

**Church Constitution, Covenant
And Confession of Faith
BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH
Bergen, New York**

PREAMBLE

We the members of Bethel Baptist Church of Bergen, New York, hereby adopt the following Constitution, Church Covenant and Articles of Faith, which are based on biblical principles. These are neither substitutes for, nor supplements to the Word of God. They are simply systematic reviews of the doctrines and their application to practical matters as taught by the Bethel Baptist Church of Bergen, New York. They are guides to aid in the application of biblical principles to church polity. The Word of God shall be the first and final authority on all church matters, and any issue whereon these documents and statements of faith are silent shall be governed by the clear statement of the Word of God.

ARTICLE ONE- NAME

The name of this Church shall be known as Bethel Baptist Church located in Bergen, New York. It is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of New York.

ARTICLE TWO- CHURCH CREED

This local Assembly accepts the Bible as its absolute authority in matters of faith and practice. We believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of Scripture; in one God eternally existing in three Persons; in the creation of all things, including man, as the direct act of God; in the eternally secure salvation of the sinner, by free sovereign grace through faith alone in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; in the incarnation and virgin birth of Christ, and in His bodily resurrection; bodily, pre-millennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ and His millennial reign on earth. We believe in a literal Heaven and a literal Hell, and that Satan is a person. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead. We believe in the autonomy of the local church, in baptism by immersion, and in the celebration of the Lord's Supper by all obedient believers. We are a fundamental, traditional, separated, missionary minded group of Bible-believing Christians, striving to maintain a balanced Spirit-filled life to the glory of God.

ARTICLE THREE- STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Our Purpose is to glorify God as a Fundamental Bible Believing local church in accordance with the Word of God as our sole authority. This we, by the gracious aid of the indwelling Holy Spirit of God, resolve to carry out, through the worship of our God, the edification of believers, the teaching of the whole counsel of God, the administration of the ordinances and Biblical discipline, the defense of "the Faith once delivered," the

world-wide proclamation of God's saving grace expressed in the shed blood and finished substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary, the maintaining of a good testimony for Christ in His church and in the world by godliness and good works, and the cooperation of likeminded Christians actively functioning together in harmony with God's Holy Word, the Bible, until He comes.

ARTICLE FOUR- ASSOCIATIONS

The church shall be an independent, autonomous local assembly of believers in Christ, subject solely and finally under the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church and to His Holy Word as its final authority. As a New Testament church cannot join anything outside itself, but only affiliate therewith on the grounds of fellowship, this church declares itself to be in fellowship with only churches, para-church groups or associations that are of like faith and practice. We reject ecclesiastical fellowship with any churches, groups or associations which do not accept the authority of the whole counsel of God, or which permits the presence of modernism, post-modernism, neo-evangelicalism, the contemporary or charismatic movements, or any other such movement that is in opposition to God's Holy Word.

ARTICLE FIVE- CHURCH COVENANT

- Having been regenerated by the Spirit of God and through belief of the truth to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our 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, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ. We shall ever seek to allow the Holy Spirit full freedom to do His work of convicting, converting, cleansing, empowering, teaching, comforting, and guiding.

- We determine, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and in accordance with His Holy Word, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; and to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

- We also determine together to maintain personal communion with the Lord; to direct and lead our families in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; to Biblically educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to live carefully in this world; to be just and honest in our dealings, faithful and loving in all our engagements, and exemplary in our personal conduct; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the

kingdom of our Savior.

- We determine to abstain from any practice which might reflect negatively on the witness of Christ's church: to avoid all tattling, backbiting, unrighteous anger; to abstain from wearing any immodest apparel in terms of cover, fit and form; to abstain from gambling, dancing, the promotion, sale or use of intoxicating drink as a beverage, and the misuse of drugs; to, in summation, prove all things, hold fast to that which is good, while abstaining from all forms of evil that will either cause our brother to stumble or that will bring reproach upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- We further determine to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in intercessory prayer; to aid each other in 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 rules of our Savior, to secure it without delay.

- We moreover determine that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word. In the event there is no such church, we shall seek, with the Lord's help to establish one.

