

CHURCH INFORMATION





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F R O M T H E P A S T O R

WELCOME

Whether you are looking for a church home or are simply passing through, I want to thank you for your interest and in taking time to learn more about Raikes Hill Baptist Church.

Our church was founded with the Great Commission in mind, with a heart to reach the communities that surround us with the gospel of Jesus Christ. As such, you will find that much of what we do here at Raikes Hill is very much centered around the “good news” - recognizing and detailing the implications of Christ’s redeeming work on the cross in the life of the believer. This message is central to all that we do, with the conviction that our faith and obedience flow into every aspect of our lives. While some may designate things as “sacred” or “secular,” we believe that all of life should be consecrated and set apart, ultimately, for God’s glory.

This is a faith that truly transforms, and it is only the power of God through His Word that is capable of achieving it! Our prayer is that your walk with Christ fashions and shapes you into His likeness, showing the same compassion, grace, and devotion to Almighty God. We recognize that we are all sinners saved by grace, and we seek to continually encourage one another in the truths of Scripture, to experience the peace that only God can bring, and to be content regardless of the circumstances that surround us.

Finally, we believe the Christian faith inevitably shapes how we interact with others. This may mean encouraging other believers in our times of worship. It may also entail the boldness to proclaim the gospel to lost family, friends, and co-workers. We recognize that our responsibility does not end there, with the Great Commission outlining the expectation to “make disciples of all nations.”

Wherever you find yourself in your faith journey, I hope and pray that Raikes Hill will be of encouragement to you as you grow in Christ and seek to live faithfully and obediently according to God’s revealed Word.

In Christ,



Drew Underwood - Pastor

WHY JOIN A CHURCH?

In writing to the church in Ephesus, Paul opens his letter with a beautiful description of our salvation. Within the first half of the second chapter, the Apostle goes on to detail how we are saved by faith through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Finally, in the second half of the same chapter and on into the third, the primary implications of our salvation are disclosed.

Go ahead, take some time to read through those passages. Then, consider this question: Why did God do all of this?

“... so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has fully realized in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Ephesians 3:10-11

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 13:34-35

How does the Bible call Christians to relate within the local church?

Love One Another

- 1 Peter 2:17 - “Love the brotherhood.”
- Galatians 6:10 - “So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”
- Romans 15:1 - “We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”
- Romans 12:13, 15-16 - “Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality... Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another.”

Encourage One Another

- 1 Thessalonians 5:11 - “encourage one another and build one another up.”
- Hebrews 10:24-25 - “consider how to stir one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

Guard One Another

- Hebrews 12:15-16 - “See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no ‘root of bitterness’ springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; that no one is sexually immoral or unholy...”
- 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 - “It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father’s wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. For though absent in the body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.”

Obey Your Leaders

- Hebrews 13:17 - “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.”

Putting these commands into practice requires three characteristics of our relationships in a local church:

1. Relationships that are **committed**.
2. Relationships with a **defined group** of people.
3. Relationships that **give permission to speak hard words** into your life.

This means developing relationships with a depth (meaningful membership) and breadth (loving those who are different from you), which often looks like this within the local gathering:



BAPTISM & THE LORD'S SUPPER

Two questions help us better understand baptism and the Lord's Supper:

- 1) What is the gospel?
- 2) What is the nature of the local church?

Through baptism, the church affirms an individual's profession of faith, validating that their confession of Christ as Lord of their lives is genuine and true. When the church gathers to participate in the Lord's Supper, we encourage one another in rehearsing the gospel message once again, in addition to renewing our individual profession of faith.

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

As we consider the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, we ought to remember a few things:

- 1) These are Christian essentials.
Baptism and the Lord's Supper are not secondary things. The significance of these things should not be downplayed within the local church.
- 2) These are biblical commands.
The Lord Jesus Christ himself commands us to practice these ordinances. They are not optional in that we have the right to accept or reject them at our own discretion.
- 3) These are symbols of salvation.
They do not have a saving effect. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone (Eph 2:8-9). However, these important symbols unite us with Christ and the church.

