



GOSPEL LIGHT
BAPTIST CHURCH

CHURCH DOCUMENTS

GOSPEL LIGHT BAPTIST CHURCH
EXISTS TO BRING GLORY TO GOD
BY MAKING DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS
THROUGH GOSPEL-CENTERED WORSHIP,
DISCIPLESHIP, SERVICE,
AND OUTREACH.

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Gospel Light Baptist Church

STATEMENT OF FAITH

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

The Holy Scriptures

The Bible, composed of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament, is the verbally and plenary inspired word of God and is inerrant, infallible and God-breathed and, therefore, is the final authority for faith and life. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21

God

There is one triune God, eternally existing in three persons— Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each co-eternal in being, co- identical in nature, coequal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections.

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

God the Father

God the Father is the Creator of heaven and earth. By His word and for His glory, He freely and super-naturally created the world out of nothing. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

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

God the Son

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

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

God the Holy Spirit

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

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

Man

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

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

Salvation

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

Regeneration

Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance and Faith

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the confession of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

Justification

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

Sanctification

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

Glorification

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

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14, 29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10, 13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1- 12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

God's Purpose of Grace

Becoming one of God's children is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

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

The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local body of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each church operates under the Lordship of Christ. In such a church each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are elders and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of elder or pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

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

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to covenant of church membership. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby followers of Christ through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

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

The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian custom to recognize this day regularly. On this day Christians celebrate the resurrection of Christ from the dead. This day should include worship and spiritual commitment, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should agree with the Christian's sense of right and wrong under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

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

The Kingdom

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

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

Last Things

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

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

The Christian and Social Order

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

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

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

Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing

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

Evangelism and Missions

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

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

Stewardship

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

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

Cooperation

Christ's people should, as time requires, plan associations and conventions that will best get cooperation for the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no power over one another or over the churches. These organizations are voluntary. They are to make suggestions planned to get, to join, and to direct the interests of our people in the most successful way. Members of New Testament churches should help each other to spread the missionary, educational and kind ministries of Christ's Kingdom. This should be done together to add to Christ's Kingdom. The meaning of Christian unity in the New Testament is spiritual agreement and voluntary help by many groups of Christ's people to reach a common purpose. Cooperation is wanted between the many Christian denominations when the purpose is right. Cooperation is wanted when there is no ignoring of the sense of right and wrong. Cooperation is wanted when there is no giving up of loyalty to Christ and His Word as explained in the New Testament.

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



Gospel Light Baptist Church

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1 – NAME, MISSION AND PURPOSES

SECTION 1.01—NAME

The name of this corporation is Gospel Light Baptist Church of Hot Springs, Arkansas. This corporation will be further referred to in these Bylaws as the “Church” and also may be referred to in these Bylaws by and may do business as “Gospel Light,” and such other names as the Elders of the Church shall determine from time to time.

The Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of outside control. Recognizing, however, the benefits of cooperation with other churches in the fulfillment of its purposes, the Church may voluntarily affiliate with other churches and conventions by a passing vote of the Elders and affirmation of the Members.

SECTION 1.02—MISSION

Gospel Light Baptist Church is a biblically-based faith community that exists to bring glory to God by making disciples of all nations through gospel-centered worship, discipleship, service and outreach.

SECTION 1.03—PURPOSES

The Church is organized and shall be operated exclusively for religious, charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Church’s purposes also include the limited participation of the Church in any other activities, including taxable activities, but only to the extent the activities would be permitted by a tax-exempt organization. More particularly, but without limitation, the purposes of this Church are:

- (a) to promote the Christian religion by any appropriate form of expression and in any location, through the Church’s combined or separate formation, of a church, ministry, charity, school, or institution, without limitation;
- (b) to ordain, employ and discharge ordained ministers of the gospel, and others, to conduct and carry on divine services at the place of worship of the Church, and elsewhere;

(c) to collect and disburse any and all necessary funds for the maintenance of said Church and the accomplishment of its purpose within the State of Arkansas and elsewhere;

(d) to make distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended; and

(e) to promote, encourage, and foster any other similar religious, charitable and educational activities; to accept, hold, invest, reinvest and administer any gifts, legacies, bequests, devises, funds and property of any sort or nature, and to use, expend, or donate the income or principal thereof for, and to devote the same to, the foregoing purposes of the Church; and to do any and all lawful acts and things which may be necessary, useful, suitable, or proper for the furtherance of accomplishment of the purposes of this Church; provided, however, no act may be performed which would violate Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as it now exists or as it may hereafter be amended.

