

Bible Baptist Church of Mattoon Constitution and By-Laws

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ARTICLE 1 NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION 1.01—NAME

This congregation of believers shall be known as the Bible Baptist Church of Mattoon

SECTION 1.02—PURPOSE

This congregation is organized as a local church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the building of churches, parsonages, schools, chapels, radio stations, television stations, rescue missions, print shops, daycare centers, and camps; the evangelizing of the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture, both in Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education; and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country.

ARTICLE 2

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT

SECTION 2.01—STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following comprise the Scriptural beliefs of this church and its members.

- (A) **The Holy Scriptures.** We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plerarily inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed and, therefore, are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning, and all issues of interpretation and meaning shall be determined by the pastor. The Authorized MDCXI King James Version of the Bible shall be the official and only translation used by the church. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21)
- (B) **The Godhead.** We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; John 14:10, 26; 2 Cor. 13:14)
- (C) **The Person and Work of Christ.**
1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-8)
 2. 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 sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:18-36; Rom. 3:24-25; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 Peter 1:3-5)
 3. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9-10; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2)

(D) The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and, that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8-11; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13-14)

2. We believe that He is the divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27)

3. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry. (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 28; Eph. 4:7-12)

4. We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. Speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit. Ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. (1 Cor. 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22)

(E) The Fall of Man. We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God; but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is a sinner and continues to sin by choice and unable to save himself or remedy his lost condition. (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19)



God's Purpose of Grace. We believe the Scriptures teach that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with Individual Soul Liberty, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God; that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the Gospel; that it is the foundation of Christian assurance.

(G) Salvation. We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. (Matt. 12:31-32; John 1:12; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 1 John 1:9)

(H) The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers.

1. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1; 38-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; 1 Pet. 1:4-5)
2. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. (Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15)

(I) The Church

1. We believe that the local church is a congregation of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel. (1 Cor. 12:12-14; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27)
2. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11)
3. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4)
4. We recognize water baptism and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 8:36-38; Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:17-34)
 - 4.1 We believe that water baptism is by immersion in water of a believer. In the name of the Father, of the Son and the Holy Spirit, with the authority of the local church as a testimony of the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 4.2 We believe that the Lord's supper is for baptized believers belonging to this local church. In the which the members of the church by the use of bread and fruit of the vine are to commemorate together the suffering and dying love of our Lord Jesus Christ. Which is preceded always by solemn self examination of each member of the congregation.

- (J) Separation.** We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and to refrain from all immodest and immoderate appearances, piercings, and bodily markings. (Lev. 19:28; Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11)

(K) **The Resurrection and Return of Christ.** We believe in and accept the sacred Scriptures upon these subjects. Of the resurrection, we believe that Christ arose bodily "the third day according to the Scriptures", that He ascended "to the right hand of the throne of God", by the power of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, "That this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven", bodily, personally, and visibly, that the "dead in Christ shall rise first;" that the living saints "shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump", "that the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David," and that "Christ shall reign a thousand years in righteousness until he hath put all enemies under His Feet." Matt. 28:6-7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; I Cor. 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2;4-6; Acts 1:9;11; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19; Rev. 3:21; Heb. 8:1; Heb, 12:2; Heb. 8:6; I Tim. 2:5; I John 2:1; Heb. 2:17 Heb. 5:9-10; John 14:3; I Thess. 4:16; I Cor.15:52; I Cor. 15:42-44; I Cor. 15: 51-53; I Thess. 4;17; Phil.4:20-21; Luke 1:32; I Cor. 15:25; Isa. 11:4-5; Psa. 72:8; Rev.20:1-4; Rev.20:6; Rom.8:34; Heb.10:19

(L) **The Eternal State.**

1. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28, 29; 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13)

2. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6)

3. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15)

(M) **The Reality of Satan.** We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10)

(N) **Creation.** We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively; that man was created directly in God's own image and after his own likeness. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. Gen. 1:1-2; Ex. 20:11; Acts 4:24; Col. 1:16-17; Neb. 11:3; John 1:3; Rev. 10:6; Rom. 1:20; Acts 17:23-26; Jer. 10:12; Neh. 9:6; Gen. 1:26-27; Gen. 2:21-23; Gen. 1:11; Gen. 1:24.