With all this said, we at Raikes Hill hold that baptism and participation in the Lord's Supper should be reserved for genuine, regenerate followers of Christ only.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

Here at Raikes Hill, we encourage our members to contribute to the ministry of the church. This certainly entails more than financial gifts, as members may utilize their time and talents for the benefit of the local gathering. However, we do want to help you understand how your monetary tithe is utilized.

While helping cover the day-to-day costs of building maintenance and facilities management, 10% of our total recorded receipts go to both the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program, as well as the Kentucky Baptist Convention Distribution.

The Cooperative program of the SBC pools gifts from all SBC member churches in support of numerous para-church organizations that enable us to make a greater impact in the world for the cause of Christ. As such, even the smallest financial contribution can lead to untold gains in the advancement of God's kingdom.

Here's how the Cooperative Program funds are utilized:

73% of funds go to World Missions Ministries. This includes the North American Mission Board (NAMB), which handles nation-wide missionary activity, and the International Mission Board, which focuses on missionary activities in foreign lands.

22% of funds go towards Theological Education Ministries. This includes the SBC's six seminary institutions, but also includes other opportunities to equip church leaders and lay members in effectively proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

3% of funds go to the Executive Committee of the SBC and its operating budget. The Executive Committee sees to the interests of the convention throughout the year between annual meetings.

2% of funds go toward Christian Ethics and Religious Liberty Ministries. Baptists have always been concerned about religious freedom, with these groups seeing that no restrictions are placed on our ability to operate according to our religious convictions.

As mentioned, portions of the church's recorded receipts also go to the Kentucky Baptist Convention Distribution, which includes initiatives like the following:

Baptist Campus Ministry

Baptist Campus Ministry looks to reach out to students across Kentucky's university campuses with the gospel. With a goal to place a ministry on every campus in the state, BCM endeavors to provide a network in which students can be engaged by local churches and associations surrounding a particular college or university.

Clear Creek Baptist Bible College

Clear Creek Baptist Bible College was founded by Dr. Lloyd Caswell Kelly in 1926 as he sought to provide grounds for assemblies and to establish a base for a 'mountain mission' evangelism program. Located in Pineville, Kentucky, CCBBC provides undergraduate theological training and certificate programs.

Crossings

Crossings camps serve as unique retreats that focus entirely on proclaiming and displaying the gospel to attendees. Campers are engaged at events hosted across the state, with encouragement to embody a Christ-like character and honoring God in their relationships with others - all while developing a mindset for service and missions.

Disaster Relief

The Disaster Relief program of the KBC provides endless opportunities for volunteers to minister to others affected by major natural disasters. The organization provides training in a variety of tasks to aid recovering communities, from providing hot meals to affected individuals and families to efforts in rebuilding homes and businesses. Volunteers must be a member of a Kentucky Baptist Church in order to participate in ministry opportunities.

Kentucky Baptist Foundation

The Kentucky Baptist Foundation provides consultation services regarding charitable gifts provided by individuals and a variety of forms of investment management to both Kentucky and Southern Baptist-related churches and organizations. Council members are comprised of ministers throughout the state, with the KBF providing guidance in addition to scholarships for students attending Clear Creek Baptist Bible College or The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Oneida Baptist Institute

The Oneida Baptist Institute began in 1899 as an outreach opportunity for children in the mountain regions of eastern Kentucky. In providing a Christian education for their students (focusing on academics, co-curriculars, work programs, and worship), OBI also provides boarding for students in grade 9-12. With funding provided primarily through Kentucky churches and individuals, OBI is able to base admission on financial need, with nearly every student receiving some sort of tuition assistance.

Sunrise Children Services

With three residential centers, one psychiatric residential treatment center, and five foster care regions, Sunrise Children's Services provides care for nearly 800 children and their families across the state. Sunrise also provides services to families and those children who age out of the foster care system through their independent living programs. The organization also encourages adoption opportunities within the state.