ARTICLE 2 – ARTICLES OF FAITH

SECTION 2.01—STATEMENT OF BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

At the center of Christian faith and practice stands the belief that God has spoken to the world in the person and work of Jesus Christ, which is accurately and authoritatively revealed in the Christian Bible (“the Bible,” “Scripture” or “the Scriptures”).

The Bible is the inspired, inerrant and sufficient Word of God and is thus the ultimate authority for life, faith and morals. Though the various theological statements of the Church reflect succinct summaries of biblical boundaries, it is the Bible itself to which we are in ultimate submission.

Members have the responsibility and opportunity to engage Elders and Church staff on areas of theological disagreement. However, membership carries with it the implicit understanding that the Elders shall function as the interpretive authority on biblical meaning and application for the purpose of Church doctrine, practice, policy and discipline.

SECTION 2.02—STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEF

The following Statement of Basic Belief represents the core orthodox beliefs of the Church from a biblical and historical perspective. While Church Members are not required to fully understand or articulate all aspects of the Statement of Basic Belief, the explicit rejection of any part of it disqualifies one from membership in Gospel Light Baptist Church. Revisions to the Statement of Basic Belief in order to more clearly align to Scripture shall be at the sole discretion of the Elders, with the understanding that such changes will be communicated to the Members of the Church.

We believe . . .

- **THE BIBLE IS GOD’S WORD:** The Bible is God’s written revelation of Himself to mankind divinely given through human authors who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is entirely true, totally sufficient, and completely authoritative for matters of life and faith. (*Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21*).
- **THERE IS ONE TRIUNE GOD:** There is only one true and living God who is the Creator of the universe. He exists eternally in three Persons – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (*Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 46:9-10; John 17:3, 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; 1 Timothy 2:5, Genesis 1:26; Psalm 45:6-7; Psalm 110:1; Matthew 3: 13-17; Matthew 28: 17-20; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6*).
- **PEOPLE ARE IN NEED OF REDEMPTION:** Because of the Fall, the image of God in people is distorted but not lost. All people have disobeyed God willfully through sin; thus inheriting both physical and spiritual death and the need for redemption. All human beings are born with a sin nature and into an environment inclined toward sin. Only by the grace of God through Jesus Christ can they experience salvation. (*Genesis 6:5; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23; 5:8, 12-21, 7:18; Ephesians 2:1-3*).
- **JESUS IS BOTH LORD AND CHRIST:** Jesus is both fully God and fully human. He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died on the Cross as a substitute for mankind, was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will one day return. (*Matthew 1:20; Luke 2:52; John 1:1-4, 14; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:1-3*).

- **JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY OF SALVATION:** Salvation comes only through Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and man. No other religion, belief, or person can reconcile God and man. He alone can provide forgiveness and eternal salvation. (*John 1:29; 10:1-18; Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 3:18*).
- **JESUS CHRIST WILL RETURN:** God will bring the world to its appropriate end in His own time and in His own way. At that time, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth. Christ will judge both the saved and unsaved. Those who have trusted Christ will receive a glorified body and dwell forever with the Lord. Those who have not trusted in Christ will spend eternity in hell, the place of everlasting punishment. (*Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15*).
- **SALVATION IS BY FAITH ALONE:** Salvation comes only through a faith relationship with Jesus Christ, the Savior, as a person repents of sin and receives Christ's forgiveness and eternal life. Salvation is instantaneous and accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. This salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of Christ's life, death and resurrection, not on the basis of human works. All the redeemed are secured in Christ forever. (*John 3:18, 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 1 Timothy 2:5-6*)

SECTION 2.03—STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

It is the biblical position that marriage involves the union of one man and one woman in permanent sacred fidelity. Though various cultures and customs have evolving definitions of marriage, it is God alone who has ultimate authority to prescribe and describe the marital relationship (*Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:1-9, Mark 10:1-12*).