Matthew 28:18-20: And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, >All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.>@

ARTICLE SIX- CONFESSION OF FAITH

1. The Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible, as originally written, was plenarily and verbally inspired and the product of Spirit controlled men, and therefore has truth without admixture of error for its matter. We believe it is the center of Christian union and the only infallible rule for human conduct,= creeds and opinions.

By the AHoly Bible@ we mean that only the collection of 66 books, 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament, which, as originally written is the very Word of God. By Ainspiration@ we mean that as God breathed, the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit in such a way that their writings were supernaturally controlled and free from error as no other writings have ever been or ever will be. **Ps119:89; Mt.5:18; 2Ti.3:16; 2Pet.1:19C21.**

We believe that God's Word has been preserved so that what we have today is a fully trustworthy and authoritative copy of the original text. While we do not claim infallibility of any particular translation, the King James Version and the New King

James Version have been selected as the primary source for public reading, preaching, and teaching.

2. The True God

We believe there is one and only one living and true God, an infinite sovereign Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. **Ex.20:2,3; Deut.6:4; Jn.4:24; 1Cor.8:6; Rev.4:11.**

3. The Person and Work of Christ

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, the Creator and Sustainer of this Universe became man, without ceasing to be God, having been supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem man. **Mt.1:18-25; Lk.1:35; Jn.1:1-14,18; Gal.4:4-5; Phil.2:5-11; Col.1:14-19; Heb.1:1-14; Heb.10:1-10.**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and that our justification is made absolutely sure by His literal, physical, resurrection from the dead. **1Pet.2:24; Eph.1:7.**

4. The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world, He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the agent in the new birth or regeneration; that He seals, endues, guides, convicts, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer. The gifts of tongues, healing and the working of miracles were all assigned to the believing Jews in verifying God's truth. These gifts, in short, were given and useful until the Scriptures were completed and the church of both Jew and Gentile together had been established. It was then that they ceased to exist, in that they had served their purpose.

Gen.1:1C3; Isa.26:19-21; 35:2-6b; 61:1-2a; Mt.8:17; Mt.10:5b-8; Mt.12:28; Mt.28:19; Lk.7:18-23; Jn.3:6-8, Jn.14:16,17; Jn.16:8C11; Jn.20:30-31; Acts2:22; 5:30C32; 1Cor.13:8-10; 2Cor.12:12; Eph.1:13,14; Eph.2:15; 2Thess.2:13; Heb.9:14.

We believe that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit takes place at conversion and is that sovereign act by which the individual is placed into the body of Christ. **1 Cor.12:13**

We believe the infilling of the Holy Spirit may occur many times and is essentially a matter of faith and yieldedness, the fruit of which is listed in **Gal.5:22,23.**

5. Angels

We believe that there are angelic beings created by God for the purpose of carrying out His divine program; that some of these angels are good in that they perform God=s will especially in relation to the saints on earth; and that some are evil, having fallen from their original state under the leadership of Satan and are his ministers of evil in the world. **Ps91:11; Mt.13:41; Heb.1:14; Jude 6; Rev.14:9,10.**

We believe that Satan, as Lucifer, was once holy and enjoyed heavenly honors; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty fell and drew with him a host of Angels; that he is now the malignant prince of the power of the air and the unholy god of this world; that he is man=s great tempter, the enemy of God and His Christ, the accuser of the saints, the author of all powers of darkness, destined to final defeat at the hands of God and to the judgment of an eternal justice in the Lake of Fire, a place prepared for him and his angels. **Is.14:12C15; Ez.28:14C17; Eph.6:12; 2Pet.2:4; 1Pet.5:8; Rev.10:10; 12:10; 19:20; 20:10.**

6. Creation

We believe the Genesis account of creation as a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of God without any evolutionary process, being neither allegory nor myth; that this world and all that is were created in 6 literal 24 hour days; that man, his spirit, soul, and body, were created by a direct work of God and not from previously existing forms of life, and that all men are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race. **Gen.1&2; Jn.1:3; Col.1:16,17; Heb. 1:2.**

7. The Fall of Man

We believe that man is a unique and direct creation of God, originally created in innocence in Adam, but then by Adams voluntary transgression, disobedience and act of independence from God's restraints fell from his sinless state. As a result every man conceived and born in Adam, which includes all, are totally depraved sinners both by nature and by choice. The consequences or penalty of this fall are physical, spiritual and eternal death. Because we are all born sinners in Adam we are all positively inclined to evil, without hope, unable, in and of ourselves, to desire God's righteousness and salvation and in fact utterly devoid of any righteousness required by the law of God and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse.