Kentucky Women's Missionary Union

While not an entity within the Kentucky Baptist Convention, the Kentucky Women's Missionary Union serves as an auxiliary portion of the SBC's larger WMU. The Kentucky WMU looks to emphasize missions opportunities that lie within the state, educating and encouraging Christian service – from leadership development to numerous forms of compassion ministries. The organization also looks to highlight the Eliza Broadus Offering which supports missionary efforts in North America.

HOW TO HANDLE CONFLICT BIBLICALLY

The New Testament is clear that the church is fundamentally a people, a congregation marked by their commitment to Christ and to one another. Therefore, when the Bible talks about dealing with conflict, it involves the spiritual care of people. It's the process by which members of a church guard one another from the deceitfulness of sin and uphold the truth of the gospel.

Christians are to speak the truth in love to one another and point each other to the grace of the gospel. However, in this fallen world, there will be times when loving correction may not be enough; there will be times when those who belong to the church refuse to repent and continue down the path of sin. It's for these situations that Jesus provides instructions for church discipline:

If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that "every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses." If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

Matthew 18:15–17

Every single step of this process is an expression of Christ's loving and wise rule over his church, and therefore every step ought to be followed.

Step #1: Have a private conversation.

It all begins with private confrontation (Matt. 18:15). As mentioned above, this happens regularly in the life of the church in all kinds of contexts. The member who knows of unrepentant sin is to go to the one who has sinned and, in love, call him to repentance. Rather than fostering gossip and division, Jesus commands his people to speak privately first, "just between the two of [them]." And in God's grace, so often this is the means by which God works repentance among his people.

But what happens if that initial confrontation is rejected? What does it look like once we get beyond that informal step? Though details will vary depending on the church and the circumstances, below are five steps that church members and leaders should generally take in the process of handling conflict or matters of discipline in the church:

Step #2: Take one or two others along (Matt. 18:16).

The next step widens the circle of involvement, while not yet involving the church as a whole. Jesus instructs the members to take one or two others along to confront the one caught in sin. If church leadership has already been notified, it might be appropriate for the pastor(s) to go along with the member making the charge. It's also worth considering whether there might be another member of the church—perhaps a trusted friend—to speak into his life. Ideally, this step would happen in a personal meeting, but in certain situations, a phone call, voicemail, or perhaps even written correspondence may have to suffice.

Those involved up to this point should evaluate the response of the one caught in sin and determine if there's evidence of genuine, lasting repentance. Of course, the goal isn't perfection but rather a heart that's broken over sin and clinging to Christ, evidenced by humility and a willingness to follow wise counsel. In many cases, this step may take weeks, or months, or even longer. Often, it's here that God brings about repentance and reconciliation. But in some cases, it will become evident to those involved that there's no genuine repentance and, in obedience to Christ's instructions, the church should proceed to the next step.

Step #3: Involve the pastor or church leadership by informing them of the situation.

Somewhere around step 2, maybe before, maybe after, a Christian should consider involving the pastor or other leaders of the church (like a small group leader). This might begin with a conversation, but eventually the pastor(s) should have a way of formally receiving charges (for example, the pastor(s) might require that the charges be made in writing or they might invite the person to meet with one or two of them). Jesus does not speak of the involvement of pastors in Matthew 18, but given the responsibility over the church that the apostles assign to them in other passages, it makes sense that pastors would be involved in the process of church discipline at some point. In more difficult situations, the pastor will need to be involved sooner rather than later.

Here, the leadership has the responsibility to consider the nature of the charges. Is the sin concrete and serious enough to warrant taking the next steps of church discipline? Are there extenuating circumstances that the member might not know? Are there other members who might better speak to the one caught in sin? How do we care for those who have been wronged? The leaders of the church will need to think through these and other important questions, and prayerfully shepherd those involved in the following steps.