(O) **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)

(P) **Human Sexuality.**

1. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one 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. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

2. We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23) (Section 5.01-D)

(Q) **Family Relationships**

1. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)

2. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are an heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5;

Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

- (R) **Divorce and Remarriage.** We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication. 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 offices of pastor or deacon. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)
- (S) **Abortion.** We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well being of the mother are acceptable. We reject any teaching that accepts the harvesting of human embryos as means to further science. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)
- (T) **Euthanasia.** We believe that the direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus we believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment. (Ex. 20:13, 23:7; Matt. 5:21; Acts 17:28)
- (U) **Love.** We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)
- (V) **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 for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)

- (W) **Missions.** We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20)
- (X) **Giving.** We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to financially support his local church. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for 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 his tithe or offering once the gift has been made. (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

SECTION 2.02—AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

SECTION 2.03—COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of our Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, 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 engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, 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; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; 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 engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred, acquaintances, and all others; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful to our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from such worldly amusements as watching ungodly movies, gambling, ungodly music, and dancing; to be free from all oath-bound secret societies and partnerships with unbelievers; to abstain from the sale or use of tobacco in any form, abusive narcotic drugs, or intoxicating drink as a beverage; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

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

We moreover engage, 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.

ARTICLE 3 MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 3.01—QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Upon a majority vote of the members present at any church service or meeting, membership shall be extended to all who have had and whose lives evidence a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior; who renounce sin; who endeavor to live a consecrated life wholly unto the Lord; who subscribe to the Statement of Faith contained herein; who enter into the church covenant contained herein; who agree to submit to the authority of the church and its leaders as set forth herein; and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:

- (A) By baptism (immersion) as a true believer in Christ Jesus as personal Savior;
- (B) By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith;
 - B.1** Any candidate desiring admittance and giving testimony of salvation that has been baptized by another organization with beliefs and practices contrary to this church, must be baptized by the authority of this church to obtain membership.
- (C) By testimony of faith, having been baptized by immersion; or
- (D) By restoration, if having been removed from membership, upon majority vote of the congregation after confession is made publicly before the church membership of the sin or sins involved, and satisfactorily evidencing repentance to the pastor (or the board of deacons if the office of pastor is vacant).

SECTION 3.02—DUTIES OF A MEMBER

On becoming a member of this church, in addition to the covenant contained in Section 2.03, each member further covenants to love, honor, and esteem the pastor; to pray for him; to recognize his authority in spiritual affairs of the church; to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the church; to support the church in prayer, tithes, offerings and with other financial support as the Lord enables; and in accordance with Biblical commands, to support through a lifestyle walk affirming the beliefs and practices of the church.

SECTION 3.03—PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

- (A) Only members at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. The eligible membership of the church has certain limited areas to exercise a vote. Members may not vote to initiate any church action, rather the vote of a member is to confirm and ratify the direction of the church as determined by the pastor and the board of deacons.
- (B) This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the under-

shepherd with the counsel of the board of deacons. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The pastor shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this church. The board of deacons shall give counsel and assistance to the pastor as requested by him.

- (C) Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board of deacons) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of the pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board of deacons), be treated as a trespasser.
- (D) A member may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church and the minutes of the proceedings of church meetings and of board meetings, provided he shall have made a verbal request upon the church and the church has received the written request at least five business days before the requested inspection date
1. A member may not, under any circumstances, inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the church, the list of names and addresses of the church members, or the accounting books and financial records of the church.
 2. The church may impose a reasonable charge, covering the costs of labor and material, for copies of any documents provided to the member before releasing the copies to the member.

SECTION 3.04—DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER

- (A) There shall be a discipline committee consisting of the pastor and the board of deacons. These men shall have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the Statement of Faith and violations of the church covenant. If the pastor or a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the discipline committee. The pastor and deacons shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.
- (B) Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and testimony, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.
- (C) If reconciliation is not reached, a second member, either a deacon or the pastor, is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also

be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.