We believe in the everlasting, conscious existence of all who die, and that every man, though humanly responsible and accountable before God for his sin, is in such a condition that he is completely devoid of any human ability or power to understand God or desire to seek after God. **Gen.1:27; Gen.3:1C6; Job 15:14; Ps.51:5; Ps58:3; Ps103:3; Prov.20:9; Eccl.7:20; Eccl.7:29; Eccl.9:3; Is.53:6; Is.64:6,7; Jer.17:9; Mt.25:41,46; Mk.7:21-23; Jn.3:19; Jn.8:34; Jn.8:44; Jn.14:1C3; Rom.1:19C21; Rom.3:9C12,23; Rom.5:12; Rom.7:14C17; Rom.6:20; Rom.8:7-8; 1Cor.2:14; Gal.3:22C24; Gal.5:19C21; Eph.2:1-3; Heb.9:27.**

8. The Virgin Birth

We believe that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman, and that He is both the Son of God and God the Son; that His two natures remained distinct and yet acted in complete harmony with each other in full subjection to the will of the Father. **Gen.3:15; Is.7:14; Mt.1:18C25; Lk.1:35; Jn.1:14; Phil.2:6-8; Heb.1:8; 1Jn.1:1,2; Jn.4:34.**

9. The Atonement for Sin

We believe that the salvation of sinners is divinely initiated and wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full, and vicarious atonement for the sins of His chosen people; that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but as a voluntary substitution of Himself in the believing sinner=s place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the cross. **Is.53:4C7; Jonah 2:9; Mt.1:21;18:11; 20:28; 26:28; Jn.3:16; 10:11; Acts 15:11; Rom.3:24; 1Cor.15:3; 2Cor.5:21; Eph.2:8; Phil.2:7,8; Heb.2:14; 1Jn.4:10.**

10. Resurrection and Priesthood

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ and in His ascension into Heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of the Father as our High Priest fulfilling the ministry of Intercessor and Advocate. **Mt.28:6,7; Mk.16:6; Lk.24:2C6,39; Jn.20:27; Acts1:9C11; Rom.8:34;1Co.15:4; ITi.2:5; Heb.2:17; 5:9,10; 7:25;8:6;12:2; 1Jn.2:1; Rev.3:21.**

11. Grace in the New Creation

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous, and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about solely by the initiation and act of our sovereign God in a manner above our comprehension, and by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; that it=s proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith and newness of life. **Jn.3:3-8; Acts16:30C33; Rom.6:23; 2Cor5:17; 2Co.5:19; Eph.2:1,5; Col.2:13; 2Thess.2:13; James 1:18; 2Pet.1:4; 1Jn 5:1.**

12. Justification

We believe that justification is the judicial act of God whereby, He declares us to be righteous (guiltless) through faith in Christ Jesus based solely on His perfect righteousness; that justification includes the pardon of sin and the imputation of God=s righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God. **Is.53:11; Zech.13:1; Acts13:39; Rom.5:1,9;8:1-2; Gal2:16; 2Co.5:18C21.**

13. Repentance and Faith

We believe that repentance, a change of mind and purpose toward God, is an integral part of saving faith, and that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation.

We believe that repentance includes a godly sorrow for sin, as offensive to God and ruinous to the soul; a great humiliation in view of one=s sin and guilt, sincere hatred of sin, and a persistent turning away from and abandonment of all that is evil and unholy. We believe that faith includes an assent of the mind and consent of the heart in supplication for God=s mercy, consists of unreserved belief and trust in Christ alone for salvation, and that it is the channel whereby eternal life, sonship, and all the blessings of justification are received by the repentant sinner.