Furthermore, sexual intimacy is only properly exercised and pursued within the confines of this marital relationship. Sexual immorality, defined as any sexual activity outside of the boundaries of the sacred marital relationship between one man and one woman, is clearly and expressly prohibited by the Lord (*Matthew 15:19, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, Hebrews 13:4*).

As a consequence, the Church regards any and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or even lustful intent toward such, as sinful and ultimately unsatisfying. Moreover, the Church also regards as sinful the intent or desire to surgically alter one's biological sex to a different sex. Since the body is a creation of God, the Church holds sexual identity to be biologically determined, and associated gender norms are to be observed as appropriate to biblical standards. Disagreement with one's biological sex only leads to spiritual confusion and emotional chaos (*Genesis 1:27, Romans 1:26-32, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11*).

In order to preserve the function and integrity of the Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical example to the Church Members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Church in any capacity or united to the Church in membership should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

This article specifically gives the Elder board the right and authority to prohibit acts or omissions, including but not limited to (a) permitting any Church assets or property, whether real property, personal property, intangible property, or any property or asset of any kind that is subject to the direction or control of the Church, to be used in any manner that would be—or, in the sole determination of the Elders, could be perceived by any person to be—inconsistent with this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality; and (b) permitting any Church facilities to be used by any person, organization, corporation, or group that would or might use such facilities to convey, intentionally or by implication, what might be perceived as a favorable impression about any definition of marriage other than that contained in this Section.

The Church's Statement on Marriage and Sexuality is based upon God's will for human life as conveyed to us through the Scriptures, upon which this Church has been founded and anchored, and this Section shall not be subject to change through popular vote; referendum; prevailing opinion of Members or the general public; influence of or interpretation by any government authority, agency, or official action; or legal developments on the local, state, or federal level.

ARTICLE 3 – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 3.01—QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this church shall be composed of persons who have given testimony of regeneration, who have been baptized by immersion, who agree with the Statement of Faith and Bylaws of this church, and who have been received into full fellowship by the church by agreeing to the Church's Membership Covenant.

Baptized members of other churches of like faith and order may be received by the church upon a letter of transfer from that church.

Members of Baptist churches that have no regular letter of transfer may be received into our fellowship upon a statement satisfactory to the church. When a member of this church joins a church of different faith and order, membership in this church will terminate. When a member, in good standing of this church, joins a Church of like faith and order, letters of transfer will be granted and membership in this church will terminate.

SECTION 3.02—RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MEMBER

Members of the Church are held accountable to the responsibilities of general Christian obligations comprehensively though not exhaustively outlined within the Church's Membership Covenant. These responsibilities include praying for and pursuing both corporate health and individual holiness.

In agreeing to the Membership Covenant, Members attest that they have completed the membership process as instructed, read the Membership Covenant, and are willingly covenanting.

SECTION 3.02.1—VOTING BY MEMBERS

The covenant members of the church shall vote on the matters of (a) the annual operating budget; (b) indebtedness associated with the purchase or construction of real estate; (c) acceptance of an amended or restated constitution or bylaws; (d) disposition of substantially of all of the church's assets; (e) merger or dissolution of the Church; and (f) other actions deemed major and extraordinary by the elders.

The time, place and nature of upcoming votes will be communicated to the Church at least twenty-one (21) days in advance and Church Members shall have an opportunity to submit questions, comments and concerns, which will be considered by the Elders on a case-by-case basis.

Voting shall take place during public worship services or a special business meeting as determined in the sole discretion of the Elders.

A simple majority, defined as a result greater than 50% when the number of affirmative votes are divided by the number of total votes cast, shall constitute a passing vote.

SECTION 3.03—CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Church discipline is a necessary mark of a healthy church and shall be applied in cases of sexual misconduct, gossip, divisive-ness, dishonesty, and various other expressions of sin. In accordance with the biblical pattern generally outlined in Matthew 18:15-17, a person who evidences such sin will be confronted in an initial one-on-one meeting, followed by escalating engagement by ministerial and pastoral staff and Elders.