- (D) If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, the discipline committee should proceed lovingly and cautiously, as the church representatives Biblically responsible for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the hearing before the discipline committee, the committee shall recommend to the members of the church that they, after self-examination, make an effort personally to go to the offending member and seek that member's restoration.
- (E) If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B), (C), and (D) have been taken, such members who refuse to repent and be restored are to be removed from the membership of the church upon a majority vote of the membership present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action.
- (F) No matter may be heard by the discipline committee or the church unless the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, except in the case of a public offense.
- (G) If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the church membership, all fellowship with him from that point forward must be for the sake of restoration.
- (H) The procedures provided in this section are based on Matt. 18:15-20; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:1-11; Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6, 10-15; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.

SECTION 3.05—TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Members not under the disciplinary process of Section 3.04 may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church.

SECTION 3.06—TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- (A) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church in the preceding ninety (90) days. Upon good cause being shown to the pastor, this provision for termination may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the pastor.
- (B) No member of this church may hold membership in another church. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member unites in membership with another church.

- (C) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member states or it becomes evident to the Pastor or to the discipline committee that he or she is actively involved in any conduct described in Section 2.01(P) or threatens to files a lawsuit in violation of Section 2.01(V).
- (D) No provision contained in this section shall be subject to or governed by the procedures regarding discipline of members set forth in Section 3.04.
- (E) A member may resign at any time, but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the pastor.

ARTICLE 4 OFFICERS

SECTION 4.01—CHURCH OFFICERS

The church officers are pastor (see Section 5.01), deacon (see Section 5.02), church clerk, (see Section 5.03), church treasurer (see Section 5.04). One person may hold two or more offices, except that of pastor. The pastor, from time to time as he deems appropriate, may appoint other church officers, subject to a confirmation vote of the church membership.

SECTION 4.02—DESIGNATION OF CORPORATE OFFICERS

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the pastor shall serve as president of the corporation; the church clerk shall serve as secretary of the corporation; the church treasurer shall serve as treasurer of the corporation; and the chairman of the board of deacons shall serve as vice president of the corporation.

SECTION 4.03—ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE

- (A) The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith. All church officers, upon request of the pastor, shall affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith (as set forth in Article 2).
- (B) All church officers must be approved initially and thereafter annually by the pastor in order for them to commence or continue in their offices.
- (C) Only church members are eligible for election or appointment to any church office or position.

SECTION 4.04—TERMS OF OFFICE

- (A) The relationship between the pastor and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of a month's notice, or less by mutual consent. The calling of a pastor or severance of the relationship between the pastor and the church may be considered at any regular church administration meeting, provided notice to that effect shall have been given from the pulpit to the church two Sundays prior to said regular church administration meeting. A three-fourths majority of the eligible members present and voting shall be required to call a pastor or to sever the relationship between the pastor and the church. Disciplinary removal of the pastor from office automatically terminates his membership. A restoration to membership after disciplinary removal will be subject to the requirements of Section 3.01(D).

- (B) The term of service for all offices and positions in the church, except the pastor, shall be one year, at the expiration of which the officers may be re-elected or re-appointed.
- (C) A vacancy occurring in any office or board, except in the case of the pastor, may be filled at any regular church administration meeting.
- (D) All elected and appointed officers shall serve in their respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed.
- (E) Members of the board of deacons may be removed from office for unbiblical conduct, as determined by the other board members, upon a majority vote of the remaining members of the board of deacons.

SECTION 4.05—ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The annual election of officers by the church membership shall occur during the month of December at the annual church administration meeting.

SECTION 4.06—PASTORAL OVERSIGHT OF OFFICERS AND STAFF

- (A) Subject to the approval of the church membership and on the condition that they shall become a member of the church upon assuming their duties, the pastor may hire associates and assistants to assist him in the carrying out of his God-given responsibilities.
- (B) All church staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the pastor who has the sole authority to dismiss the same. No employee or volunteer shall be hired, appointed, or retained who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith.

