

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
OF
FAITH CHURCH**

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**Constitution and By-Laws
of
Faith Church**

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Constitution

Article 1. Name; Vision; Purpose

A. Name

A.1. This congregation is a non-denominational, Bible based fellowship of believers known as Faith Church.

B. Vision

B.1. Our vision for Faith Church is to assemble together to worship and glorify our Lord. We seek and strive for a perfection of Holiness taught by the Holy Spirit. We pursue this through the preaching and teaching of the Word, discipleship, and missions.

(Matthew 22:37-39; Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 4:18)

C. Purpose

C.1. This congregation is organized as a 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, missions, 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

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

A. The Holy Scriptures

A.1. We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbal and completely 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 in their literal, historical context. All issues of interpretation and meaning shall be determined by the leading of the Holy Spirit through the church leadership

(2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Revelation 22:18-19, Deuteronomy 4:2)

B. The Godhead

B.1. We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son, & Holy Spirit – each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections, but still distinguishable.

(Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 14:10, 26; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

C. The Person and Work of Christ

C.1. God's Revelation: We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became fully man, without ceasing to be fully God. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful humanity.

(Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-8)

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C.2. God's Redemption: We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as our representative; suffered in our place as a substitutionary sacrifice; and, that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. Christ came to save the world, not condemn it.

(Acts 2:22-36; Romans 3:24-25; John 3:17; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:3-5 1 Peter 2:24)

C.3. God's Intercession & Ascension: 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 Intercessor, and Advocate.

(Acts 1:9-10; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; I John 2:1-2)

C.4. God Establishes His Eternal Kingdom: We believe in the personal, literal and bodily return of Jesus Christ in power and glory as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

(Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27, 30; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6)

D. The Second Advent of Christ

D.1. We believe in that blessed hope, the personal, imminent return of Christ, Who will rapture His church. We believe in the blessed hope of Christ's return, where He will establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom which was promised to the nation of Israel.

(Psalm 89:3-4; Daniel 2:31-45; Zechariah 14:4-11; Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6)

E. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

E.1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

(John 14:26, John 16:8-11, Acts 7:51, Acts 9:31, Acts 28:25, Romans 8:26, Ephesians 4:30)

E.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 command of all the saved to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

(Ephesians 1:17-18; 5:18; I John 2:20, 27)

E.3. We believe that God bestows spiritual gifts to every believer according to His will. God sets apart and uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to help equip believers in the ministry of His Church.

(Romans 12:3-8; I Corinthians 12:28-31; Ephesians 4:11-15)

E.4. We believe Perfect Love is that renewal of our fallen nature by the Holy Spirit, received through faith in Jesus Christ, whose blood of atonement cleanses from all sin; whereby we are not only delivered from the guilt of sin, but are washed from its contamination, saved from its power, and are enabled, through grace, to love God with all our hearts and to walk in His holy commandments blameless.

(Matthew 5:44-48; Luke 6:27-28; John 13:34-35; Philippians 2:2-4; II Timothy 2:20-23; Titus 3:2; I John 3:17-18)

E.5. We believe Christian Perfection is a state of righteousness and true Holiness, which every born again believer may obtain. Christian Perfection consists in being cleansed from all sin, loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and loving our neighbor as ourselves. Christian Perfection is obtainable in this life by faith, both gradually and instantaneously, and every child of God must earnestly seek to grow in grace.

(Acts 2:1-4; Acts 4:30; Romans 8:11; Romans 12:1-2, 9-10, 17-21; Romans 13:8-10; I Corinthians 12-14; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 2:3-4;)

E.6. We believe in the ever-present supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit, including the indwelling, inter-working, and baptism of His person in the believer. We believe in the spirit-filled life, a life of separation from the world & perfecting of Holiness in the fear of God as an expression of

Christian Faith. We believe in the multiplicity of spiritual gifts and supernatural signs that follow those who believe. Some of which include: words of wisdom, words of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, various kinds of tongues and their interpretation as spoken by Luke and the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 14:1-25.