Step #4: Give adequate notice to the one caught in sin.

Before making the matter public, the pastor(s) will want to make formal contact with the one caught in sin. This is especially in cases where there has been minimal contact with the pastor, as when communication has been rejected or most of the information has been communicated secondhand. The goal of this contact is to explain the charges and express their love and concern. If the person remains unrepentant, then it's necessary to notify them of when this will be shared with the congregation. Given the need for clarity and precision in communication, the initial contact should probably be some form of written communication, followed up by a phone call or a personal meeting.

If the pastor(s) have not yet met with the one being confronted, they should make clear that they want a chance to hear their side of the story. If meeting with the pastor(s) is too intimidating, they can offer to send a group of other believers or church leaders. The goal in this step is to give the unrepentant member a chance to meet with the leaders personally and make sure there is no misunderstanding.

If after this step it's clear there's no misunderstanding and there's still no repentance, then church leadership should proceed to the next step.

Step #5: Tell it to the church (Matt. 18:17).

At this point, Jesus commands the member to "tell it to the church." Though "church" has been interpreted in many different ways, Jesus seems to understand the church to be a gathering of disciples in his name (Matt. 18:20, see 1 Cor. 5:4). The church is the congregation. In this step, the pastor will communicate what's taken place to the congregation.

Given the sensitive nature, it makes sense that the pastor would present this at a regularly scheduled members' meeting, rather than a public worship service. The pastor needs to think through carefully what and how much to communicate about to the congregation. They want to communicate enough so that the congregation understands what has taken place and the need for church discipline. However, they should not communicate so much that it makes returning upon repentance difficult because of public shame, embarrasses family members, or causes weaker sheep to stumble.

Given the need for carefulness and precision, it's generally wise for the pastor to craft a letter to be read at the meeting, rather than trying to explain it extemporaneously. In some cases, the pastor may want to involve the member who initially brought the charges in crafting the letter. After the pastor reads the letter, they should allow for questions from the congregation, and invite people to talk to them privately if they have further questions. In more difficult cases, the pastor might consider holding a forum for members of the church to bring questions.

Having been apprised of the situation, the congregation should be instructed to pray. Those in the church who have a personal relationship with the one caught in sin should be encouraged to reach out prayerfully. The pastor will want to give the congregation enough time to participate in the process of confrontation.

This period may be the time until the next members' meeting, or longer if needed. However, in certain cases, the church may need to act more quickly, perhaps even right away, if the church feels confident about a lack of repentance (1 Cor. 5:1-5).

Step #6: Remove the unrepentant person from membership (Matt. 18:17).

After following all the previous steps, if the individual continues to refuse to listen "even to the church," then the pastor should update the congregation on the situation, and bring a formal motion for the congregation to remove them from the membership of the church. If the vote passes, then the church needs to understand that they no longer affirm this person's profession of faith. They are to relate to him no longer as one who belongs to the church but to the world, like "a pagan or tax collector."

Following the removal, the pastor should instruct the congregation on how to interact with the individual. As someone under discipline, the goal is not to shun him or to cut off all relationship. Rather, members should relate to him as someone in need of the gospel, yet who is self-deceived. In that sense, interactions are more complex than relating with non-Christian friends who know they are non-Christians. Any interactions should be used to call the person to repentance and to remind him of the hope of the gospel. Members should encourage him to attend the services of the church and to sit under the preaching of the Word. And yet, at the same time, they must avoid relating to him casually as if nothing has changed.

After the meeting, the pastor should send a written communication to the individual, informing him of the act of discipline, and expressing their love for him and their desire for his repentance and restoration. The pastor should also continue to follow up with the congregation in different settings (Sunday School classes, small groups, etc.) to see if there are any concerns or questions about what has taken place. Church discipline can be a difficult time in the life of a church, and yet it can also be used by God to bring about maturity and growth. Pastors should shepherd the congregation wisely both throughout the process and after.

Conclusion

Handling conflict and church discipline would be easier if the church wasn't made up of people. But Jesus didn't come for buildings or institutions or events. He came to save a people for himself, sinners like you and me.

It's this reality that makes church discipline a wonderful gift. The church is a gathering of those who through repentance and faith have received the hope of Christ's salvation and are helping each other persevere in that hope. To neglect loving correction or church discipline is to fail to love one another in that way. So, as we labor to follow Christ's instructions for the purity of the church, we cling to the hope of the gospel both for ourselves and for those around us.

MISSIONS & OUTREACH

“And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go 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 that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

As followers of Christ, we at Raikes Hill believe that all believers have been commissioned to share the gospel. Whether it be in our homes, in our community, or in foreign lands, our goal is to equip and encourage believers in obediently carrying out the commands of Christ.

Missions and outreach at Raikes Hill typically take the following forms:

Personal Evangelism

Personal evangelism is relational in nature. It means building genuine connections with the individuals who we are trying to reach with the gospel. While personal evangelism is unique to the individual, the church is also involved in making the gospel clear during its services, by equipping believers in sharing the gospel, and in bearing witness to the gospel through our love for one another.

Global Evangelism/International Missions

While a portion of our receipts go towards local and international missions (see “Where Does the Money Go? on page #), we aim to participate in such activities ourselves! This may additionally entail supporting missionaries, serving as a sort of “rope-holder” as they are in the field. It may also include short- or long-term trips to be actively involved in a variety of missions opportunities.

Caring for Other Churches

All churches have the opportunity to encourage and aid one another in their calling. We can achieve such by supporting seminaries who train pastors and other church leaders, through fostering the growth of leadership in our on congregation to send out to other communities, in addition to collectively serving alongside one another through the Kentucky and Southern Baptist Convention.

HISTORY OF RAIKES HILL

In 1954, Dr. J. Chester Badgett and the Missions Committee of Campbellsville Baptist Church began missions work in rural areas of Taylor County. With the consolidation of one-room schools, the church began using some of the old school buildings as mission churches.

A tent revival was eventually held at Raikes Hill, with Dr. Badgett preaching. Brother Jeremiah Cox would come to serve as the Sunday School Superintendent and lay preacher. After resigning in 1955, E.S. Woosley became the Sunday School Superintendent, with numerous members of the Campbellsville Baptist Missions Committee members serving the church in leading Sunday School and aiding the Vacation Bible School program.

Shortly after its founding (around 1955), the schoolhouse at Raikes Hill and over one acre of land was purchased for \$345 by Dr. W.B. Atkinson and the committee.

PASTORS

Russell Dazey	Sep/Oct 1956 - Oct 1960	Cody Kidd (Interim)	
Jim Humphrey	Mar 1981 - Dec 1962	Ed Hamlin	1986
Phillip Basinger	Dec 1962 - Apr 1964	Terry Vale (Interim)	
Charles Hedrick	Jul 1964 - 1965	Danny Hunt	1994-1996
Bobby Richardson	1965 - 1967	Terry Vale (Interim)	
Tommy Williams	Nov 1967 - 1971	Wayne Orange	1998-2000
Harley Archer	1971 - 1972	Bob Stotts	2000-2003
Maurice Bulter	1972 - 1974	Seibert Sullivan	Oct 2003-2004
Bud Walls	May 1976 - 1978	Johnathan Anderson	2005-Apr 2009
Terry Vale		Dr. Joseph Segree	Jul 2009 - 2021
Ken Wells		Drew Underwood	Aug 2022 - Present
Dr. Blackburn (Interim)			

OUR MISSION & VISION

Here at Raikes Hill, our passion is to encourage followers of Christ to lovingly participate within the family of God, be spiritual leaders within their own families, as well as a witness to the power of the gospel in their relationships with others.

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

Colossians 1:28

This is our ultimate goal - to image Christ in our devotion to God, in our love for one another, with a compassion to help address the greatest need of humanity - a restored relationship with our Creator. In encouraging one another, we look to develop spiritually in three ways:

Upward

Of greatest priority is our posture before God. We realize that we are all sinners redeemed by grace alone, by faith alone, in Christ alone. In that, we cast our eyes to our Redeemer, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, experiencing true peace with God through Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. For this, our aim is to serve God and worship Him in all that we do.

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth!
Serve the LORD with gladness!
Come into his presence with singing!

Know that the LORD, he is God!
It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise!
Give thanks to him; bless his name!

For the LORD is good;
his steadfast love endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.

Psalms 100

Inward

With a right understanding of who God is and in properly responding to the gospel message through faith and repentance, we understand that God has given us everything we need through Christ in order that we can live a life of obedience and godliness (2 Pet 1:3). Through God's Word, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, our inner nature is changed and transformed into the likeness of Christ, more and more as we journey in the faith.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:2

Outward

With a desire to worship and serve God, and in being transformed more and more into the likeness of Christ, we inevitably share in his compassion for others. This entails encouraging and edifying other believers, but also seeking to make the gospel known amongst all nations. Whether at home or abroad, we look to champion the name of Christ, for he is the only one who is truly able to save.

For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"

Romans 10:11-15

CHURCH COVENANT

Having, as we trust, been brought by divine grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with each other.

We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We will walk together in brotherly love, as becomes the members of a Christian Church, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require.

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others.

We will endeavor to bring up such as may at any time be under our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family and friends.

We will rejoice at each other's happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.

We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation now to lead a new and holy life.

We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. We will 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 will, when we move from this place, 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.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following is from the Southern Baptist Convention's Baptist Faith & Message 2000.

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of

the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the

goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32;

John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the

Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and

the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free

church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. 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 companionship, 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. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. 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. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. 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.

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

PREAMBLE

Since it pleased Almighty God, by His Holy Spirit, to call certain of His servants to unite here in 1955 under the name Raikes Hill Baptist Church, for the worship of God and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and He has sustained and prospered this work to the present day; and

Whereas we, the members of Raikes Hill Baptist Church, having searched the Scriptures under the guidance of His Spirit, have recognized the need to reconstitute ourselves to more closely conform to His will for the Church in this age and prepare ourselves for greater efforts in His name;

Now therefore we, the members of Raikes Hill Baptist Church, do hereby organize ourselves in accord with the Kentucky Nonprofit Corporation Act and adopt this Constitution as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated in the standards set forth in the Statement of Faith and Covenant of this church.

ARTICLE 1 – NAME

The name of this church is Raikes Hill Baptist Church.

ARTICLE 2 – PURPOSE

This church exists by the grace of God, for the glory of God, which shall be the ultimate purpose in all its activities.

This church glorifies God by loving Him and obeying His commands through:
Worshipping Him;

Equipping the saints through Bible instruction and study;

Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of Holy Scripture;

Encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work, local, domestic, and international;

Administering the ordinances of baptism and communion;

Encouraging Biblical fellowship among believers;

Serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, in the name of Jesus Christ; and

Calling fellow churches to biblical faithfulness and purity through instruction and encouragement about the nature of the local church.

ARTICLE 3 – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Qualifications

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized, in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. The pastor shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence, as the pastor deems appropriate.

Section 2 – Admission of Members

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the pastor for admission and accepted by vote of the members at any regular or special meeting of the members, and shall at that point relinquish their membership in other churches.

Section 3 – Duties and Privileges of Membership

In accord with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only those shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of the church who are members of this congregation; non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the pastor. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation.

Under Christ this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters as may be submitted to a vote.

Section 4 – Associate Membership

Students and others temporarily residing in the Taylor County area who are members of an evangelical church may apply for associate membership. Qualifications are identical to those for full membership as set out above, except that home church membership must be retained. A letter of commendation will be sought from the applicant's home church. Duties and privileges of associate members are the same as for other members except that:

(a) when absent from the immediate area for extended periods of time they are released from the responsibility to attend our church services;

(b) while they will be encouraged to participate in members' meetings they will not be eligible to stand for any office or to vote.

Termination of associate membership as a disciplinary measure will be as it is for other members, except that the pastor shall notify the pastor of the home church of that termination. Associate membership will normally terminate immediately upon the ending of the period of temporary residence in the Taylor County area.

Section 5 – On Church Discipline

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the pastor and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and the example of Scripture. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed.

Church discipline can include admonition by the pastor or congregation, suspension from communion for a definite period, deposition from office, and excommunication (see Matthew 18:15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14–15; 1 Timothy 5:19–20; 1 Corinthians 5:4–5).

The purpose of such discipline should be for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (see Proverbs 15: 5; 29:15; I Corinthians 4:14; Ephesians 6:4; I Timothy 3:4–5; Hebrews 12:1–11; Psalm 119:115; 141:5; Proverbs 17:10; 25:12; 27:5; Ecclesiastes 7:5; Matthew 7:26–27; 18:15–17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; I Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1–5; II Thessalonians 3:6, 14–15; I Timothy 1:20; Titus 1:13–14; James 1:22);

For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (see Proverbs 13:20; Romans 15:14; I Corinthians 5:11; 15:33; Colossians 3:16; I Thessalonians 5:14 [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; I Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 10:24–25);

For the purity of the church as a whole (see I Corinthians 5:6–7; II Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27; II John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21:2);

For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (see Proverbs 28:7; Matthew 5:13–16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1–14; Ephesians 5:11; I Timothy 3:7; II Peter 2:2; I John 3:10); and

Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (see Deuteronomy 5:11; I Kings 11:2; II Chronicles 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 9:2; Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 36:20; Matthew 5:16; John 15:8; 18: 17,25; Romans 2:24; 15:5–6; II Corinthians 6:14–7: 1; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; I Peter 2:12).

Section 6 – Termination of Membership

The church shall recognize the termination of a person’s membership following his or her death, and may do so after he or she has voluntarily resigned or joined with another church. Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (ordinarily, but not necessarily, at the recommendation of the pastor) upon the vote of at least two-thirds of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members.

The church shall have authority to refuse a member’s voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline, or for any other biblical reason.

ARTICLE 4 - MEETINGS

Section 1 – Worship Meetings

Worship services shall be held each Lord’s Day, and may be held throughout the week as the church determines.

Section 2 – Members’ Meetings

In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There shall be a regular members’ meeting at least every other month, at some time apart from a public worship service agreed upon by the membership.

An member designated by church leadership shall preside as moderator at all members’ meetings of the church. The pastor shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.

Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present. All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present.

A budget shall be approved by the membership at a members’ meeting not more than three months after the start of the fiscal year. Prior to this approval and subject to the pastors’ discretion, expenditures may continue at the prior year’s level.

At any regular or special members’ meeting, officers may be elected and positions filled as needed, so long as all relevant constitutional requirements have been met.

Special members' meetings may be called as required by the pastor, or at the written request, submitted to the pastor, of five percent of the voting membership. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at all public services of the church within two weeks preceding the meeting. In the event of a written request from the members, the pastor shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request.

ARTICLE 5 – OFFICERS

Section 1 – Summary

The Biblical offices in the church are pastors and deacons. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative positions under this constitution of clerk and treasurer. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

Section 2 – The Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor must satisfy the qualifications for the office as set forth in I Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9. No pastor shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure.

Subject to the will of the congregation, the Senior Pastor shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6 and I Peter 5:1–4, the Senior Pastor shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock.

An Senior Pastor's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that the Senior Pastor should be dismissed should express such concern to church leadership and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and I Timothy 5:17–21. The Senior Pastor may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members at any members' meeting of the church.

