Bishops” and “Pastors” are recognized as referring to the same individual.

- B. Responsibility of the Elders
 - 1. Biblical Responsibilities As undershepherds of Jesus Christ the Board of Elders has the mandate to:
 - a. Lead the congregation by their example (I Peter 5:3; Hebrews 13:7,17).
 - b. Feed and protect the believers (Acts 20:28-31; I Peter 5:2).
 - c. Govern the affairs of church life (I Timothy 3:4-5; 5:17; I Peter 5:2,3)
 - d. Equip the believers for their work of ministry so that the body might be edified. (Ephesians 4:11-16).

 - 2. Specific Administrative Responsibilities
 - a. To direct the ministry and business of the church including the organizing and functioning of all organizations and service committees. (See Article VIII Section 3A)

- b. To appoint a Treasurer, a Clerk of the Congregation and such other officers it deems appropriate.
- c. To keep the congregation well-informed concerning its work.
- d. To be the legal trustees of the property of the church.
- e. To exercise general oversight of all financial matters of the church including the presentation to the church of an annual budget and to regularly inform the church of the financial status.
- f. To approve the selection of members on all service committees. (See Article VIII Section 3A)
- g. To organize itself as follows:
 - (1) A Chairman shall be elected who shall also be the Chairman of the church and the moderator of the congregation.
 - (2) A Vice-Chairman shall be elected who shall act for the Chairman when appropriate.
 - (3) A Secretary shall be elected who will record and duplicate minutes of the board meetings.
- h. To develop and maintain a manual of operation in which the job description and duties of all church officers and committees are clearly defined.
- i. To exercise all other powers not specifically assigned to the membership of the church. (See Article VII)

C. Term and number of Elders The church should en-

deavor to discover and then formally recognize those whom the Holy Spirit has endowed with the requisite gifts and graces and has set over the church, but only such men. Thus when men have been ordained to this office, the church will have the confidence that it has recognized the overseers whom the Holy Spirit has set over it (Acts 20:28). It is evident, therefore, that neither the number of Elders nor the length of their term of office can be fixed by the church.

- D. Relationship of Elders to one another The Bible teaches a plurality of Elders within a given local church. (Acts 14:23). All Elders who are members of this local church shall be respected and recognized for their God-given position, spiritual leadership and advice. (Hebrews 13:17)

No Elder is to be superior to another. The Head of the church is Jesus Christ, and the Elders with specific responsibilities and spiritual gifts are to function together in unity and work, looking to Jesus Christ for direction.

While Elders are overseers of the flock, they are themselves members of the flock. Therefore, each Elder as an individual is under the oversight of his fellow Elders and is subject to the same discipline as are all the members of the church.

Section 3 Office of Deacon and Deaconess

- A. Responsibilities of Deacons and Deaconesses. Deacons and Deaconesses are responsible to serve the church and assist the Elders so that they, the Elders may freely give themselves to their pastoral responsibilities (Article VIII, Section 2B). (Acts 6:1-4) Deacons and Deaconesses will carry out their responsibilities by chairing Service Committees, (Finance, Missions, Building and Grounds, Social, etc.). The responsibilities, composition, selection, etc. of each Service Committee will be set forth in the church's manual of opera-

tion.

- B. Number of Deacons and Deaconesses. The number of Deacons and Deaconesses shall not be fixed. The church shall choose as many as are needed for the work to be done from among those who give evidence of having the scriptural qualifications for that office.
- C. Qualifications of Deacons and Deaconesses. The qualifications for those chosen to fulfill the office of Deacon and Deaconess are set forth in Acts 6:3; I Timothy 3:8-13 and I Timothy 3:11.

Any member who cannot affirm a candidate must 1) speak with the candidate and attempt to resolve the objection (Matthew 18:17), 2) (if resolution is not reached through step one) submit written evidence to the nominating committee no more than two weeks after the receipt of the list of candidates. The committee shall review the evidence and seek to resolve the objection. If the resolution is not satisfactory to the member raising the question, he/she may speak the objection at congregational meeting.