ARTICLE 5

DUTIES AND POWERS OF OFFICERS

SECTION 5.01—THE PASTOR

- (A) The pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly and shall be at liberty to preach the whole counsel of the Word of God as the Lord leads him. He shall administer the ordinances of the church, act as moderator at all church meetings for the transaction of church matters, supervise the teaching ministries of the church, and tenderly watch over the spiritual interests of the membership.
- (B) The pastor shall serve as the president of the corporation. He shall publicly inform all newly elected officers of the particular function and the responsibilities of their respective offices. He shall extend the right hand of fellowship to all new members on behalf of the church and perform such other duties as generally appertain to such a position. The pastor shall be free to choose the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry that God has given him as long as means and methods are consistent with the articles of faith.
- (C) All appointments for public worship and Bible study and the arrangements thereof, including time and place and the use of the property belonging to the church for purposes other than the stated appointments, shall be under the control of the pastor.
- (D) The Pastor shall perform marriages for members of this Church that is consistent with Article 2.01(O),(P),(Q). Approval from the board of deacons must be obtained for marriages performed for non-church members that are of like faith.

SECTION 5.02—THE BOARD OF DEACONS

- (A) The board of deacons shall assist the pastor, in such manner as he shall request, in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church, in conducting the religious services, and in performing all other work of the church. They shall make provision for the observance of the ordinances of the church. They shall, if requested by the pastor, consider applications for church membership. They shall, in cooperation with the pastor, disburse special funds. They shall assist the pastor in visitation and all other evangelistic efforts of the church. The board of deacons shall assist the pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the church's various ministries as requested by the pastor. They shall provide the pulpit supply and choose a moderator for church meetings if the pastor is unavailable or the office of pastor is vacant. Upon the death, resignation, or dismissal of the pastor, the board of deacons may appoint a pulpit committee.
- (B) Immediately following the annual church administration meeting, the board of deacons shall assemble and elect, from their own number, a chairman who shall be vice president of the corporation, a vice chairman, and a secretary.

- (C) The board of deacons shall constitute the board of trustees of the corporation. The board of trustees shall exercise only the following specific powers, upon authorization by a majority vote of the members present at a duly called church administration meeting:
1. To purchase, hold, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the church, and to take real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church;
 2. To sell, convey, alienate, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, and to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the church, to borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and the use of the church; to cause to be executed, issued, and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and to secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, or pledges; and
 3. To exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church corporation.

SECTION 5.03—THE CHURCH CLERK

The Church Clerk shall:

- (A) Certify and keep at the office of the church, the original bylaws or a copy, including all amendments or alterations to the bylaws;
- (B) Keep at the place where the bylaws or a copy are kept a record of the proceedings of meetings of the board of deacons, with the time and place of holding, the notice of meeting given, the names of these present at the meetings;
- (C) Sign, certify, or attest documents as may be required by law;
- (D) See that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws. (In case of the absence or disability of the secretary, or his or her refusal or neglect to act, notice may be given and served by the pastor or by the chairman of the board of deacons.);
- (E) Be custodian of the records of the church, including the membership roll, baptisms, and certificates of ordination, licenses and commissions;
- (F) See that the reports, statements, certificates, and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed;

- (G) Exhibit at all reasonable times to proper persons on terms provided by law the bylaws and minutes of proceedings of the board of deacons or the minutes of the meetings of the church members;
- (H) Keep an account of any special events in the life of the church which are of historical interest and give a report at the annual church administration meeting of the status of the church membership roll in the past year;
- (I) Keep all records at the office of the church and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office; and
- (J) Serve as the secretary of the corporation.

SECTION 5.04—THE CHURCH TREASURER

The Church Treasurer shall:

- (A) Have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds of the corporation, and deposit all funds in the name of the church in banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected by the pastor or the board of deacons;
- (B) Receive, and give receipt for all contributions, gifts, and donations to the church;
- (C) Disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the church as may be directed by the pastor, the board of deacons, or the budget adopted by the members of the church at the annual church administration meeting, taking proper vouchers for the disbursements;
- (D) Keep and maintain adequate and correct accounts of the church's properties and business transactions including account of its assets, liabilities, receipts, disbursements, and capital;
- (E) When and as requested, render to the pastor and the board of deacons accounts of all his transactions as Church Treasurer and of the financial condition of the church;
- (F) Present a written report of itemized disbursements at the regular quarterly church administration meetings and make a general report for the year at the annual church administration meeting;
- (G) Maintain all church financial records of the church and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office; and
- (H) Serve as treasurer of the corporation.