(Acts 2:1-4, 4:30; I Corinthians 12:4-1, 14:1-25; Hebrews 2:4)

F. The Personality of Satan

F.1. The Scriptures say and we believe that Satan, whose heavenly name was Lucifer, was an anointed cherub and an archangel who was cast out from the heavenlies and his position. He is the author of sin, the cause of the Fall of Humanity, and the open and declared enemy of God and humanity. Therefore, he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire along with fallen angels, demons, and the spiritually lost.

(Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14: 12-15; Ezekiel 28:14-29; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Revelation 12:7-9, 20:10)

G. The Total Depravity of Man

G.1. We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God; but through Adam's sin the human race fell. Therefore, mankind inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Humanity is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition.

G.1.1 We believe sin is the willful act of rejection of the commandments and precepts recorded in the Bible.

G.1.2 We also believe that any lack of obedience on our part at some point becomes disobedience and therefore, constitutes a sin against God.

(Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:17-19)

H. Salvation

H.1. We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. His precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. The Scripture informs us that Satan is the Accuser of the Saints. (Rev. 12:10). The Scripture also informs us that "Greater is He who is within us than He who is in the World (I John 4:4). If we confess our sins He (God) is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (I John 1:9). We believe God is fully able to forgive and forget all of our sin that we truly repent of (Hebrews 8:12). We believe that all sins, except for the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, are forgivable.

H.2. We believe it is the Lord who initiates fellowship with us (Rev. 3:20). It is our belief that any person who seeks a relationship with the Lord has not committed the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Jesus came to seek and save the lost.

(Luke 19:10, Matthew 12:31-32; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; I Peter 1:18-19; I John 1:9)

H.3. The Scripture is very clear: Salvation is by faith, not by good Works, lest any man should boast. Jesus said, 'Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven.

(Matthew 5:16)

H.4. When an individual is filled with the Holy Spirit by faith, he or she will glorify God through good works. The intention of good works is not to obtain salvation nor to glorify oneself, but to glorify God. However, the Scripture is very clear that one cannot be saved through his or her good works.

(Ephesians 2:8-9)

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H.5. Not every sin willingly committed after salvation is an unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit. We believe the Scriptures teach we may depart from grace and fall into sin, and by the grace of God, repent and be restored back into fellowship with Him. Therefore, we reject the theology that says that one can sin no more as long as they live here, or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

(1 John 2:4)

H.6. We believe that salvation is the perfect redemption of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, and no one goes to the father but by Jesus.

(John 14:6)

I. Separation

I.1. We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. We believe God expects His people to be in the world but not of the world, to be set apart, and to be salt and light- distinctively different from the world. Believers should pray and be led by the Holy Spirit on how to conduct themselves in life, speech, dress, and action.

(Leviticus 19:28; Romans 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 10:23-33; 2 Corinthians 6:14; 7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11)

J. The Eternal State

J.1. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all humanity, either the saved to eternal life or the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment.

(Matthew 25:46; John 5:28, 29; 11:25-26; Revelation 20: 5-6, 12-13)

J.2. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord. In conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when body, soul, and spirit are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. The redeemed of all ages will then be judged at the Bema seat for their righteousness and when found worthy by His blood, they will be given crowns of righteousness and other rewards.

(Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 20:4-6)

J.3. We believe that the souls of the unbelievers remain, after death in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when the body, soul, and spirit reunite. They will then appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and will be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment.

(Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15)

K. The Church

K.1. We believe that the true church is the body and the bride of Christ. It is solely made up of born-again believers.

K.2. We believe that the New Testament clearly teaches that we are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together; therefore it is important to establish churches.

(Hebrews 10:25; Acts 14:27; 20:28 -32; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1: 5-11)

K.3. We believe that the purposes of the Church are to worship God, to communicate with God, and to maintain the vital activities of God for training and equipping the Body of Christ for evangelism, service, discipleship, missions and other works of ministry.

(Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:13, 28, 14:12 Ephesians 4:11-16)

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- K.4. We believe in the autonomy of the church free of any external authority or control, especially in the matters of the calling of a pastor and the church ownership of property. The ownership of the church and properties shall reside with the active members of the congregation.
(Acts 13:1-5; 20:28; Romans 16:1, 4; I Corinthians 3:9,16; I Peter 5:1-4)
- K.5. We recognize water Baptism and the Lord's Supper (communion) as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church.
(Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 8:36-38; I Corinthians 11: 23-26)
- K.6. We believe that Water Baptism is a profession of salvation, a mark of difference, and a sign of the new birth.
- K.7. We also believe in the dedication of infants and the baptism of knowledgeable young children.
- K.8. We believe the Lord's Supper is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death.
- K.9. We believe that the bread represents the body of Christ, which was broken for us, and that the cup represents the blood of Christ, which was shed for us. Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup we remind everyone of Christ's sacrifice and death for our sins.
- K.10. We believe the Lord's Supper should be administered to all Christians. We believe it should be received by all Christians by faith after careful spiritual reflection.
(Matthew 26: 26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19, 20)

L. Creation

- L.1. We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods called days. God rested on the seventh day, completing His creation week.
- L.2. We therefore are instructed to keep the Sabbath Day Holy. We do not believe in any unscriptural theories of origin.
(Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11)

M. Civil Government

- M.1. We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions:
- a. The home
 - b. The church
 - c. The state
- M.2. 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.
(Romans 13: 1-7; Ephesians 5:22-33, 6:1-4; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 2:13-14)
- M.3. The President, the Congress, the general assemblies, the governors, and the councils of state, as the delegates of the people, are the rulers of the United States, according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the United States, and by the sovereign and independent nation, and ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction.

N. Human Sexuality

- N.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

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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.

(Genesis 2:24; 19:5, 13; 26: 8-9; Leviticus 18: 1-30; Romans 1:26-29; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; I Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)

- N.2. The church stands upon its constitutional right, under the first amendment, to oppose homosexual practices according to our religious conscience and biblical understanding.
- N.3. We recognize that the Bible verifies that homosexuality is no greater sin than adultery, murder, stealing, etc. We, therefore, affirm that homosexuals are redeemable according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus, we encourage all members of this congregation to present God's plan of salvation and deliverance from sin to all homosexuals. Moreover, all homosexuals who seek faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and cease to practice homosexual acts are welcomed into the fellowship of this church body.
- N.4. We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman.
(Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2-3; I Corinthians 7:10-16; Ephesians 5:22-33)

O. Family Relationships

- O.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 Spiritual Leader of the home, leading by example in prayer, Bible study, fasting, and the keeping of all the Holy Commandments.
- O.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.
- O.3. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the Headship of Christ. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle examples and appropriate discipline, including spiritually disciplining their children.
(Genesis 1:26-28; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 127:3-5; Proverbs 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mark 10:6-12; I Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:22-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; Hebrews 13:4; I Peter 3:1-7)

P. Divorce and Remarriage

- P.1. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until the death of one spouse. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication. A physical separation may need to take place in cases of marital cruelty. We recognize that, divorced persons, by the grace of God, can be forgiven and may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service.

Q. Abortion

- Q.1. 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 and therefore 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 wellbeing of the mother are acceptable.
- Q.2. We encourage our church to help women in problem pregnancies by providing understanding, forgiveness, and counseling in a spirit of love. They should be helped morally, spiritually, and financially. We should do all we can to help every woman to find trust and to help in a non-judgmental spirit of love and understanding. In the same spirit we should help those mothers who have had an abortion to a realization of the redeeming grace of Christ and the complete forgiveness of that sin. We should open our arms of Christian fellowship to those who Christ redeems, "restoring such a one in the spirit of meekness, lest we also be tempted."

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(Job 3:16; Psalms 51:5; 139: 14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1,5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

R. Euthanasia

- R.1. 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. However we do recognize that discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment.

(Exodus 20: 13, 23:7; Matthew 5:21; Acts 17:28)

S. Love

- S.1. We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, whether believers or not. 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.

- S.2. We believe Perfect love or Christian perfection is a state of righteousness and true Holiness which every born again believer may obtain. It is that renewal of our fallen nature by the Holy Spirit, received through faith in Jesus Christ, whose blood of atonement cleanses from all sin. It involves loving God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, and loving our neighbor as ourselves. This gracious state of perfect love is obtainable in this life by faith, both gradually and instantaneously, and every child of God should earnestly seek to grow in grace.

(Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:9-10; 17-21; 13; 8-10; Philippians 2:2-4; Titus 3:2; I John 3:17-18)

T. Lawsuits between Believers

- T.1. We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between believers.

(I Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32)

U. Missions

- U.1. We believe that God has given the church a great commission to go forth and proclaim the Gospel at home and to all nations. Therefore we pray so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:20)

V. Giving

- V.1. We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to financially support his church. We believe that God has established the tithe (10%) 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.

(Genesis 14:20; Proverbs 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; I Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; I Timothy 5:17-18; I John 3:17)

Article 3. Principles for the Church

A. Amendments to the Constitution

- A.1. The Constitution of Faith Church can be amended only by the following procedure:
- A.1.1 During the annual or special called meeting of the membership any active member in good standing with Faith Church may propose an amendment to the constitution.
- A.1.2 The proposed amendment must pass by a 2/3 vote at that annual meeting. If the motion passes it will be taken into consideration by the elder council and the leadership council.
- A.1.3 The elder council will consider the proposed amendment to the constitution to determine if the amendment is in harmony with scripture and the Constitution of Faith Church. The elder council may then make a recommendation of approval/ disapproval to the leadership council.
- A.1.4 The proposed amendment to the constitution shall be typed and hand delivered or mailed (e-mail) to each elder and deacon prior to the vote. The leadership council will vote in a quorum on the proposed amendment to the constitution. The proposed amendment must pass by a unanimous vote of the elders and deacons present. If the proposed amendment does not pass at that leadership meeting it can be reconsidered at the next leadership meeting and passed by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the elders and deacons present. If the proposed amendment to the constitution is approved by the leadership council then it is considered immediately binding to the membership.
- A.1.5 The approved amendment to the constitution may be ratified at the next Annual Meeting of Faith Church. The approved amendment to the constitution shall be typed and hand delivered or mailed (e-mailed) to each active member two weeks prior to the vote. The approved amendment to the constitution must be voted on by a quorum of the active membership present at the meeting and shall be ratified by a 2/3 vote of those active members in good standing.

B. Amendments to the By Laws

- B.1. The Faith Church Bylaws can be amended only by the following procedure:
- B.1.1 During any regular meeting of the elder council any active member in good standing with Faith Church may propose an amendment to the bylaws.
- B.1.2 The elder council will consider the proposed amendment to the bylaws to determine if the amendment is in harmony with scripture and the Constitution of Faith Church. The elder council may then make a recommendation of approval/ disapproval to the leadership council.
- B.1.3 The proposed amendment to the bylaws shall be typed and hand delivered or mailed (e-mailed) to each elder or deacon prior to the vote. The leadership council will vote in a quorum on the proposed amendment to the bylaws. The proposed amendment must pass by a unanimous vote of the elders and deacons present. If the proposed amendment does not pass at that leadership meeting it can be reconsidered at the next leadership meeting and passed by a 2/3 vote of the elders and deacons present. If the proposed amendment to the bylaws is approved by the leadership council then it is considered binding to the membership.
- B.1.4 The approved amendment to the bylaws may be ratified at the next Annual Meeting of Faith Church. The approved amendment to the bylaws shall be typed and hand delivered or mailed (e-mailed) to each active member two weeks prior to the vote. The approved amendment to the bylaws must be voted on by a quorum of the active membership present at the meeting and shall be ratified by a 2/3 vote of those active members in good standing.

C. Authority of Statement of Faith

- C.1. 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.

D. Covenant

- D.1. 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 Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, angels, and this church, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.
- D.2. 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, our tithes & offerings, 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.
- D.3. We also engage to maintain family and private devotions, prayer, and fasting; 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 and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.
- D.4. 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.
- D.5. We moreover engage that when we remove from this assembly, 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.

E. Theological Position Statement

- E.1. Moreover it is our belief and teaching the spirit filled life is available to all born again believers. The evidence of such a life is one of Holy living and a commitment in service to the Lord. We hold to the scriptural teaching that empowerment of Holiness and spiritual service came to the believer through their exercising of Faith. God alone supplies the power through the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- E.1.1 The problem is the phenomena can quickly become fleshly and taught as the anointing of God. They are introduced as something that occurs every time the Holy Spirit is present. This produces two classes of Christians: Those who have arrived with power spiritually and those who have not. The subjective approach to living in the presence of God should not be the leading in the church.
- E.1.2 John Wesley emphasized the inward dynamics not the outward manifestation of the Spirit. In his sermon "Spiritual Christianity," he said the spirit was given – to give them.... the mind which was in Christ.... to endue them with faith, to enable them to crucify the flesh, with its affections, lust, and desires, and in consequence of that inward change, to fulfill all outward righteousness; to walk as Christ also walked...."

F. Definition of Bylaws

- F.1. All which follows and that are not specifically in the Constitution shall be known as the By-Laws.

By-Laws

A. Name

- A.1. This congregation is a non-denominational, Bible-based fellowship of believers known as Faith Church.

B. Statement of Purpose

- B.1. The Faith Church is composed of believers who are trusting in the blood of Jesus Christ for salvation and cleansing from all sin.

The church is a collection of persons who believe:

- that the Holy Bible is the divinely inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original writings, and is the final authority for life and truth.
- that they are converted to God (born again), accepting the salvation of Jesus Christ through faith in His atonement made for the sins of all men.

- B.2. The church is a collection of persons who unite for the purposes of:

- worshipping God and Christian fellowship.
- receiving the Word of God through preaching.
- receiving the Sacraments.
- praying and working together.
- evangelizing the lost.
- disseminating the Christian spirit and life.
- sending out the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord.
- promoting missions both at home and abroad.

C. Dissolution

- C.1. In the event of the dissolution of Faith Church the elder council shall:

- Pay or make provision for paying all outstanding liabilities
- Distribute the remaining assets of Faith Church to organizations dedicated to charitable and/or educational purposes (a 501(c)(3) organization as recognized by the Internal Revenue Service).

- C.2. The named organizations are:

- Asbury University
One Macklem Drive
Wilmore, KY 40390
- Go International, INC.
503 Wilder Reynolds Road
Wilmore, KY 40390

D. Church Governance

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- D.1. Faith Church is independent from all organizations, associations, or denominations. The church acting within its own membership constitutes the basic governmental body of Faith Church. The members and leaders will hold each other accountable to guide the church according to scriptural principles which are in harmony with the church constitution. Within the body certain spirit filled persons are commissioned to lead the church (elders and deacons) (see section F and section G for qualifications).
- D.2. The collective church membership will approve the buying, selling or transferring of property such as buildings and land. A proposal may be presented at any annual meeting or a special called meeting. The proposal should be hand delivered or mailed (e-mailed) to all active members two weeks prior to the meeting. If circumstances dictate that immediate action be taken (i.e. less than two weeks) then reasonable effort should be given to notify the membership of the proposal and meeting. The proposal must be voted on by a quorum of the active membership and shall pass by a 2/3 vote of those members in good standing who are present at the meeting.

E. Church Meetings

- E.1. The annual meeting of the church membership shall occur in January. The following business shall be presented and received for information:
- minutes of previous meeting
 - annual reports by ministries within the church
 - financial report for the preceding year
 - budget approval for the current year by a majority vote
- E.2. Special meetings of the membership may be called by the elder council. A call for special meeting shall clearly state the purpose of the meeting and business will be restricted to that which is specified in the call. Reasonable effort should be given to notify the active membership of the meeting by written notice.