Where the steps of discipline are exhausted in cases of unrepentant and/or habitual sin, the Elders will consider removing a person from membership with the hope of eventual reconciliation and restoration. This removal may or may not include a prohibition to attend Church services and events, depending on the circumstances. In addition, it might include public disclosure of removal from membership and the circumstances leading to this decision to the corporate membership of the Church. Those so disciplined will in turn be restored to fellowship where the Elders have determined that appropriate repentance has occurred.

SECTION 3.04—TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership is reviewed and renewed on a periodic basis. Members can be removed through (a) failure to renew their membership, (b) voluntary resignation of membership by one in good standing, (c) death, or (d) a decision by the Elders as a result of the disciplinary process.

ARTICLE 4 – CHURCH DIRECTORS, SENIOR PASTOR, ELDERS, OFFICERS, STAFF AND DEACONS

SECTION 4.01—CHURCH DIRECTORS

The overall policy, control, direction and management of the ministry, operations and finances of the Church shall be vested in the Elder body. The Elders are designated as the directors of this corporation as the term is defined and used in the state of Arkansas. Subject to the provisions and limitations of the laws of the state of Arkansas, any limitations in the Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws, all corporate powers shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Elders. As used throughout these Bylaws, the terms “Elders,” “Elder body” and “Elder board” are used interchangeably to mean a quorum of Elders.

SECTION 4.02 – SENIOR PASTOR

The Senior Pastor is responsible to lead the staff, and lead the Elders in the area of casting an appropriate vision and direction for the church. He is responsible to receive, cast and assist in the implementation of the vision God provides for ministry. The Senior Pastor will be the overseer of the day-to-day ministries and programs of the church. He or his designee shall be responsible to supervise all ministry employees and delegate their duties and responsibilities.

The Senior Pastor shall have charge of the preaching and teaching ministry of the church, administer the ordinances of believer’s baptism by immersion and communion, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the Bylaws. He serves as a member of the Elder Board and as a voting member of the Leadership Team.

SECTION 4.02.1 – SELECTION, TERM OF OFFICE, AND REMOVAL

The Elders shall have the sole authority to nominate the Senior Pastor. A man shall be appointed as Senior Pastor by a passing vote of the Elder body (A passing vote must be equal to or greater than seventy-five percent (75%) of the Elders present.) after he has been tested and proven to meet the qualifications. The Elders may appoint a committee or group to vet Senior Pastor candidates and report its findings to the Elder body.

The proposed selection of Senior Pastor shall be communicated to the Church at least twenty-one (21) days in advance and Church Members shall have an opportunity to submit questions, comments and concerns, which will be considered by the Elders on a case-by-case basis. Confirmation and affirmation of Senior Pastor shall be at the sole and final discretion of the existing Elders and effectuated upon their passing vote and the affirmation of the Church Membership by an equal to or greater than seventy-five percent (75%) majority vote.

Once a man is appointed as Senior Pastor, he is expected to serve in this capacity indefinitely. To resign, the Senior Pastor shall notify, in writing, the officers of the Church who are also members of the Elder body. Such officers shall determine the most fruitful and edifying way to notify the remaining Elders and the Church Members. A vacancy in the position of Senior Pastor because of death, resignation, removal or any other cause shall be filled only in the manners prescribed in these Bylaws. The Senior Pastor may be removed from the office for valid cause. Discipline must be consistent with the standards set forth in the Bylaws. The Elder body will determine the specific procedure for removal of Senior Pastor. This procedure may be altered, amended, repealed or restated by a resolution of the Elders. The Elders shall have the sole authority to remove the Senior Pastor. A written notice of the proposed removal of any Elder shall be given to such Elder at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the meeting at which an action to effectuate such removal is to be taken to ensure that the Senior Pastor is given a reasonable opportunity to defend himself. The Senior Pastor shall have the opportunity to answer the charges in the presence of his accusers, but shall not be present during the discussion and vote on his removal. Such removal shall take place only upon and after a passing vote of the Elders. The Senior Pastor under consideration for removal shall not have voting rights while such removal is considered.

SECTION 4.03—ELDERS

The Elder board shall consist of the Leadership Team and such number of additional Elders as may from time to time be nominated and elected in accordance with these Bylaws, provided that the total number of Elders shall not be less than three (3). The Elder board shall include at least one Vocational Elder; as such position is defined in 4.03.2 below, and that being the Senior Pastor.