SECTION 5.05—ASSOCIATE PASTORS

Under the direction and guidance of the pastor, the associate pastor(s) of the church shall assist the pastor in carrying out the ministries of the church.

SECTION 5.06—DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS

- (A) All officers shall prepare a written report of their work for the annual church administration meeting and shall surrender all records in their possession to the Church Clerk at the close of their term of office to be filed as a permanent record of the work of the church. All records are the property of the church and must be kept in the church office.
- (B) Any officer who neglects his duties as outlined in the bylaws may be removed from his office, at the discretion of the pastor, and another may be appointed by the pastor in cooperation with the Board of Deacons to serve the un-expired term.

SECTION 5.07 ALL OTHER LEADERSHIP POSITIONS INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

Sunday School Teacher(s), Children's Church Worker(s), Song Director, Transportation Worker(s), Nursery Worker(s), Usher(s).

These positions shall be appointed by the pastor for an indefinite period of time provided that such persons maintain their duties in a proper manner as deemed by the pastor and Board of Deacons.

SECTION 5.08 GENERAL RULES FOR LEADERSHIP

- (A) All elected or appointed leaders must be committed to the following:
1. Faithful Church attendance
 2. Giving of their tithes and offerings to support the church
 3. Keeping an exemplary Christian lifestyle by abstaining from excessive anger, the use of alcohol or tobacco, gossiping, keeping a clean and godly appearance in dress and manner, and avoiding all forms of worldliness.
 4. Following the leadership of the pastor as being God's appointed leader in the church. (Acts 20:28 and Hebrews 13:7, 17)
 5. In event that a person no longer wishes to serve in a position of leadership, that person is to submit a written/signed statement to the pastor (or deacons if the church is without a pastor) stating their decision and the reasons for that decision.

SECTION 5.09—INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

A public installation service in which all newly elected officers of the church are to be dedicated to their respective offices and the ordination of newly elected deacons shall be held at a public church service following their election at the annual church administration meeting.

ARTICLE 6 MEETINGS

SECTION 6.01—MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Unless otherwise determined by the pastor, the church shall meet each Sunday for public worship both morning and evening and at least once during the week for Bible study and prayer. Except when circumstances forbid it, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed as the Pastor feels led of the Holy Spirit. The Lord's Supper is a special time for the Church as explained in I Cor. 11:23-24

SECTION 6.02—MEETINGS FOR CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

- (A) The annual church administration meeting shall be held during the first week of December, at which time the regular church administration shall be considered. A quorum shall consist of the members present.
- (B) All church administration meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer for divine guidance and blessing.
- (C) The Pastor shall act as moderator in all Church administration meetings, in the absence of the Pastor, the chairman of the deacons shall serve as moderator. The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling. The following order shall be observed at the regular church administration meetings which are to be held quarterly.
- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1.Devotions & prayer | 7. Election of officers |
| 2.Reading of minutes | 8. New matters |
| 3.Reception of members | 9. Adjournment |
| 4.Dismissal of members | 10. Benediction |
| 5.Report of officers | |
| 6. Unfinished matters | |
- (D) For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require nonmembers to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. The moderator shall have full authority to order the removal of all children (ages to be determined by the moderator) if the moderator determines, in his sole discretion, that circumstances so warrant. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, the moderator may, in his sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises in accordance with Section 3.03(C) and treat the person as a trespasser.

SECTION 6.03—SPECIAL MEETINGS

- (A) The pastor (or deacons if the office of pastor is vacant or the pastor is the subject of possible disciplinary action) may call a special meeting. A meeting for the calling of a pastor or the severance of the relationship between the church and pastor shall be called in accordance with the provision of Section 4.04(A). A two week notice shall be provided prior to the meeting.
- (B) Bible conferences, missionary conferences, and revivals may be held as the pastor deems beneficial.

SECTION 6.04—FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the church shall begin January 1st and end December 31st.

ARTICLE 7

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

SECTION 7.01—PURPOSE

The church believes that it is to provide the members' children with an education which is based upon and consistent with Biblical teachings. The church believes that the home and church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education. To this end, the church shall engage in ministries in education in keeping with the following dictates.