We believe that repentance and faith are solemn obligations, wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God in conjunction with the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ. **Mk.1:15; Lk.13:3,5; Jn.1:12;3:16;6:44; Acts 3:16-19; 17:30; 16:31; Rom.1:16; 2:4; 3:24-28; 5:1C9; 10:17; 12:3; 1Cor.1:18; 4:7; Gal.2:16; Eph.2:8,9; Phil 1:29; Col.1:3-7; 2Thess2:13; 1Tim1:14; 2Tim.2:24-26; Heb.12:2; James1:18; 2Pet.1:1.**

14. Sanctification

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We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God accomplished in a threefold manner: first, an eternal act of God the Holy Spirit, based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he trusts the Savior; second, a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to their life; third, the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord=s return. **Jn.17:17; Ro.8:23;1Co.1:30; 2Co.3:17-18; Eph.5:25,26; Phil3:20-21; 1Th.4:3-4; 5:23,24; 2Th.2:13; Eph.5:27; Heb.3:1;10:10C14; 1Jn3:2; Jude24,25; Rev.22:11.**

15. Election

We believe that election is the all gracious and eternal purpose of God set forth in eternity past, whereby He

unconditionally chose a multitude of undeserving and depraved sinners, in all the ages to come, to be the recipients of His eternal salvation. These He foreknew in terms of His foreordained sovereign will, He predestinated to be His children and to be conformed unto the image of His blessed Son. His unconditional election is graciously secured as He, by His all-gracious and sovereign will calls, regenerates, justifies, saves and even positionally glorifies every elect sinner unto Himself. This all is a most glorious display of God=s sovereign goodness and marvelous grace, which utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, and trust in God. **Deut7:6-8; Mt.22:14; Jn.15:16; Ro.8:29-33; 9:11,16,20C24;11:5-6;16:13; Col.3:12; 1Th.1:4;2Ti.2:10;Titus1:1;1Pet.1:2;2:9.**

16. Adoption

We believe that adoption is the gracious act whereby the Father, for the sake of Christ, places new believers into the honored position of mature sons, in contrast with regeneration, whereby, the believer receives the nature of God and becomes a child of God. The full benefit of the position accorded by adoption as the sons of God awaits the glorification of the believer at the coming of the Lord. **Eph.1:5,13-14; Gal.4:1C7; 1 Jn.3:1C2.**

17. The Security and Perseverance of the Saints

We believe that all who are truly born again are eternally secure in God=s salvation, and that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special providence watches over their welfare; and they are kept by God through faith unto salvation. **Ps.89:30C34;Mt.16:18;Jn.5:24;6:37;10:28,29;14:19;17:2; Rom.8:1,29-31; Rom.8:35C39; 1Cor.1:8; Phil.1:6; 2Tim 1:12; 2Tim.2:13; 1Jn.5:13; Jude 1.**

18. The Sovereign Free Grace of God In Salvation

We believe that salvation is totally and completely God=s work of grace in the sinner, from beginning to end. **Ps3:8; Jonah 2:9; Heb. 12:2.**

A. We believe that all mankind, in their nature, are totally and completely depraved and ruined by the fall; that every human, with the exception of our Lord Jesus Christ, is conceived and born into this world, after the first type Adam, in a completely sinful, corrupt and depraved condition; that each is spiritually dead in his trespasses and sins as it concerns the entirety of his nature and faculties, including his mind, intellect and will; that man=s mind, intellect and will are enslaved to his fallen evil nature; and that he is completely incapable or able, in and of his own power, to save himself or to do anything about it. **Gen.2:16-17; 6:5; 8:21; Job 14:4; 15:14-16; Ps.51:5; 58:3; Prov.20:9; Eccl.7:20; 9:3; Is.53:6; 64:6; Jer.17:9; Mk.7:21-23; Jn.3:5-7; 3:19; 6:44; 6:65; Rom.3:10-12; 5:12; 6:20; 8:7-8; 9:16; ICo.2:14;**

4:7; 2Co.3:5; Eph.2:1-3; Eph4:17-19; Eph.5:8; Col.2:13; 2Tim.2:25-26; Titus1:15; Titus3:3.