The Elder board will maintain a simple majority of Lay Elders. If for any reason the composition of the Elder body does not consist of a simple majority of Lay Elders, then the Elders will begin the process to restore the required composition.

Elders are entrusted with the governance of the Church, leading the Church from a centralized vantage point. The Elder board's oversight includes, but is not limited to, teaching, protecting, leading, disciplining, equipping and caring for the corporate Church body and its individual Members as well as the oversight of all ministry, operations and finances of the Church. The Elders are also responsible for being obedient to the Scriptures in the doctrine of the Church, establishing the overall vision of the Church and appointing new Elders.

SECTION 4.03.1 – LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Leadership Team will be comprised of paid Church personnel. Members of the Leadership Team shall be Elders of the Church. Members of the Leadership Team shall serve as overseers of significant segments of the Church ministry or business operations.

Members of the Leadership Team shall have the authority, as granted by the Elder board, to hire and terminate Church personnel, except for Vocational Elders. As sanctioned by the Elders, the Leadership Team shall have authority to transact business, execute contracts and legally bind the Church in its respective ministry and business affairs.

The Leadership Team shall have comprehensive oversight over the day-to-day activities of the Church. The Leadership Team will primarily spend time leading leaders, focusing on the Church's mission and vision and thinking globally with respect to Church-wide issues that could impact the whole Church. They will also provide organizational clarity and manage logistical decisions of the Church.

The Leadership Team will work as a team for the protection of the Church, representing the best interests of the entire Church and not simply the interests of a particular part of the Church. The Leadership Team will make wise and efficient decisions as leaders trusted by the Elders and Church Members. The Elders shall determine the size and composition of the Leadership Team.

SECTION 4.03.2—VOCATIONAL ELDERS

Vocational Elders are defined as those Elders who are in the employ of the Church as a regular part-time or full-time staff member. Vocational Elders may receive reasonable compensation for fulfilling their vocational responsibilities as employees of the Church. They shall neither vote on nor determine his own personal salary or benefits or designate his personal housing allowance.

SECTION 4.03.3—LAY ELDERS

Lay Elders are defined as those Elders who are not in the employ of the Church as a regular part-time or full-time staff member. Lay Elders shall not receive compensation or salaries for their service.

SECTION 4.03.4—QUALIFICATIONS

The minimum qualifications for Elders shall not be less than those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, including without limitation the requirement that Elders be men. In addition to the minimum qualifications given in Scripture, Elders must be Covenant Members who fully subscribe to Church's Articles of Faith and are actively involved in the ministry of the Church. The Elders may at any time create, alter, amend, repeal or restate resolutions establishing additional qualifications outside of those listed in the above scriptures.

SECTION 4.03.5 –DUTIES

The duties of the Elders shall include, but not be limited to, leading the Church to fulfill the purposes of the Church.

The Elder board, as a group, shall supervise all employees of the Church; the Vocational Elders, as individuals, shall supervise those employees reporting to them hierarchically within the Church staff. The Elders may delegate to Church employees any and all duties and responsibilities the Elders deem reasonable, subject to the rights, if any, of the person under contract of employment.

The Elders of the Church shall vote on the matters of (a) appointment of any Elder, (b) doctrinal issues, (c) removal of any Elder, and (d) other actions

deemed major and extraordinary by the Elders. Elder votes on any matter may be communicated to the Church at the sole discretion of the Elders, other than a vote on the appointment of any Elder, which shall follow the procedure outlined in 4.03.6 below.

The Elders shall make the final determination in regards to any ecclesiastical questions. The Elders shall be the express and final arbiter of ecclesiastical polity, religious doctrine, and questions of Church property, and shall make the final decision with respect to any other matter that shall arise concerning the Church, its internal workings, and its governance in every respect, consistent with these Bylaws. In deciding such matters, the Elders shall use the standards of: (a) the best spiritual, financial, and operating interests of the Church in light of the Bible and the tenets of faith of the Church; and (b) the furtherance of the religious purposes of the Church as discerned by the Elders according to the teachings of the Bible.

SECTION 4.03.6 – SELECTION, TERM OF OFFICE, AND REMOVAL

The Elders shall have the sole authority to appoint new Elders. A man shall be appointed as an Elder by a passing vote of the Elder body (A passing vote must be equal to or greater than seventy-five percent (75%) of the Elders present.) after he has been tested and proven to meet the qualifications. The Elders may appoint a committee or group to vet Elder candidates and report its findings to the Elder body. The Elders may also receive recommendations for Elder candidates from Church Members.

The proposed appointment of any Elder shall be communicated to the Church at least twenty-one (21) days in advance and Church Members shall have an opportunity to submit questions, comments and concerns, which will be considered by the Elders on a case-by-case basis. Confirmation and appointment of a new Elder shall be at the sole and final discretion of the existing Elders and effectuated upon their passing vote and the implied confirmation of the Church.

Once a man is appointed to the Elder body as a Lay Elder, he is expected to serve in this capacity for a minimum of three years, but no more than five years per term. Elders may be re-appointed after a one-year absence from the Elder body.

If the Elder body determines that an Elder needs an extended Sabbath because of a legitimate need (e.g., illness or tragedy), then such Elder may transition to being an active but nonvoting Elder for a set period of time determined by the Elder body.

To resign from the Elder body, an Elder shall notify, in writing, the officers of the Church who are also members of the Elder body. Such officers shall determine the most fruitful and edifying way to notify the remaining Elders and the Church Members. A vacancy in the Elder body because of death, resignation, removal or any other cause shall be filled only in the manners prescribed in these Bylaws. Such vacancies may be filled as they occur.

Any Elder may be removed from the office of Elder for valid cause. Discipline of Elders must be consistent with the standards set forth in of the Bylaws. The Elder body will determine the specific procedure for removal of an Elder. This procedure maybe altered, amended, repealed or restated by a resolution of the Elders. The Elders shall have the sole authority to remove an Elder.

A written notice of the proposed removal of any Elder shall be given to such Elder at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which an action to effectuate such removal is to be taken to ensure that the Elder is given a reasonable opportunity to defend himself. The Elder shall have the opportunity to answer the charges in the presence of his accusers, but shall not be present during the discussion and vote on his removal. Such removal shall take place only upon and after a passing vote of the Elders. The Elder under consideration for removal shall not have voting rights while such removal is considered.

SECTION 4.04 – OFFICERS

Officers of the Church shall be Members of the Elder body. The Officers shall consist of a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and such other officers as deemed necessary by the Elders.

The Officers of the Church shall be elected by a passing vote of the Elders and shall serve terms of at least two (2) years, as long as they remain a member of the Elder body. Officers may be re-elected.

The Senior Pastor will act as the de facto Chairman until and unless he chooses to call for an election to select another Elder to take this position.

SECTION 4.04.1 – DUTIES

The Chairman shall perform such duties as are incumbent upon such Officer, including making certain that all orders and resolutions of the Elders are carried into effect. The Chairman shall have oversight of the Elder meetings. The Chairman's duties shall include, without limitation: establishing meetings, setting the agenda and presiding over the meetings.

The Secretary shall record or cause to be recorded in a minute book of the Church minutes of all meetings of the Elders and all votes taken at such meetings. He shall have charge of the official records and seal of the Church, and he shall perform such other duties as are incident to the office of Secretary and as may be assigned by the Elders or the Chairman, under whose supervision the Secretary shall be.

The Treasurer shall serve as the overseer of the financial operations of the Church. Paid Church staff members shall be accountable to the Treasurer for management of the financial aspects of the Church. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties and have other responsibilities as may be assigned to him from time to time by the Elders.

SECTION 4.05 – CHURCH STAFF

All personnel employed by the Church shall act in accordance with the current Elder-approved Personnel Policies and Procedures document, as it may be revised, amended or restated from time to time.

The Church will reserve employment for men and women who believe and confess essential biblical convictions and act in accordance with such. Additionally, the Church reserves the right to terminate the employment of any existing employee who fails to meet this general standard of faith and practice.

SECTION 4.06 – DEACONS

Deacons may be men who meet the qualifications as specified in I Timothy 3:8-13. In addition to the minimum qualifications given in Scripture, Deacons must be Covenant Members who fully subscribe to Church's Articles of Faith and are actively involved in the ministry of the Church.