The Senior Pastor shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The Senior Pastor is to further ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions.

The Senior Pastor may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The Senior Pastor may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill the positions of senior

and associate pastor. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the hands of those with hiring authority for that position.

The Senior Pastor shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member.

Each year the Senior Pastor, after consultation with the deacons, the deaconesses, and the membership, shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for discussion at a specially-called budget meeting and called up for a vote at the following members' meeting. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the Senior Pastor.

The Senior shall elect a chairman of deacons' meetings and shall also elect one of their number to serve as moderator of members' meetings (if not himself). For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the state of Kentucky, the Senior Pastor shall elect one of their number to serve as the president of the corporation.

The Senior Pastor shall preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the constitution.

In the absence or incapacity of the Senior Pastor, church leadership shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

Section 3 – Associate Pastors

The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the senior pastor is that of associate.

He shall assist the senior pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor, or as set forth in the constitution, or which may be specifically assigned to him by the congregation.

In the absence or incapacity of the Senior Pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the associate pastor(s) shall assume the responsibility for his duties under the oversight of church leadership.

Section 4 – Deacons

The office of deacon is described in I Timothy 3:8–13 and Acts 6:1–7. The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of service. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons.

Deacons and shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help others and those with gifts of administration.

The deacons shall receive, hold, and disburse a fund for benevolence, reporting on its use to the pastor at their request, and reporting to the church its total receipts and total disbursements only.

The deacons, with the agreement of the pastor, may establish unpaid administrative positions or committees of members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the church.

Section 9 – Clerk

It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports as requested by the pastor, the deacons, or the church.

The clerk shall be nominated by church leadership and elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year.

In the absence or incapacity of the clerk church leadership shall appoint a member to perform the duties of the church clerk.

For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the state of Kentucky, the clerk shall serve as the secretary of the corporation.

The church clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this constitution shall be available for all church members.

Section 10 – Treasurer

The treasurer, who shall not be an active pastor or paid church staff member, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the church at each members' meeting. The responsibility may be delegated with the approval of the pastor. The treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The treasurer shall render to the pastor annually, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial condition of the church.

The treasurer shall be nominated by church leadership and elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year.

ARTICLE 6 – ELECTIONS

Section 1 – Principles

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles:

Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process;

Nominations should proceed with the support of the Senior and Associate Pastor(s);

All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members;

The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 2 – Selection of Officers

The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church. Names of nominees to serve as Senior or Associate Pastor(s), deacons, clerk, or treasurer shall be presented by the pastor at the previous members' meeting (providing that previous meeting occurred at least eight weeks prior), and the election shall proceed as directed by the moderator.

The Senior and Associate Pastor(s) should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to church leadership. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the pastor as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting.

The moderator shall declare elected all men receiving a 75% majority of all votes cast for the office of Senior or Associate Pastor. For all other offices, the moderator shall declare elected all persons receiving a simple majority of all votes cast; abstentions will not be considered as votes cast.

The persons elected shall assume their respective offices upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated.

Section 3 – Calling of the Senior Pastor

In the calling of any man to this position, the same basic process of calling a pastor must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential Senior Pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from church leadership that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as Senior Pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

Section 4 – Calling of Associate Pastor

In the calling of any man to the position of Associate pastor, the same basic process of calling an pastor must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential Associate Pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from church leadership that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be called as Associate Pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of him and his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

ARTICLE 7 – INDEMNIFICATION

Section 1 – Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if church leadership determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

Section 2 – Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of church leadership, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.

Section 3 – Procedure

If a quorum of church leadership is not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of church leaders seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may be made by the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

ARTICLE 8 – DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (see, e.g., Matthew 18:15–20, I Corinthians 6:1–8), the church shall require its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities.

ARTICLE 9 – AMENDMENTS

The Statement of Faith and Church Covenant may be amended by a three-quarters vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

The revised version of this constitution shall be made available to all church members by the church clerk.