SECTION 7.02—CHURCH PARTICIPATION

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the church; however, the pastor may permit non-church members to participate in church educational programs or courses of instruction if he deems it in the best interest of the church.

SECTION 7.03—STAFF MEMBERSHIP

All instructors, teachers, and administrators shall be members of this church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, or preachers engaged for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals, or other special meetings on a temporary basis.

SECTION 7.04—STATEMENT OF FAITH ACCORD

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the Statement of Faith of the church. The church shall not hire, appoint, or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith.

SECTION 7.05—UNITY

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the church. They shall be approved by the Pastor and be consistent with the Word of God.

SECTION 7.06—TEACHING

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted consistent with the teaching of the inerrant Word of God. Any assertion or belief which conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every instructor or teacher to present the inerrant Word of God as the sole infallible source of knowledge and wisdom.

SECTION 7.07—CHRISTIAN WALK

All administrators, instructors, and teachers shall continue or adopt a lifestyle consistent with the precepts which they teach, also which are taught by the Pastor whether in or out of the classroom.

ARTICLE 8 ORDINATION

SECTION 8.01—ORDINATION QUALIFICATIONS

Any member of this church or its mission churches, who gives evidence of a genuine call of God into the work of the ministry and possesses the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, may be ordained as a minister of the Gospel.

SECTION 8.02—ORDINATION PROCEDURE

- (A) Upon a conference with the pastor and after the pastor has approved the candidate for ordination, the pastor shall call a council to examine and pass on the qualification of the candidate. The ordination council shall consist of ordained ministers of like faith invited to participate in the examination of the candidate.
- (B) If the candidate is found worthy of ordination by the council, the ordination council may ordain the candidate on behalf of the church.
- (C) The pastor and the chairman of the deacons shall arrange for the ordination service.

ARTICLE 9 INDEMNIFICATION

SECTION 9.01—ACTIONS SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

The church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church, against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding; and if that person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

SECTION 9.02—EXPENSES SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

To the extent that a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in this Article, or in defense of any claim, issue, or matter in that action, suit, or proceeding, he or she may be indemnified against expenses, including attorneys' fees, actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding.

SECTION 9.03—LIMITATIONS OF INDEMNIFICATION

Any indemnification made under this Article, may be made by the church only as authorized in the specific case on a determination that indemnification of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Section 9.01. The determination shall be made (a) by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the pastor and deacons who were not and are not parties to or threatened with the action, suit, or proceeding; (b) if the described quorum is not obtainable or if a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested deacons so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by a majority vote of the members of the church.

SECTION 9.04—TIMING OF INDEMNIFICATION

Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article, may be paid by the church as they are incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, as authorized by the board of deacons in the specific case, on receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the church.

SECTION 9.05—EXTENT OF INDEMNIFICATION

The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise required as a matter of law or under any agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the church, both as to action of each person seeking indemnification under this Article in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding that office, and may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent and may inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

SECTION 9.06—INSURANCE

The church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this Article.

ARTICLE 10

DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS

From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Contributors may suggest uses for their contributions, but all suggestions shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. All contributions made to specific funds or otherwise designated shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the pastor and the board of deacons. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Section 1.02.

ARTICLE 11 DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the church, the trustees shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the church, dispose of all of the assets of the church to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the trustees shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to tax-exempt organizations which agree with the church's Statement of Faith.

ARTICLE 12 – AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be revised or amended by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any regular church administration meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing and announced from the pulpit fourteen (14) days before the vote is taken.

ADOPTION

These bylaws were adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present.

These bylaws supersede any other bylaws of Bible Baptist Church of Mattoon.

_____	_____	_____
<i>Date</i>	<i>Office</i>	<i>Signature</i>

_____	_____	_____
<i>Date</i>	<i>Office</i>	<i>Signature</i>

_____	_____	_____
<i>Date</i>	<i>Office</i>	<i>Signature</i>

_____	_____	_____
<i>Date</i>	<i>Office</i>	<i>Signature</i>

RACIAL NONDISCRIMINATION

Constitution & Bylaws

The church shall have a racially nondiscriminatory policy and, therefore, shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin.