

POTOSI COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH CONSTITUTION AND DOCTRINE

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The name of this organization shall be the "POTOSI COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH"

ARTICLE 2 - AUTHORITY & AFFILIATION

- 2.1** This fellowship shall be governed by a Biblically qualified plurality of Elders.
- 2.2** This fellowship is a non-denominational, independent body of believers.

ARTICLE 3 - PURPOSE

- 3.1** The purpose of this fellowship is to glorify God by being actively involved with the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and by providing an environment which encourages believers to grow spiritually and serve God faithfully.
- 3.2** This organization shall not engage in any activity for the sole purpose of making a profit.

ARTICLE 4 - DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

4.1 THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We teach that the Holy Scriptures, including 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament, are the verbal, plenary, inspired Word of God. They are inerrant in the original writings, and are the only infallible rule of faith, doctrine and practice. (2 TIM 3:16-17; 2 PET 1:20-21; MATT 5:18; JOHN 16:12-13; 1 THES 2:13)

4.2 THE GODHEAD

We teach that there is but one living and true God (DEUT 6:4; ISA 45:5 -7; 1 COR 8:4), an infinite, all-knowing Spirit (JOHN 4:24), perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three Persons; namely, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (MATT 28:19; 2 COR 13:14)~each deserving worship and obedience.

(A) GOD THE FATHER

We teach that God the Father, the first person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (PS 145:8 -9; 1 COR 8:6). He is the creator of all things (GEN 1:1 -31; EPH 3:9). As the only absolute and omnipotent ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (PS 103:19; ROM 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. He is Creator to all men (EPH 4:6), but He is the spiritual Father only to believers (ROM 8:14; 2 COR 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that

come to pass (EPH 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 CHRON 29:11). In His sovereignty He is neither author nor approver of sin (HAB 1:13; JOHN 8:38 - 47), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 PET 1:17). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (EPH 1:4 -6); He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ; He adopts as His own all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own (JOHN 1:12; ROM 8:15; GAL 4:5; HEB 12:5 -9).

(B) GOD THE SON

We teach that Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine Excellencies, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father (JOHN 10:30; JOHN 14:9).

We teach that God the Father created "the heavens and the earth and all that is in them" according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operation (JOHN 1:3; COL 1:15-17; HEB 1:2).

We teach that in the incarnation Christ surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. In His incarnation, the eternally existing second person of the Trinity accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God-man (PHIL 2:5-8; COL 2:9).

We teach that Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness (MIC 5:2; JOHN 5:23, JOHN 14:9-10; COL 2:9).

We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ was virgin born (ISA 7:14; MATT 1:23,25; LUKE 1:26 -35); that He was God incarnate (JOHN 1:1,14); and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, and rule over God's kingdom (PS 2:7-9; ISA 9:6; JOHN 1:29; PHIL 2:9-11; HEB 7:25-26; 1 PET 1:18-19).

We teach that in the incarnation, the second person of the Trinity laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God, assumed the place of a Son, and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes (PHIL 2:5-8).

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive (JOHN 10:15; ROM 3:24-25; ROM 5:8; 1 PET 2:24).

We teach that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (ROM 3:25; ROM 5:8-9; 2 COR 5:14-15; 1 PET 2:24; 1 PET 3:18).

We teach that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest (MATT 28:6; LUKE 24:38-39; ACTS 2:30-31; ROM 4:25; ROM 8:34; HEB 7:25; HEB 9:24; 1 JOHN 2:1).

We teach that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (JOHN 5:26-29; JOHN 14:19; ROM 1:4, ROM 6:5-10; 1 COR 15:20, 23).

We teach that Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, which is His body, unto Himself at the rapture and, returning with His church in glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth (ACTS 1:9-11; 1 THESS 4:13-18; REV 20).

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ is the one through whom God will judge all mankind (JOHN 5:22 -23): **a.** Believers (1 COR 3:10 -15; 2 COR 5:10); **b.** Living inhabitants of the earth at His glorious return (MATT 25:31 -46); and **c.** Unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne (REV 20:11 -15). As the mediator between God and man (1 TIM 2:5), the head of His body the church (EPH 1:22; EPH 5:23; COL 1:18), and the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David (ISA 9:6; LUKE 1:31 -33), He is the final judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior (MATT 25:14 -46; ACTS 17:30 -31).

(C) GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

We teach that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, eternal underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity including intellect (1 COR 2:10 -13), emotions (EPH 4:30), will (1 COR 12:11), eternality (HEB 9:14), omnipresence (PS 139:7 -10), omniscience (ISA 40:13-41), omnipotence (ROM 15:13), and truthfulness (JOHN 16:13). In all of the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (MATT 28:19; ACTS 5:3 -4; ACTS 28:25 -26; 1 COR 12:4 -6; 2 COR 13:14).

We teach that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to His elect. We recognize His sovereign activity in creation (GEN 1:2), the incarnation (MATT 1:18), the written revelation (2 PET 1:20-21), and the work of salvation (JOHN 3:3-7).

We teach that the work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost when He came from the Father as promised by Christ (JOHN 14:16 -17; JOHN 15:26) to initiate and complete the building of the body of Christ, which is His church (1 COR 12:13). The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and transforming believers into the image of Christ (JOHN 16:7 -9; ACTS 1:5; ROM 8:39; 2 COR 3:18; EPH 2:22).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ at the moment of conversion (1 COR 12:13). The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, and seals (ROM 8:9; 2 COR 3:6; EPH 1:13).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine teacher who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible. Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with the Spirit (JOHN 16:13; ROM 8:9; EPH 5:18; 2 PET 1:19 -21; 1 JOHN 2:20, 27).

We teach that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit neither glorifies Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (JOHN 16:13-14; 1 COR 12:4-11; 2 COR 3:18).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today and that the speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers (ROM 12:3 -8; 1 COR 12:4 -11; 1 COR 13:8 -10; 2 COR 12:12; EPH 4:7 -12; HEB 2:1-4; 1 PET 4:10-11).

4.3 MAN

We teach that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free from sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (GEN 2:7; GEN 2:15-25; JAS 3:9).

We teach that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world (ISA 43:7; COL 1:16; REV 4:11).

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (GEN 1:26-27.) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (GEN 2:18-25.)

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 COR 6:18; 7:2-5; HEB 13:4.)

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (MATT 15:18-20; 1 COR 6:9-10.)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the PCBC as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the PCBC members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the PCBC in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (MATT 5:16; PHIL2:14-16; 1 THESS 5:22.)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (ACTS 3:19-21; ROM 10:9-10; 1 COR 6:9-11.)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (MARK 12:28-31; LUKE 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the PCBC.

We teach that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence, incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death; became subject to the wrath of God; and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. Man has no recuperative powers that enable him to recover himself, and thus he is hopelessly lost. Man will never seek God on his own (ROM 3:10), he is enslaved to sin (ROM 6:17), spiritual things are complete foolishness to him (1 COR 1:18, 1 COR 2:14), his heart is deceitful and desperately sick (JER 17:9) and will only do evil continually (GEN 6:5). Therefore, man's salvation is nothing of himself, but wholly by the sovereign act of God through the redemptive work of Christ (JOHN 6:44; EPH 2:1 -10; 2 PET 1:1; 2 TIM 2:25; ACTS 13:48; 1 TIM 2:13 -14).

We teach that because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, choice, and by divine declaration (PS 14:1 -3; JER 17:9; ROM 3:9 -20,23; ROM 5:10-12). Although man is depraved, he, by the common grace of God does not always fulfill his potential to sin.

4.4 SALVATION

We teach that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works (JOHN 1:12 -13; EPH 1:7, EPH 2:8 -10).

(A) REGENERATION

We teach that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given (JOHN 3:3 -7; TITUS 3:5). It is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word (ROM 10:13 -17; EPH 1:13), when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Spirit, responds in faith (God's gift) to the gospel. Genuine regeneration will be manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct (EPH 2:10; COL 1:3 -6; 1 THES 1:5 -10).

(B) ELECTION

We teach that election is the sovereign act of God, by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He will effectually call, regenerate, and sanctify (ROM 8:28 -30; EPH 1:3 -11, EPH 2:4; 2 THES 2:13; 1 TIM 1:9; 1 PET 1:1 -2). The basis of God's choosing was His own choice (1 TIM 1:9) and not on anything He saw in man (ROM 9:6 -23). He did not choose certain men because He saw their faith or knew they would believe. Faith is the gift of God (EPH 2:8 -9; EPH 6:23; PHIL 1:29; 2 PET 1:1). Nor did He choose because He saw any goodness in man (ROM 3:10). He chose men according to His own good pleasure totally independent of anything in man (EPH 1:5,11).

We teach that man exercises no free will in his salvation, but is wholly acted upon by God in his salvation experience. However, it would appear from our own experience that we exercised our free-choice in salvation, but we must evaluate our salvation experience from Scripture and find that God alone chose us and drew us to Himself apart from any initiative of our own (ROM 9:10 -23; JOHN 1:13; JOHN 6:44, JOHN 15:15; JAS 1:18). The effect of God's drawing and saving act is joined with God changing the will and affections of the sinner's heart, which causes man to call upon the name of the Lord.

(B) ATONEMENT

We teach that the atonement was to make propitiation to God and to reconcile Him to the sinner. It is God who has been offended and must be satisfied and reconciled to sinful man (ROM 5:10). The atonement reconciles God to those who were objects of His judicial wrath by the sacrificial covering of their sin. It satisfies the justice of God and the demands of His law. Understanding the purpose and effect, the scope of the atonement cannot be efficacious to all men universally without discretion, but limited to those who are brought into the grace of God according to the kind intention of His will (JOHN 6:37 -39,44,65, JOHN 10:14-15; EPH 1:3-11).

(D) JUSTIFICATION

We teach that the justification of sinners is an act of God (ROM 8:33) by which He legally declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins (LUKE 13:3; ACTS 2:38; ACTS 3:19, ACTS 11:18; ROM 2:4) and confess Him as Sovereign Lord (ROM 10:9 -10). This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man (ROM 3:20, ROM 4:6), and involves the imputation of our sins to Christ (COL 2:14; 1 PET 2:24), and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (1 COR 1:30; 2 COR 5:21). By this means God is enabled to "be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (ROM 3:26).

(E) SANCTIFICATION

We teach that every believer is sanctified unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. This sanctification has to do with the believer's standing and not his present walk (1 COR 1:2,30; 1 COR 6:11; 2 THES 2:13; HEB 2:11, HEB 3:1, HEB 10:10; 1 PET 1:2).

We teach also a progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the standing the believer positionally enjoys through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ (ROM 6:1 -22, ROM 8:29; 2 COR 3:18; 1 THES 5:23).

In this respect, we teach that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict (the new nature in Christ doing battle against the flesh) but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Spirit (ROM 7:7 -25; ROM 8; 2 PET 1:3 -4). The struggle stays with the believer all through this earthly life. Any claim of the total eradication of sin in this life is impossible (1 JOHN 1:9), but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin (GAL 5:16 -25; EPH 4:20 -24; COL 3:9 -10; 1 JOHN 3:5 -9). Hence, we do not teach sinless perfection, but we do teach that the direction of a believer's life will be one of holiness.

(F) SECURITY

We teach that all the redeemed are kept by God's preserving power and are thus secure in Christ forever (JOHN 5:24; JOHN 6:37 -50; ROM 8:1,31 -39; 1 COR 1:4 -8; EPH 1:14; 1 PET 1:5; JUDE 24). It is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word. However, this security clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality (ROM 6; GAL 5:13, 25 -26; TITUS 2:11-14).

(G) SEPARATION

We teach that the separation from sin is clearly called for throughout both Testaments and that the Scriptures clearly indicate that in the last days apostasy and worldliness in the visible church shall increase (2 COR 6:14 -7:1; 2 TIM 3:1 -5).

We teach that out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, the saved ought live a life in a manner that is worthy of the Lord (EPH 4:1; ROM 12:1-12). We also teach that separation from all religious apostasy, and worldly and sinful practices is commanded of us by God (1 COR 5:9 -13; EPH 5:3 -14; 1 JOHN 2:15 -17).

We teach that the believer is not to withdraw himself from the world because that is the place of ministry (1 COR 5:9 -10); rather he is to expose the deeds of darkness (EPH 5:11).

4.5 THE CHURCH

(A) The Makeup of the Church

We teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Spirit into one united spiritual body, the church (1 COR 12:12-13), the bride of Christ (2 COR 11:2; EPH 5:23 -32; REV 19:7 -8), of which Christ is the Head (EPH 1:22; EPH 4:15; COL 1:18).

We teach that the formation of the church, the body of Christ, began on the day of Pentecost (ACTS 2) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture (1 COR 15:51-52; 1 THES 4:13-18).

We teach that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age (EPH 2:11 -3:6). The church is distinct from Israel (ROM 9 -11; 1 COR 10:32), a mystery not revealed until this age (EPH 3:1-6; EPH 5:32).

We teach that the establishment, autonomy, and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament (ACTS 14:23,27; ACTS 20:17,28; GAL 1:2; PHIL 1:1; 1 THES 1:1) and that the members of the one spiritual body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (1 COR 11:19 -20; HEB 10:25).

We teach the importance of discipleship (MATT 28:19 -20; 2 TIM 2:2), mutual accountability of all believers, as well as the need for discipline of sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture (MATT 18:15-18; 1 COR 5; 2 THES 3:6-15).

We teach the autonomy of the local church, free from any authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations (TITUS 1:5).

We teach the need of the church to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end He gives the church spiritual gifts. First, He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (EPH 4:7 -12) and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the body of Christ (ROM 12:5 -8; 1 COR 12:4-31; 1 PET 4:10).

(B) Leaders of the Church

We teach that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ (1 COR 11:3; EPH 1:22; COL 1:18). The Biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are Elders (ACTS 14:23; ACTS 20:28; EPH 4:11; TITUS 1:5; 1 PET 5:1 -4) and Deacons both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1 TIM 3:1 -13; TITUS 1:5 -9).

(C) Spiritual Gifts

We teach that there were two kinds of gifts given the early church: miraculous sign gifts given temporarily in the Apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the Apostle's message (2 COR 12:12; HEB 2:3 -4) and permanent ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another. With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message, and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message (1 COR 13:8 -12). Miraculous gifts can be counterfeited by Satan so as to deceive even believers (1 COR 12:1 -3). The only gifts in operation today are permanent ministering gifts given for edification.

We teach that no one possesses the gift of healing today but that God does hear and answer prayer in accordance to His own perfect will (2 COR 12:6 -10; JAS 5:13 -16).

(D) Ordinances

We teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper (MATT 28:19 -20; ACTS 2:28 -42).

1. Believer's Baptism

We teach that Christian baptism by immersion (ACTS 8:36 -39) is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (ROM 6:1 -11). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible body of Christ (ACTS 2:41 -42). In no way does baptism have any saving merit (EPH 2:8 -9).

2. The Lord's Supper

We teach that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination (1 COR 11:17 -34).

(E) The Missions of the Church

1. Exalting the Lord

We teach that the purpose of all of God's creation is to glorify God. Therefore, it is a primary mission of the church to glorify God (EPH 3:21). The church meets corporately for the purpose of worshipping and exalting of the Lord.

2. Edifying the Saints

We teach that the education of the saints is accomplished by building each other up in the faith (EPH 4:13 -16; HEB 10:24), by instruction of the Word (2 TIM 3:16 -17), by fellowship (ACTS 2:47), and by corporately keeping the ordinances (ACTS 2:38 -42).

3. Evangelizing the Lost

We teach that one of the most significant commands given to the church is evangelizing the lost (MATT 28:19 -20; 2 COR 5:20). The Church advances and communicates the gospel to the entire world beginning with our own families, friends, co-workers, and neighbors.

4.6 ANGELS

(A) Holy Angels

We teach that angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshiped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they cannot procreate and have been created to serve God and to worship Him (LUKE 2:9 -14; HEB 1:6 -7, HEB 2:6 -7; REV 5:11 -14, REV 19:10; REV 22:9).

(B) Fallen Angels

We teach that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (ISA 14:12 -17; EZEK 28:11 -19), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (GEN 3:1 -15).

We teach that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (MATT 4:1 -11; 1 PET 5:8; REV 12:9 -10), the prince of this world who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (ROM 16:20; COL 2:15), and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (REV 20:10).

4.7 LAST THINGS (ESCHATOLOGY)

(A) Death

We teach that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness (REV 6:9 -11), that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ (2 COR 5:8; PHIL 1:23), that there is separation of soul and body (PHIL 1:21 -24), and that, for the redeemed, such separation will continue until the rapture (1 THES 4:13 -17). Until that time, the souls of he redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ awaiting their bodily resurrection (2 COR 5:8).

We teach the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life (JOHN 6:39; ROM 8:10 -11, 19 -23; 2 COR 4:14), and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (DAN 12:2; JOHN 5:29; REV 20:13 -15).

We teach that the souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment until the second resurrection (REV 20:13-15), when the soul and the resurrected body will be united (JOHN 5:28 -29). They shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment (REV 20:11-15) and shall be cast into the lake of fire (MATT 25:41 -46), and cut off from the life of God, abiding under his wrath forever (DAN 12:2; MATT 25:41 -46; 2 THES 1:7 -9).

(B) The Rapture of the Church

We teach the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ before the seven-year tribulation (1 THES 4:16; TITUS 2:13) to translate His church from this earth (JOHN 14:1 -2; 1 COR 15:51 -53; 1 THES 4:15 -5:11) and, between this event and His glorious return with His saints, to reward believers according to their works (1 COR 3:11 -15; 2 COR 5:10).

(C) The Tribulation Period

We teach that immediately following the removal of the church from the earth (JOHN 14:1 -3; 1 THES 4:13 -18), the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world (JER 30:7; DAN 9:27; 2 THES 2:7 -12; REV 16), and that these judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth (MATT 24:27 -31; MATT 25:31 -46; 2 THES 2:7 -12). At that time the Old Testament and tribulation saints will be raised and the living will be judged (DAN 12:2-3; REV 20:4-6). This is a seven (7) year period that fulfills the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (DAN 9:24 -27; MATT 24:15-31; MATT 25:31-46).

(C) The Second Coming and the Millennial Reign

We teach that after the tribulation period, Christ will come to the earth to occupy the throne of David (MATT 25:31; ACTS 1:10-11; ACTS 2:29 -30) and establish His Messianic kingdom for a thousand years on the earth (REV 20:1 -7). During this time the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth (EZEK 37:21 -28; DAN 7:17 -22; REV 19:11 -16). This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and by the removal of Satan from the world (REV 20:1 -7).

We teach that the kingdom itself will be a fulfillment of God's promise to Israel (ISA 65:17 -25; EZK. 37:21 -28; Zech. 8:1 -17) to restore them to the land, which they forfeited through their disobedience (DEUT 28:15 -68). The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside (ROM 11:25 -29) but will again be awakened through repentance to enter into the land of blessing (JER 31:31 -34; EZEK 36:22 -32; ROM 11:25 -29).

We teach that this time of our Lord's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life (ISA 11; ISA 65:17 -25; EZEK 36:33 -38), and will be brought to an end with the release of Satan (REV 20:7).

(D) The Judgment of the Lost

We teach that following the release of Satan after the thousand-year reign of Christ (REV 20:7), Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city, at which time Satan's army will be devoured by fire from heaven (REV 20:9). Following this, Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (REV 20:10) where upon Christ, who is the judge of all men (JOHN 5:22), will resurrect and judge the great and small at the Great White Throne judgment.

We teach that the resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection, whereupon receiving their judgment (ROM 14:10-13), they will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire (MATT 25:41; REV 20:11 -15).

(E) Eternity

We teach that after the closing of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers (2 THES 1:9; REV 20:7 -15), the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved (2 PET 3:10) and replaced with a new earth wherein only righteousness dwells (EPH 5:5; REV 20:15, 21-22). Following this, the heavenly city will come down out of heaven (REV 21:2) and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another (JOHN 17:3; REV 21,22). Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 COR 15:24 -28) that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (1 COR 15:28).

ARTICLE 5 - MEMBERSHIP

5.1 CLASSIFICATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Every member shall be given membership status in accordance with his qualification for membership by the Elders as follows:

- (A) Active membership of this church shall be composed of those individuals over the age of eighteen, who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior, have been baptized by immersion, who are in full agreement with the church doctrine and constitution, and who submit to the authority of this local church.
- (B) Associate membership shall be granted on the same basis as active membership to those of like precious faith who feel it necessary to retain primary membership in some out-of-town church. They may attend the church business meetings but have not the privilege of voting.
- (C) Inactive membership shall be any member who is not presently fulfilling the responsibilities for active membership listed in Article 5, Section 3. Inactive members shall not have the privilege of voting.
- (D) Junior membership shall be open to those believers before the age of 18. They shall enjoy all the privileges of active membership except voting.
- (E) Attending membership shall consist of all other persons who regularly attend the services of this church, not classified above. They may teach a Sunday school class or participate in a similar ministry, under the supervision of the Elders. They may attend the church business meeting but have not the privilege of voting.

The Elders shall review the status of all members, based on the above membership categories at least annually, and report any changes.

5.2 PROCEDURES FOR MEMBERSHIP

Each prospective member shall:

- (A) fill-out a current application form and submit it to the Elders.
- (B) share their personal testimony with the Elder Board,
- (C) have been baptized by immersion as a believer,
- (D) be in agreement with the Doctrine and Constitution of this church,
- (E) desire to regularly fellowship with the believers of this church,
- (F) be willing to attend a membership class if deemed necessary by the Elder Board,

(G) not be under the discipline of another church,

(H) have a "six month" period in which they demonstrate their commitment to this ministry, the beginning of this time is determined by the Elder Board,

(I) be approved by the Elder Board and extended the right hand of fellowship in a worship service.

5.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

Each member shall:

(A) maintain the unity of the Spirit of God through submission to one another and to the authority of the local church (EPH 4:2-3; 1 PET 3:8-12; HEB 13:17);

- to pray for and with one another, sharing our burdens, sorrows and joys (GAL 6:1-5),

- to be thoughtful and courteous to one another, to be slow to take offense, and to be quick to forgive and to seek forgiveness (EPH 5:32),

- to be accountable to one another (MATT 18:15-18; 1 COR 5:6-7,11-12).

(B) demonstrate faithful stewardship by exercising their God-given resources; including time, talents, finances, spiritual gifts, and prayer for the benefit of the kingdom of God and the local church (EPH 4:7-16).

5.4 DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

The purpose of church discipline is to affect a return to a biblical standard of conduct and doctrine in a member who errs (GAL 6:1), to maintain the purity of the local church (1 COR 5:6), and to deter sin (1 TIM 5:20).

Members of this church who shall err in doctrine or conduct shall be subject to dismissal according to Matthew 18:15-20. Before such dismissal, however: (1) it shall be the duty of any member of this church who has a knowledge of the erring member's heresy or misconduct to warn and correct such erring member in private, in a spirit of meekness, seeking his or her repentance and restoration, then (2) if the erring member refuses to heed this warning then the warning member shall again go to the erring member in private accompanied by one or two witnesses to warn and correct such erring member, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. The accompanied witness[es] may or may not be Elders. If the erring member still refuses to heed this warning then (3) it shall be brought to the attention of the Elders.

It is understood that this process will continue to conclusion whether the erring member leaves the church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership to avoid the discipline process.

The Elders, upon careful and prayerful investigation, shall tell it to the church. If the erring member refuses to heed to the warning of the Elders and the church, then (4) he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the church. There shall be no appeal to any court from that decision.

If the erring member, after dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement, he or she shall be publicly restored to fellowship.

5.5 REMOVAL OR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE ROLL

(A) A member of this church, who shall willfully, without plausible reason or excuse, absent himself from the services of this church for a period of one (1) year shall be removed at the discretion of the Board of Elders.

(B) Any member in good standing who desires to join another church of like faith and practice may request a letter of recommendation from the Board of Elders. (ROM 16:1-2)

(C) Upon written request of any member addressed to the Elder Board, his/her name shall be removed from the church roll.

(D) The names of the deceased members shall be removed from the membership roll.

ARTICLE - 6 ELDERS

6.1 The Elders shall carry out those functions given Elders in the New Testament in the manner and spirit directed in the New Testament. This includes conforming their decisions to the teaching of all Scripture to the fullest extent possible.

6.2 The only body entitled to act for this church as a duly recognized corporation shall be its Elders acting as a unit. (See Article 2, Section 1)

6.3 QUALIFICATIONS

Each member of the Elder Board must be an active member of this church and possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

6.4 SELECTING OF ELDERS

(A) Admission to the Eldership of this church shall be by invitation of the existing Elders who shall invite only those it unanimously agrees upon.

(B) Any man, who is a member, who desires the position of an Elder can express this to an existing member of the Elder Board.

(C) The Elder Board shall prayerfully and carefully consider each potential candidate and compile a list of approved candidates, which would include existing Elders who desire to be re-instated. This

list shall be posted in the church on November 1 to give the congregation opportunity for input and affirmation. The Elders will make their decision at the Annual Review. (See Article 6, Section 11).

6.5 NUMBER OF ELDERS

The Elder Board shall consist of at least three members (counting the Pastor-Teacher), if the number falls below three the remaining Elders shall restore the Board to its minimum number in a timely fashion, without compromising the biblical qualifications.

6.6 OFFICERS

The Elders shall elect their own officers for a period they shall determine. These officers shall be: chairman, treasurer, and clerk.

(A) The Chairman

The Chairman will conduct all Church Board and Congregational business meetings. The Chairman will be appointed by the Elders, and the appointment shall be reviewed periodically.

(B) The Treasurer

The Treasurer will be responsible for the financial duties and records of the Church, and will give a report to the Church Board quarterly and to the congregation annually. The Treasurer will be appointed by the Elders, and the appointment shall be reviewed periodically.

(C) The Clerk

The Clerk will be responsible for the taking and reporting of minutes for all Church meetings, and any reports or paperwork required by Federal, State, or local governments. The Clerk will be appointed by the Elders, and the appointment shall be reviewed periodically.

6.7 DECISIONS OF THE ELDERS

(A) Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration by unanimous vote in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself.

(B) The Elders shall bring their preliminary decisions before the church for their prayerful input if thought wise to the Elders in the situation. The expression of the body shall be carefully considered, but shall not be binding on the Elders. If the Elders subsequently take action contrary to the consensus of the body, they shall give an account to the body by stating their reasons for taking action.

(C) The Elders may remove an Elder from the Eldership by a unanimous vote of the other Elders.

6.8 APPOINTMENTS TO MINISTRIES

The Elders may appoint persons to aid the church in preaching, teaching, and other ministries they may consider necessary. All persons appointed to ministries shall be responsible to the Elders and reviewed annually.

6.9 MEETINGS

The Elders shall hold an "Annual Review" and "Annual Report" (refer to Article 6, Section 11), and regular meetings at other times as necessary. Notice shall be given at least Seven days prior to regular meetings. Special meetings may be called by an Elder at any time with unanimous agreement as to the time.

6.10 QUORUM

A simple majority shall constitute a quorum of the Elders. Decisions at these meetings shall be based on the consensus of those present. (See Article 6, Section 9)

6.11 ANNUAL REVIEW

The Annual Review of the Elder Board shall take place the first week of December for the purpose of: (1) appointing the Elder Board for the upcoming year, (2) evaluating all areas of ministry, and (3) formulating goals for the upcoming year. All of the above will be presented at the Annual Report.

6.12 ANNUAL REPORT

The Elders shall hold an annual meeting with the church in January or February. This meeting will provide a report on the finances and actions of the previous year, reports from various ministries, and projections and goals for the upcoming year.

ARTICLE 7 - PASTOR-TEACHER

7.1 DUTIES OF

The Pastor-Teacher, by virtue of his office, shall discharge all the functions of the ministry in accordance with the Word of God, his chief duty being the ministry of the Word (EPH 4:11-12; 1 TIM 5:17; 2 TIM 4:2; Titus 1:9) and prayer (ACTS 6:4). He shall be ex-officio member of all committees.

7.2 SELECTION OF

(A) Any candidate being considered for the position of Pastor-Teacher shall have first read the constitution and expressed in writing his explicit agreement with the same.

(B) The Elders shall consider only one candidate at a time, and upon unanimous approval shall present him to the congregation. A call shall be extended to the candidate if he receives at least a 3/4 majority vote by those members present and voting.

7.3 TERMINATION OF

(A) The Pastor-Teacher shall serve for unlimited term. The relationship between Pastor-Teacher and church may be dissolved by the resignation of the Pastor-Teacher or by an unanimous decision of the Elders.

(B) The Pastor-Teacher shall give or be given a minimum of thirty (30) days' notice of intended date to terminate the pastoral relationship. In the event the congregation votes that a Pastor-Teacher's services be terminated abruptly, he shall be entitled to one (1) month's regular salary.

7.4 MONETARY CONSIDERATIONS

The Pastor-Teacher's salary, vacation time, time off for conferences, etc., and other monetary considerations shall be established at the time of his call and shall be subject to review. These then shall be considered at least annually by the Board of Elders immediately prior to the annual church meeting.

ARTICLE 8 - DEACONS

8.1 APPOINTMENTS

The Elders shall appoint from the fellowship, male deacons, to help with the ministry of the church in particular areas of need.

8.2 QUALIFICATIONS

Those appointed shall meet the qualifications of a Deacon as given in 1 Timothy 3:8-12.

8.3 AUTHORITY

The Deacons shall have authority as granted by the Elders in relationship to their specific ministry and shall themselves carry out their ministry under the supervision of the Elders.

ARTICLE 9 - THE CHURCH BOARD

The Church Board shall be comprised of the Pastor-Teacher and the other Elders, the Deacons, and the Officers (if not an Elder or Deacon). The Church Board shall meet at least quarterly, to plan and execute the affairs of the church, consisting of the spiritual, temporal, financial, and other miscellaneous aspects of this ministry.

Both Elders and Deacons should have met previously, and have prepared minutes reported to the Church Board. Final authority for any action or ministry will remain with the Elders, with input from all members of the Church Board present at the quarterly meeting. Complete minutes shall be kept on file with the Clerk, and edited minutes shall be posted in reasonable time and location for the congregation to review.

ARTICLE 10 - ORDINATION

10.1 Provisions for Ordination of Men

When in judgment of the Elders a man is called to the Christian ministry, it shall be within their power to call and conduct a council of ordination.

10.2 Prospective Candidates

The prospective candidate shall make known in writing to the Elder Board his desire for ordination.

10.3 Convocation of the Council

The ordination council shall consist of at least five (5) ordained men and lay delegates from IFCA and other fundamental churches. Initiations to pastors that are not members of the IFCA shall be upon approval of the Elders. Each church may be represented by as many as two delegates.

10.4 Preparation by the Candidate

The candidate shall prepare a paper covering the following areas:

- (A) An autobiography which shall include an account of conversion, divine call to the ministry and preparation.
- (B) A personal doctrinal statement covering each of the major biblical doctrines.

10.5 Oral Examination by the Council

The council shall thoroughly examine the candidate's call, Christian experience, education and doctrinal beliefs. It will be the responsibility of the Elder Board to thoroughly examine the candidate's character and reputation prior to the oral examination.

10.6 The Service of Ordination

Upon favorable recommendation by the council the Elders may then set a time for the service of ordination or delay the ordination process if deemed necessary.

10.7 The Ordination Records

The minutes of the council and of the ordination service shall be incorporated into the church records. A certificate of ordination shall be furnished to the one being ordained.

10.8 Provision for Discipline

(A) It shall be within the province of the Elders to discipline, even to revoking of the ordination credentials, a minister ordained under this constitution, on the basis for discipline of members (Article 5, Section 4).

(B) The minister in question shall have the right of appeal to the Board of Elders provided that such an appeal is made within sixty (60) days after summons to appear.

ARTICLE 11 - AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by unanimous approval of the Elders after posting for congregational examination at least 30 days prior to a vote by the Elders.

ARTICLE 12 - DISSOLUTION

If this church as a corporation shall dissolve itself, no part of the net earnings of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, member, director, or officer of the corporation or any private individual and no donor, member, director, or officer of the corporation or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets. Upon dissolution, any assets of the corporation shall be dispersed to other Christian agencies who agree with the church statement of doctrine, and who are recognized by the IRS as a non-profit organization, in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation, and at the discretion of its final Elders.