The Elders shall appoint the number of Deacons required to meet permanent and short-term needs of the Church.

Deacons will serve a term of three to five years with a year off between terms.

The responsibility of the Deacons is not explicit within the biblical text. The overall responsibility of the diaconate is to assist the Elders in their service and equipping functions.

Deacon responsibilities include but are not limited to: Assisting the elders and pastors in shepherding the Covenant Members through biblical counseling. Helping the elders and pastors lead and organize specific ministry initiatives. Helping strengthen ongoing ministries. Helping the elders lead the corporate prayer meetings and being available for further prayer after each meeting. Being available at the end of Sunday services to pray with people.

Any Deacon may be removed from office for valid cause. A written notice of proposed removal of any Deacon shall be given to the Elders at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which an action to affect such removal is to be taken to ensure that the Deacon is given a reasonable opportunity for defense. The Deacon shall have the opportunity to answer the charges in the presence of his or her accusers, but shall not be present during the discussion and vote on his or her removal. The removal of a Deacon requires a passing vote of the Elders.

ARTICLE 5 – MEETINGS

SECTION 5.01—MEETINGS

Meetings for public worship shall be held at such times and places as may be provided for under the direction of the Elders.

The Elders shall have the authority to call a Church business meeting or special meetings as needed.

ARTICLE 6 – TRANSACTIONS OF THE CHURCH

SECTION 6.01—BOOKS AND RECORDS

The Church shall keep correct and complete books and records of account. All funds of the Church shall be deposited to the credit of the Church in banks, trust companies, or other depositories that the Elder board selects. The Elders may accept on behalf of the Church any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise for the general purposes or any special purpose of the Church including, but not limited to, gifts of money, annuity arrangements, securities, and other tangible and intangible personal property, real property, and interest therein. The Elders may make gifts and give charitable contributions that are not prohibited by these Bylaws, the Articles of Incorporation, state law, or any requirements for maintaining the Church's federal and state tax status.

SECTION 6.02—FINANCIAL AUDIT

At the discretion of the Elders the Church will engage an independent certified public accountant to conduct audits, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted of the financial records of the Church. These financial statements are to include, but not be limited to, a statement of financial condition, a statement of activity, and a statement of cash flows and disclosures.

SECTION 6.03—CONTRACTS AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS

The Elder board may authorize an individual Elder, Officer, employee or agent of the Church to enter into a contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Church. This authority may be limited to a specific contract or instrument, or it may extend to any number and type of possible contracts and instruments.

SECTION 6.04—FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on the first day of January and end on the last day in December in each year.

ARTICLE 7 – ORDINATION

SECTION 7.01—ORDINATION

The Church will consider ordaining duly qualified pastoral, ministerial and executive staff positions as determined by the Elders in accordance with the guidelines of Scripture.

All ordained staff members are expected to assist in baptism, communion, prayer and other ministerial duties. Furthermore, ordained males are expected to be available to officiate weddings and funerals.

The Church reserves the right to revoke ordination in cases such as moral failure or termination of employment. The decision to rescind or extend ordination shall be at the discretion of the Elders.

ARTICLE 8 – INDEMNIFICATION

SECTION 8.01—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 director, officer of the Church, staff, or a member of the Leadership Team, 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 8.02—EXPENSES SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

To the extent that a director, officer of the Church, staff, or a member of the Leadership Team, 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 8.03—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 of this Article. The determination shall be made:

- (a) by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the Elders 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 Elders so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or
- (c) by a majority vote of the members of the church.

SECTION 8.04—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 a director, officer of the Church, staff, or a member of the Leadership Team, to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the church.

SECTION 8.05—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 director, officer of the Church, staff, or a member of the Leadership Team and may inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

SECTION 8.06—INSURANCE

The Church may purchase and maintain insurance, at its expense, to protect itself and any director, officer, employee or agent of the Church or who, while a director, officer, employee or agent of the Church, is or was a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other enterprise against any expense, liability or loss, whether or not the Church would have the power to indemnify such person against such expense, liability or loss under the provisions of this article.