B. We believe, despite this complete depravity, that God has, in eternity past, sovereignly, graciously, mercifully, and unconditionally chosen or elected a people for Himself; that He has sovereignty and lovingly determined, in an eternal covenant made between the members of the Godhead, to provide salvation for this large group of select sinners from every tribe and nation; that He sovereignly applies it to them as He grants to them both repentance and faith in regeneration; that this choosing is not based on God=s foresight of them believing or on any working of themselves, but wholly and solely on His sovereign, gracious, unconditional, foreordained will, purpose and plan, without which none would be saved. **Dt.7:6-8;10:14,15; Ps33:12; 65:4; Mt.11:27; 22:14; 24:22, 24,31; Mk.13:20; Lk.18:7; Acts13:48; Rom.8:28-33; 9:11-13,16,20-21,23; 11:5-7,28,33-36; ICor.1: 27-29; Eph.1:4-5,11-12; Col.3:12; IThes.1:4-5;5:9; 2Thes 2:13; 2Tim.2:10; Titus1:1;IPet.1:1-2;2:8-9; 2Pet.1:10; IJn.4:19; Rev.13:8;17:8,14.**

C. We believe in the sovereign, gracious, particular, and definite atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ for all the sins of all His people; that it=s intention was particular and redemptive for all His people; that Jesus died on the cross as a true substitute, taking the punishment due unto guilty sinners; that His death not only made salvation possible, nor was it merely the basis for redemption, but it is completely redemptive in that it makes certain the salvation of all those for whom Christ Jesus died. **Mt.1:21; 20:28; 26:28; Jn.6:36-40;10:11,14-15,24-26; 11:50-52; 17:1-2,4,9-11; Acts 20:28; Rom.3:24; 5:8-10,19; 8:32-34; Gal.1:3-4,13; Eph.1:4-5,7;5:25-27; Col.1:21-22; ITim.1:15; Titus2:13-14; Heb.9:12,15,28; IPet.3:18; IJn2:1-2; Rev.5:9.**

D. We believe that having been chosen in Christ in eternity past and thus redeemed by Christ through the work of the cross, that God will, in His appointed and accepted time, graciously, effectually and irresistibly call, by His Word and Spirit, the sinner out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, unto His grace and salvation; that this special inward call of the Spirit never fails to result in the conversion of those to whom it is made; that it cannot and will not be thwarted or refused, as it never fails to bring one to true repentance and faith in Christ; that this regeneration, or new birth, is completely by the initiation of God, and a wonderful gift of His incredible grace, in which the converted sinner has no ground for

boasting.Dt.30:6;Is.55:11; Ez.36:26-27; Mt.11:25-27; 13:10,11,16;
Lk.8:10;10:21;16:15-17;Jn.1:12-13;3:3-8,27;5:21; 6:37,44,45,64,
65;17:2;Acts5:31;11:18;13:48;16:14;18:27;Rom.1:6-7;8:14,30;9:16,
23-24;ICor.2:10-14; 3:6-7; 4:7; 6:11; 12:3; 2Cor.3:6,17,18; 5:17-
18; Gal.1:15-16; 6:15; Eph.1:17-18; 2:1,5,8-10; 4:4; Phil.1:29;
2:12-13;2Tim.1:9;2:25-26;Titus3:5;Jam.1:18;IPet.1:2-3,15,23;2:9;
5:10;2Pet.1:3;IJn5:4,20;Jude1;Rev17:14.

E. We believe in the perseverance & security of the saints, where all genuine regenerated saints, not merely professors, will by God=s power and sovereign grace, persevere and be secured to the very end; that the truly called and faithful may in fact stumble and fall, and most probably will, but will never quit; that they will be kept by the power of God to the day of their complete redemption in glory; that they all, have been predestined unto eternal glory and are therefore assured of heaven; that AHe who began a good work in you will perform it, until the day of Jesus Christ@.Is43:1-3; 54:10; Jer.32:40;Mt.18:12-14; Jn.3:16;5:24;6:35-40,47;10:27-30;17:11,12,15; Rom.5:8-10;8:1,29-30,35-39; ICor.1:7-9;10:13; 2Cor.4:14,17; Eph.4:30; Phil.1:6; Col.3:3-4; ITh.5:23-24;2Ti.4:18;Heb.9:12,15;10:14;12:28;IPet.1:3-5; IJn.2:19,25;5:4, 11-13,20; Jude 1,24-25.

19. The True Church

We believe in the True Church and that it is a living spiritual organism and body, of which Christ is the Head, and of which all regenerated people are members.

We believe it universally consists of all truly regenerated believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, beginning on the day of Pentecost and all the way to the Rapture.

We believe that a Visible church, built from this universal body of Christ, is a local, geographical, unified body of regenerated believers who have been banded together; that they are, or have been, immersed upon a credible confession of faith in Jesus Christ; that they consist of two officers (pastor and deacons); that they are independent and sovereign in polity, under Christ their Head; that they are banded together for work, worship, edification, fellowship, the observance of the ordinances (baptism and the Lord=s Supper), and the worldwide proclamation of the gospel; and that this proclamation consists of, according to our Lord=s great commission found in **Matthew 28:19-20**, the priority command of *Amaking disciples@* and *Ateaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.@* **Mt.28:19-20; Jn.3:3-5; Acts 1:8; 2:41-47; 15:13-18; 20:17C28; 1Co.12:12-13;11:2; Eph.1:22,23;3:1C6;4:11; 1Ti.3:1C7; Col.1:18; Eph.5:23,24; Acts15:13C18.**

20. Baptism and the Lord=s Supper

We believe that true Christian baptism is the immersion of a

genuine, regenerated believer in water; that it is to be under the authority of the local church; that it is that outward, visible act which serves as a prerequisite for bringing one into membership of this local assembly; and that it, most vitally, testifies in a solemn and beautiful way, of our identification with the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, through Whom we died to sin and rose to a new life

We believe that the Lord=s Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. We believe the natural Biblical order of ordinances is baptism first then the Lord=s Supper, and that participants should be immersed believers. Acts8:36,38,39;

Jn.3:23; Ro.6:3C5; Mt.3:16; Col.2:12; 1Cor.11:23C28; Mt.28:19,20; Acts2:41,42.21.

21. Separation from the World

We believe in personal separation from the world; that since our citizenship is in heaven, as the children of God, we should walk in separation from the present world, abstaining from all worldly amusements and unclean habits which defile mind and body, from membership in secret societies, from the use of unbelieving courts for the settlement of disputes between Christians, and from taking personal vengeance in carnal strife.

We believe in a separation from apostate persons and organizations as those associated with the charismatic movement, neoCevangelicalism, modernism or anyone who does not take a full view of Scripture whether by proclamation or practice. **Ro.12:1-2,18C21; 14:13;16:17; 1Co.5:11-13; 6:1C9, 18-20; 2Co.6:14C7:1; Phil.1:9-11; 1Th.5:22-23; 2Th.3:6,14; 2Tim.3:1-5; IPet.1:15-16; 2:11-12; 2Jn.9-11.**

22. Israel

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God=s eternal covenant people, that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ, and that she will be re-gathered in the Holy Land and, after the completion of the Church, will be saved as a nation at the second coming of Christ to the earth. **Gen.13:14C17; Ezek.37; Rom.9-11; 11:1C32.**

23. The Rapture and Subsequent Events

We believe in the imminent, pretribulational, premillennial return of Christ for His Church, and that at that moment of His return, in the clouds (**1Thess.4:13-18**), the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death, and all shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the seven years of great tribulation. **Jn.14:1-3; 1Co.15:42C44,51C58; 1Th.4:13C18; Phil.3:20,21; Rev.3:10.**

We believe that the great tribulation, which follows the rapture of the church, will be culminated by the revelation of Christ in power and great glory to sit upon the throne of David and to establish the millennial Kingdom. **Is.9:6,7;11:1C9; Dan.9:25C27; Mt.24:29C31; Lk.1:30C33; Acts2:29,30; Rev.**

20:1C4;6.