F. Leadership Council

- F.1. Deacon: The Bible teaches that deacons lead by serving (Acts 6). The qualifications for deacons are established in 1 Timothy 3:8-12. Deacons should be capable and proved as servants.
- F.2. The leadership council shall be composed of all active members of the church who are designated as elder or deacon. Each elder position is allowed up to 3 voting deacons on the leadership council. The elder should recommend spiritually discerning persons for the position of deacon. The council should meet on a quarterly basis to receive reports and act on necessary business.
- F.3. Special meetings of the leadership council may be called by the elder council. A call for special meeting shall clearly state the purpose of the meeting and business will be restricted to that which is specified in the call. Reasonable effort should be given to notify the leadership council membership of the meeting by written notice.
- Responsibilities of the leadership council (The leadership council will have the final authority on all of the below matters.):
- receive recommendations from the elder council regarding the hiring or dismissal of pastoral and lay staff
 - receive recommendations from the elder council regarding the appointment or dismissal of elders or deacons

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- appoint an elder (pastor or lay) to serve as the chairman of the leadership council
- vote in a quorum on any proposed recommendation
- proposed recommendations must pass by a 2/3 vote of the elders and deacons present

G. Elder Council

- G.1. Elder: Elders are members or pastors of the church who are qualified to lead according to Titus 1:6-9. The Bible teaches that the elders serve by leading and are responsible to the spiritual oversight of the church body.
- G.2. The elder council is a representative body appointed by the leadership council and is composed of the active eldership of Faith Church. The elder council should consist of no less than three and no more than nine members.
- G.3. Responsibilities of the elder council:
- ensure that the doctrine of the church is biblical
 - ensure that the direction of the church is consistent with the constitution and statement of purpose in the bylaws
 - administering in love and humility the process of church discipline as given in scripture (Matthew 18:15-20; Galatians 6:1-4; Titus 3:10; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 5:17-25; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11, Romans 16:17)
 - directing the affairs of the ministry to which he is appointed
 - setting the annual church budget
 - negotiating the terms of pastor and staff contracts
 - make recommendations to the leadership council for pastor or staff appointments/dismissals
 - make recommendations to the leadership council for elder or deacon appointment/dismissals
 - appoint an elder (pastor or lay) to serve as the chairman of the elder council
 - commissioning new areas of ministry within the church i.e. (adding/subtracting leadership positions). The council should prayerfully consider the current leadership and determine if a ministry cabinet leader will hold the position of an elder. If it is determined that the leader should hold the position of a deacon (due to spiritual maturity or giftedness) then the elder council can assign that cabinet to work under the direction of another elder.
 - Removing or restoring a person's membership according to Section I. Discipline.
- G.4. The council should meet on at least a quarterly basis or in a special called meeting as determined by at least two elders. The council should seek unity in all matters of business. However, a 3/4 majority will rule in the end.
- G.5. The elder council will appoint a secretary to keep the minutes of all the annual, leadership and elder meetings. The minutes shall be kept in a permanent record by the appointed secretary of the council and shall be available to all members of the church by posting for two weeks after the meeting.

H. Membership

- H.1. *Active member:* All persons who believe the following may be considered for membership in Faith Church:
- that they have been saved from their sins (sinner saved by grace)

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- who believe in Jesus Christ as God's only begotten Son, that He was born of a virgin, that He died for our sins, that He was buried and the third day rose from the dead, that He ascended into heaven and is coming again
 - who have confessed Him as their Lord and Savior before men
 - who are willing to walk in the light as given by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.
- H.2. When the pastor is satisfied that the candidates for membership have committed to the following:
- are born again Christians
 - taken the vows and signed the membership covenant
 - have knowledge of and have expressed willingness to keep the doctrines, rules and regulations of Faith Church
 - have knowledge of water baptism
- Then he shall receive them into active membership and present them to the church.
- H.3. *Transfers in:* Members in good standing in any evangelical church who desire to unite with us may be received into active membership by taking the vows and signing the membership covenant.
- H.4. *Transfers out:* When requested by a member, or his delegated representative, a certificate of transfer shall be granted. The pastor or secretary shall send the certificate to the church which he is transferring.
- H.5. *Withdrawal:* A letter of withdrawal shall be issued when requested by an individual. Anyone joining another church without a certificate of transfer shall be recorded as having withdrawn.
- H.6. *Inactive member:* If a member of this congregation has not attended weekend worship services for a period of three months, and if such absence is not for illness or temporary absence from the community, that member shall become an inactive member and shall not be able to vote in a congregational meeting.
- H.7. *Restoring inactive:* A person may be restored to active membership by making a statement to the church staff of his or her intent. The pastor may then restore voting privileges after 60 days.

I. Discipline

- I.1. It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member.
- I.2. The pastor, staff, and elders will be available for counsel and guidance.
- I.3. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption and restoration rather than punishment.
- I.4. In cases where a member becomes unwilling to place themselves under the authority of the Word of God, that member shall be disciplined by the pastor(s) and/or the elder council. In all cases, the model found in the New Testament shall be followed (Matthew 18:15-20; Galatians 6:1-4; Titus 3:10; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 5:17-25; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11, Romans 16:17).
- I.5. After the New Testament model (I.4) has been followed, if the pastor deems the person unresponsive, he shall recommend to the elder council to remove the person's name from active membership.
- I.6. A person may be restored to membership only by action of the elder council and pastor. The person will re-sign the membership covenant.

J. Removal from Leadership Position

- J.1. Any offense brought against a pastor, elder or deacon should be brought forth in written form to the elder council.
- J.2. Any circumstance that renders a pastor, elder or deacon unable to perform their duties as outlined herein, shall be cause for termination
- J.3. Action will be taken against a pastor, elder or deacon in spiritual disharmony with the church bylaws, constitution, or council. Biblical discipline used in 1 Timothy 5:17-20 and Matthew 18:15-20 will be used.
- J.4. Responsibility for removal of a pastor, elder or deacon is with the leadership council and will be accomplished by a 2/3 majority vote (excluding the member in question)

K. Evaluation of Service

- K.1. It is the desire of the church to have fruit bearing leaders (elders, deacons, deaconesses) commissioned who fulfill the passion of where God has called them to serve
- K.2. Each leader in the church holds the primary responsibility to voluntarily remove himself from a leadership position at anytime if he finds himself to be unqualified or desires to step down.
 - K.2.1 Each cabinet will conduct a yearly evaluation with its leaders and the pastor.
- K.3. Leaders are commissioned to fulfill a 5 year service period beginning January 1. All periods will revert to January 1 of the year they are commissioned regardless of the month appointed.
 - K.3.1 Current Elders and Deacons/ Deaconesses (as of January 1, 2014) will begin their service period as January 2014.
- K.4. At the end of each service period one of the following options will happen:
 - The elder, deacon, deaconess ("leader") may voluntarily step down from the position
 - The elder, deacon, deaconess ("leader") will meet with the elder council for the purpose of evaluating his/her:
 - history of service (fruit)
 - passion for the ministry
 - commitment to the future of the ministry
- K.5. If the leader is evaluated and IF the leader and the elder council are in agreement that the leader is qualified and committed to the ministry then he will (or may) be recommended to serve another service period.
- K.6. If the leader is evaluated and the parties are not in agreement that the leader is qualified and committed to the ministry then he will not be recommended to another service period in that ministry position. The leader may still be considered for a position in another ministry.

L. Reconciliation

- L.1. It is the desire of the church that all members work and abide together in the harmony and peace of the Holy Spirit. (James 3:17-18) All members should seek to first be reconciled to their brother or sister on their own accord. (Matthew 18:15-20)
- L.2. All matters of disunity or unresolved conflict will be handled by a reconciliation team appointed by the elder council. The team will consist of an elder, deacon and church member. Confidentiality will be of highest importance in all matters between the parties. The guidelines would fall under the current rules of the Institute of Christian Conciliation (ICC), a division of Peacemaker Ministries.

M. Financial

- M.1. The fiscal year shall be January 1 through December 31.
- M.2. The church financial records should be kept according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and be readily made available to any member upon request.
- M.3. The auditing committee shall be appointed by the elder council annually. This committee shall audit the financial records of the church financial secretary, treasurer, or any person who handles money in the church. The audit will occur following the close of the fiscal year. They shall report their findings to the elder council. An audit may be called for at any time deemed necessary by the elder council.

N. Church Policy and Job Descriptions

- N.1. The church shall develop policies for operation and job or responsibility descriptions for staff and elders.
- N.2. The elder council will be responsible for ensuring the policies are kept current. The council may assign this responsibility to a committee.