- B. Election. The election shall be by secret ballot for a term of one year. Each candidate for office must receive an affirmative vote of 75% of qualified members voting. Thirty-three percent of the active voting members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum.
- C. Removal.
 - 1. By withdrawal from the membership of Faith Bible Church.
 - 2. By voluntary resignation.
 - 3. By failure to receive annual reaffirmation of the congregation, which vote shall be an order of business at the quarterly meeting in October. Voting shall be by

secret ballot and each Elder, Deacon and Deaconess must receive a 75% reaffirmation vote to remain in office. (See Article VII Section A) Thirty-three percent of the active voting members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum. Staff pastors will not be subject to annual reaffirmation of Elders (See Article IX Section 6C)

- D. Installation of Office-Bearers. Following the election of new office-bearers by vote of the congregation, they shall be publicly installed in their office at a regular worship service by the prayer of the whole church and the laying on of hands of the existing Elders.

Section 4 Appointment of Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses

- A. Nomination Nominations to the offices of Elder, Deacon and Deaconess shall be made by a nominating committee consisting of two Elders and at least three members at large nominated by the Elders and elected by the congregation at the semiannual meeting in July. After earnest prayer and careful consideration of all the potential office-bearers, this committee shall place in nomination as many or as few candidates as it sees fit. The Elders alone may at any other time during the year nominate a candidate or candidates to any of the above three offices and call a special congregational business meeting for their consideration.

Article IX Staff Pastors

Section 1 Senior Staff Pastor In view of the fact that the responsibilities of the office of Elder are numerous and grave, it is highly desirable that at least one Elder should give of his full time to the work of the ministry and the oversight of the church. Such an Elder is usually referred to as a “pastor”, not to the exclusion of the other Elders, for they all share the pastoral responsibilities, but because he “labors in the Word and teaching.” (I Timothy 5:17) The church is responsible to give adequate financial support to such a man (I Corinthians 9:9-11; I Timothy 5:17-

18), and is free to call a man from outside the local congregation to come into its midst and serve in this capacity. Any man called to this office must conscientiously affirm his agreement with the constitution of this church special attention to “An Affirmation of our Faith” (Article III) and our Church Covenant (Article IV). Should he at any time move from this affirmation he is under spiritual and moral obligation to make this known to the church.

Section 2 Additional Staff Pastors The church shall have any number of full time salaried staff pastors as the church may approve and they shall automatically be members of the Board of Elders. Any man called to this office must conscientiously affirm his agreement with the constitution of this church with special attention to “An Affirmation of Our Faith” (Article III) and our Church Covenant (Article IV). Should he at any time move from this affirmation he is under spiritual and moral obligation to make this known to the church.

Section 3 Qualifications The Senior Pastor shall be an ordained minister. Other staff pastors may or may not be ordained ministers. The Senior Pastor and all other staff pastors shall meet the requirements for qualification as Elders as stated in Section 2c of Article VIII of this Constitution.

Section 4 Responsibilities Compensation, salaries, vacation and other considerations shall be set by the church at the time a call is extended. These considerations will be reviewed annually by the Elder Board.

Section 5 Duties

- A. **Senior Pastors** The Senior Pastor shall have the freedom of the pulpit in preaching and teaching the Word of God. He shall function as a member of the Board of Elders, and be an ex-officio member of all committees. In concert with the Board of Elders he shall tenderly watch over the membership and spiritual interest of the church, organize and develop its strength for the best possible service.
- B. **Additional Staff Pastors** Additional Staff pastors shall

operate under the general policies of the Board of Elders, and shall perform such duties as the Senior Pastor and Board of Elders direct.

Section 6 Calling and Termination of Staff Pastors

- A. **Pulpit Committee** The Pulpit Committee shall be composed of the entire Elder Board unless the Board makes the decision to include others from the membership whom they feel could contribute to the process of calling a pastor.

The Pulpit Committee shall recommend to the congregation the candidate of their choice for the office to be filled. This committee shall, subject to final approval by the congregation, work out the terms of a call. Only one candidate shall be under consideration of the congregation at any one time.

A three-fourths (3/4) majority of all votes cast shall be required to issue a call. Fifty percent of active voting members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum.

- B. **Calling:** A Senior Pastor or an additional staff pastor shall be chosen by a ballot vote at a special meeting of the membership, of which public notice shall have been given two weeks prior to the date of the meeting. See Section 6c of this article.
- C. **Termination:** The association of the Senior Pastor or other staff pastors and the church may be dissolved in either of the following ways:

1. By staff pastor (s) providing at least a thirty day written notice to the church.
2. By the church in the following way:

Any individual or group within the membership of the church who desires a change may present a signed petition of at least 25% of the active voting membership

to the board of Elders. The Board must recognize the petition by calling a meeting of the membership of the church to consider such a change.

The Board of Elders shall upon giving notice to the church membership present the matter of change at a special meeting called for this specific purpose. Fifty percent of the active membership is necessary to constitute a quorum at this meeting. A 75% affirmative vote is necessary for the senior or other staff pastor to be retained in office.

In the event that any staff pastor fails to receive a 75% retention vote, his official relationship to the church shall be terminated immediately. A sixty day severance pay and sixty day use of the parsonage beyond the termination date shall be given.

ARTICLE X Ordinances

Section 1 General There are two ordinances of special significance which our Lord has commanded us to observe, namely, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Neither of them has a saving merit, nor is any grace imparted to the recipient through the water of baptism or the bread and the cup of the supper. These ordinances are not "means of grace" but they are powerful aids to the faith of the believers who participate in them.

Section 2 Baptism Only confessing believers in our Lord Jesus Christ are proper candidates for baptism and are commanded to be baptized (Acts 2:38). Believing that baptism is the God-ordained entrance into the visible community of God's people, we shall receive into church membership only those who have been baptized. This church will, however, baptize those who after instruction and upon a credible confession of faith wish to obey our Lord in this matter but who do not choose at this time to become a member of this church. By baptism we mean immersion. (Romans 6:1-4; Colossians 1:12-14)

Before anyone is baptized he or she will be required to share his

or her profession of faith in Christ with a committee of the Board of Elders. Upon the Elders' recommendation he or she may be baptized.

Relative to the baptism of children, the Board of Elders in concert with the parents will consider the individual merits of each case. Only under special circumstances will a child under the age of twelve be considered for baptism.

Section 3 The Lord's Supper The Lord's supper should be celebrated frequently by the church (I Corinthians 11:26). While this is a holy ordinance and should be observed with solemnity and dignity, it should also be an occasion of celebration. The bread and the cup of the supper are and remain symbols of the broken body and the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord's supper shall, under normal circumstances, be celebrated by the church on the first Lord's day of each month.

Article XI Meetings

Section 1 Weekly Meetings Weekly meetings shall include Sunday morning worship service, Sunday School and such other meetings that the Board of Elders deem helpful.

Section 2 Business Meetings

- A. **Annual Business Meeting** The annual Business Meeting shall be held within the month of January unless otherwise scheduled by the Board of Elders. At this meeting reports shall be given, and other business items appropriate to this meeting may be considered.

An auditing committee shall be appointed by the Elder Board to perform an internal audit of the church's financial records each fiscal year. This report shall be given at the annual meeting.

- B. **Semiannual Business Meeting** A Semiannual Business Meeting shall be held as announced in July. At this meet-

ing committee chairpersons and other leaders shall update the congregation regarding their area of ministry and printed financial reports shall be provided. Other business items appropriate to this meeting may be considered.

- C. **Leadership and Budget Business Meeting** A congregational business meeting shall be scheduled by the elders between October 1 and the 2nd Sunday of November to elect and/or reaffirm Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses as nominated by the Nominating Committee for the coming year, and to discuss and adopt the annual budget for the coming fiscal year.
- D. **Special Meetings** A special business meeting may be called by the Board of Elders, the Senior Staff pastor or by ten or more eligible voters. If these members desire such a meeting the Chairman of the Board of Elders shall be notified. Notice of such a meeting shall be given from the pulpit for two Sundays prior to the meeting and mailed to all active members at least two weeks prior to the meeting. This notice shall state in general terms the issue(s) to be discussed or the business to be conducted.

Section 3 Quorums For the admission of new members, the members present shall constitute a quorum. At any other regular or special business meeting thirty-three (33) percent of the active members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum. A quorum of fifty (50) percent of the active members shall be necessary to vote upon the following items:

- A. The calling or dismissal of pastoral staff.
- B. The amending of the constitution.
- C. All legal matters.

Legal matters shall be those having to do with the sale, purchase, mortgaging or encumbering in any manner the real or personal property of the church, or which may bind the church in any contract or obligation. This is not to be understood to

include the annual budget of this church or items dealing with the general maintenance of the church and property.

Section 4 Voting On any item other than those listed below, a simple majority vote (51%) of votes cast is required for passage.

On the calling or dismissal of Staff pastors; the annual reaffirmation of Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses; the election of new Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses; a seventy-five (75) percent majority of votes cast is required for passage.

The manner in which any vote is taken shall be at the discretion of those at a particular meeting with the exception of the calling or dismissal of a Staff pastor, and the annual reaffirmation and election of Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses. These matters shall be voted on by secret ballot.

All active members who have reached the age of sixteen years may vote on any business item.

Absentee ballots may be obtained from the chairman of the Board of Elders. They will be made available to and accepted from qualified active members who request to vote in this manner. The completed ballot must be given to the chairman of the Board of Elders in a sealed envelope prior to the called meeting.

Section 5 Moderator The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall moderate all business meetings or in his absence the vice chairman of the Board of Elders. Minutes of all business meetings shall be taken by the Church Clerk or Assistant Church Clerk.

Section 6 Parliamentary Procedures In case of questions regarding parliamentary procedures, *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall be used as a guideline.

ARTICLE XII Finances

Section 1 Budget The annual budget will be prepared by

the Finance Service Committee and the Senior Staff Pastor with recommendations from the chairpersons of other Service Committees. The budget must be approved by the Board of Elders before being submitted to the church. (See Article VIII B Section 2e)

Section 2 Expenditures Any quarterly expenditure over a budget line item must be approved by the Board of Elders. Any quarterly expenditure beyond 110% of a budget line item must be approved by the congregation.

ARTICLE XIII Church Year

The fiscal year of the church shall be from January 1 to December 31 inclusive.

ARTICLE XIV Disposition of Church Property

Section 1 Consolidation Should a consolidation with another church of the same denomination be advisable, the Board of Elders shall be authorized to negotiate the terms of such a consolidation, insofar as the property is concerned, subject to approval of the church membership.

Section 2 Division In case of organic division of the church membership, the church property shall belong to those members who abide by this constitution.

Any dispute relative to which members are abiding by this constitution will be decided by the Board of Ministries of the Michigan Baptist General Conference.

Section 3 Dissolution Should the church congregation cease to function for any reason, the church property shall be transferred to the Michigan Baptist General Conference and the Baptist General Conference.

ARTICLE XV Amendments

Proposed changes in or additions to this constitution must be submitted to the members in a letter at least two weeks prior to the business meeting in which it is to be considered and voted upon. A proposed amendment may be introduced by the Board of Elders or any ten active members of the church. Any proposal will be submitted to the Chairman of the Board of Elders for presentation to the congregation. A two-thirds majority of votes cast is necessary to the adoption of an amendment.

A record of amendments showing the dates of adoption and how specifically paragraphs have been amended will be kept and attached to this constitution.

Amendments

10/24/1993 Article XI Section 3

Item B of Article XI Section 3, was removed, to have a 33% of active members instead of 50% required for a quorum to vote on the affirmation of and election of Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses.

Article XI--Section 4 Voting was amended to include the following paragraph:

“Absentee ballots may be obtained from the chairman of the Board of Elders. They will be made available to and accepted from qualified active members who request to vote in this manner. The completed ballot must be given to the chairman of the Board of Elders in a sealed envelope prior to the called meeting.”

03/28/1999 Article XI Section 1

Original reading: “Public Worship includes Sunday morning, Sunday School, Sunday evening and one mid-week Bible Study and Prayer service on a regular basis.”

Amended reading: “Weekly meetings shall include Sunday morning worship service, Sunday School and such other meetings that the Board of Elders deem helpful.”

04/26/2015 Article VIII Section 2A & 3C

Removed “It is to be understood that no divorced and remarried

person may serve as a..." from the end of both sections.

04/26/2015 ARTICLE XIII Church Year

Church year changed from 10/1-9/30 to 1/1-12/31. Additional changes made to language in Article XI, Section 2 A&B Business Meetings and Article VIII, Section 4 A and C3 to coincide with and implement this change.

Appendix 1—Adopted by Faith Bible Church July 28, 2013

Beliefs about Homosexual behavior and ministering to homosexual persons

Resolution passed by the Baptist General Conference in Annual Meeting, June 27, 1992 Estes Park, Colorado and unanimously reaffirmed at the Converge annual meeting in 2012.

We the delegates to the 114th Annual Meeting of the Baptist General Conference gathering in Estes Park, Colorado, June 22-28, 1992, endorse the following two-part resolution:

Part 1

Our affirmation that the Bible is the infallible Word of God with "supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct," and our affirmation that "a Christian should live for the glory of God" include the following six beliefs about heterosexuality and homosexuality:

1. We believe that heterosexuality is God's revealed will for humankind and that, since God is loving, a chaste and faithful expression of this orientation (whether in singleness or in marriage) is the ideal to which God calls all people.
2. We believe that a homosexual orientation is a result of the fall of humanity into a sinful condition that pervades every person. Whatever biological or familial roots of homosexuality may be discovered, we do not believe that these would sanction or excuse homosexual behavior, though they would deepen our compassion and patience for those who are struggling to be free from sexual temptations.
3. We believe there is hope for the person with a

homosexual orientation and that Jesus Christ offers a healing alternative in which the power of sin is broken and the person is freed to know and experience his or her true identity in Christ and in the fellowship of his Church.

4. We believe that this freedom is attained through a process which includes recognizing homosexual behavior as sin, renouncing the practice of homosexual behavior, rediscovering healthy, nonerotic friendships with people of the same sex, embracing a moral sexual lifestyle, and in the age to come, rising from the dead with a new body free from every sinful impulse. This process parallels the similar process of sanctification needed in dealing with heterosexual temptations as well. We believe that this freedom comes through faith in Jesus Christ, by the power of his Spirit.

5. We believe that all persons have been created in the image of God and should be accorded human dignity. We believe therefore that hateful, fearful, unconcerned harassment of persons with a homosexual orientation should be repudiated. We believe that respect for persons with a homosexual orientation involves honest, reasoned, nonviolent sharing of facts concerning the immorality and liability of homosexual behavior. On the other hand, endorsing behavior which the Bible disapproves endangers persons and dishonors God.

6. We believe that Christian churches should reach out in love and truth to minister to people touched by homosexuality, and that those who contend Biblically against their own sexual temptation should be patiently assisted in their battle, not ostracized or disdained. However, the more prominent a leadership role or modeling role a person holds in a church or institution of the Conference, the higher will be the expectations for God's ideal of sexual obedience and wholeness. We affirm that both heterosexual and homosexual persons should find

help in the church to engage in the Biblical battle against all improper sexual thoughts and behaviors.

Part 2

We further endorse the following affirmation as an implication of the previous six beliefs.

Since beliefs about the sinfulness of homosexual behavior, like beliefs about the sinfulness of lying, stealing, murder, greed, etc., are an essential part of our commitment to the supreme authority of the Bible in all matters of faith and conduct,

and since a person who believes that lying, stealing, murder or greed are Biblically acceptable lifestyles would not and should not be deemed qualified to serve in the leadership of our Conference, or teach in its educational institutions, or serve as pastors of Baptist General Conference churches, or as principals or teachers of all church-sponsored schools, or as missionaries of the Baptist General Conference,

therefore we affirm that, in the same way, those who believe that homosexual behavior is a Biblically acceptable lifestyle are not qualified to serve in the leadership of the Conference, or to teach in its educational institutions, or to serve as pastors of Baptist General Conference Churches, or as principals or teachers of all church sponsored schools, or as missionaries of the Baptist General Conference.

We further affirm that this affirmation is simply an effort to make explicit the implicit religious consensus of the Baptist General Conference concerning the meaning of Article One (The Word of God) and Article Eight (Christian Conduct) of our Affirmation of Faith, adopted in 1951.