24. The Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that only those who are justified by faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting blessedness of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in Hell, and ultimately, the Lake of Fire. **Gen.18:23; Prov.14:32; Dan.12:1-3; Mal.3:18; Mt.25:34-41; Lk.16:25; Jn.8:21; Ro.6:17,18,23; 7:6; 1Jn.5:19; Rev.20:14,15; 21:8.**

25. Civil Government

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions; 1) the home; 2) the Church; and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the Church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God (**Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14**). In terms of human government this means that the believing church and home, are to submit to civil law unless such law contradicts the commands of the Word of God. In the event of such conflict, we believe that we must obey God rather than man, and that we must not renounce our profession or Christian practice, even in the face of trials, afflictions, persecutions or imprisonment.

We further believe that the affairs of both the believing church and home must be kept distinct from the civil government. We maintain that the true Churches of Jesus Christ have their sufficiency in Him, and that they must not accept aid from civil authority in preaching the gospel or in enforcing Christian behavior upon unbelievers through state-church combination. **Ex.18:21,22; Dan.3:17,18; Zech. 4:6; Mt.22:21; Acts 4:19,20; 5:17-20,29; Rom.13:1-7; 1Tim. 2:1-3; Titus 3:1; 1Pet.2:13-17.**

26. Human Sexuality

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. **Gen.2:24; 19:5,13; 26:8-9; Lev.18:1-30; Ro.1:26-29; 1Co.5:1; 6:9; 1Th.4:1-8; Heb.13:4.**

27. Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage

We believe that God hates divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. This church will only marry a

man to a woman who are saved and who have not been divorced. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the Church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the office of pastor, elder or deacon **Mal.2:14-17; Mt.5:31,32;19:3-12; Ro.7:1-3; 1Ti.3:2,12; Titus1:6.**

28. Abortion

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being and is a blessing from God. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, and unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We believe that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental/physical well-being of the mother are unacceptable and contrary to the Word of God. **Job3:16; Ps.51:5;139:14-16; Is.44:2-4;49:1,5; Jer.1:5;20:15-18; Luke 1:44.**

29. Lawsuits Between Believers

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the Church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the Church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation of injuries from another Christian=s insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. **1Co.6:1-8; Eph.4:31-32.**

30. Giving

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God=s wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe (10%) as a basis of giving but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the Church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the tithe or offering once the gift has been made. **Gen.14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts4:34-37; 1Co.1:2; 2Co.9:6-7;Gal. 6:6;Eph.4:28; 1Ti. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17.**

31. God Glorifying Music in Worship

We believe that music, used in worship, was given by God for the purpose that it should, in all ways, glorify Him and edify the body of Jesus Christ, His Church. We believe that music is not neutral in any respect, but contains two elements: both lyrics and the music, which are both vitally important in bringing honor and

glory to His name. The lyrics, when involved, ought to always be biblically and doctrinally accurate and the music should be composed after the Anew song principle@ mentioned repeatedly in God=s Holy Word. Neither the lyrics, nor music should be compromised with the world>s rebellious and sensual words, sounds or songs. We believe that music, in both lyrics and song, should express the praises of God, extol the glories of the Lord, express the truth of the Lord, exhibit the intelligence and majesty of the Lord, and evidence the Spirit of the Lord. We believe that music in worship to God, as in every aspect of our lives, should be separated and holy unto the Lord our God. Music used in worship to God is never to be worldly, or after the world>s philosophies, standards or principles. Music used in worship to God is not in any way for our own entertainment, nor is it to be according to the dictates or selfish desires of our own flesh, but in complete accordance with God=s Word, and for God=s pleasure and glory. **Ps.7:17; Ps.40:1-3; Ps.33:1-4; Ps.66:2; Ps 89:15; Ps.96:1; Ps. 98:1; Ps.144:7-10; Ps.149:1; Is.42:8-11; Jn.4:24; Ro.7:25; Ro.12:1-2; Ro.14:6-8,22-23; ICo.6:19-20; ICo.8:9,12; ICo.10:31; ICo.14:15; ICo. 14:26; 2Co.5:17; 2Co.6:14; 2Co.10:5; Gal5:13; Eph.5:9-10; Eph.5:19; Phil.1:10-11; Col.2:8; Col.3:16-17; ITh.5:21-22; Heb.12:1; James 4:4; IPt.1:14-16; Rev.5:9; Rev.14:3)**