ARTICLE 9 – FORMAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION

SECTION 9.01 – FORMAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Members shall refrain from filing lawsuits against the Church and submit to Christian dispute resolution. In keeping with 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, all formal disputes, other than those which are subject to the jurisdiction of the Elders as outlined in these Bylaws, which may arise between any Member of the Church and the Church itself, or between any Member of the Church and any Elder, employee, volunteer, agent, or other Member of this Church, shall be resolved by mediation, and if not resolved by mediation, then by binding arbitration under the procedures and supervision of a faith-based mediation and arbitration group.

Arbitration under this section shall be conducted according to the rules of the American Arbitration Association. Judgment upon an arbitration award may be entered in any court otherwise having jurisdiction. The parties each agree to bear their own costs related to any mediation or arbitration

proceeding including payment of their own attorneys' fees. Either party may file a motion seeking temporary injunctive relief from a court of competent jurisdiction in order to maintain the status quo until the underlying dispute or claim can be submitted for mediation or arbitration.

If a dispute may result in an award of monetary damages that could be paid under a Church insurance policy, then use of the conciliation, mediation, and arbitration procedure is conditioned on acceptance of the procedure by the liability insurer of the Church and the insurer's agreement to honor any mediation, conciliation or arbitration award up to any applicable policy limits. The mediation, conciliation, and arbitration process is not a substitute for any disciplinary process set forth in these Bylaws, and shall in no way affect the authority of the Church to investigate reports of misconduct, to conduct hearings, or to administer discipline of Members.

SECTION 9.02 – CHURCH DISRUPTIONS

Any person deemed by a member of the Leadership Team or an Elder to pose a physical or psychological threat to any person or to the Church, or to be causing, about to cause, or capable of causing disruption to the religious services and activities of the Church, shall be considered a trespasser on Church property and may be ejected summarily. No Church employee or Elder shall incur any liability for acting in good faith in the interests of the Church pursuant to this section.

ARTICLE 10 – AMENDMENTS

SECTION 10.01 – AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws or any provision contained herein may be altered, amended, repealed or restated, and new Bylaws adopted, by a passing vote of the Elder body and affirmation by the Members. Such vote shall take place at any special or regular Elder meeting duly noticed. "Duly noticed" is defined as a twenty-four (24) hour pre-notification via email or other communication means. Upon a passing vote of the Elder body the procedure included under Section 3.02.01 regarding notification and vote will be enacted.



Gospel Light Baptist Church

MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

The church is the vehicle by which God is accomplishing His purposes in the world. The church exists to display the glory of God because all things exist for His glory. Followers of Jesus have been invited graciously into God's redemptive purposes for the world through the church. In light of this reality, the opportunity to join a local church is much more than a commitment to consistent attendance or active involvement in community. It is also a sacred call to be involved in the redemptive work of our sovereign God and to be a local manifestation of the universal household of God. Therefore, we will covenant together to fulfill these purposes and hold one another accountable to this high calling.

The primary purpose of this covenant is to serve as a teaching document in enunciating these areas:

To spell out biblical obligations and expectations between the elders and individual members of the Gospel Light Baptist Church .

To establish teaching and doctrinal guidelines for Gospel Light Baptist Church .

To serve as a tool for growth in the grace and truth of Jesus Christ.

What Is a Covenant?

A covenant is a contract or agreement between two or more parties. Covenant is how God has chosen to communicate to us, to redeem us, and to guarantee us eternal life in Jesus. These truths, revealed in the Bible, are the basis of Christianity. The Bible is a covenant document. The Old and New Testaments are really Old and New Covenants. The word "testament" is Latin for Covenant.

Membership in a local church involves commitment to worship the Lord corporately, edifying brothers and sisters through mutual exhortation and service, cooperating in mission, and holding each other accountable to walk in a manner pleasing to the Lord as a witness to the truth of Christ in the world.

We believe that covenant church membership is a wise and helpful path for those who desire to walk together in obedience to the Lord and in a manner that is worthy of the gospel of Christ (Philippians 1:27). This becomes evident when we consider how the New Testament teaching on church government and church discipline relate to mutual accountability and thus to the concept of covenant membership. The New Testament teaching about church government and church discipline would be meaningless if some form of commitment to this accountability in a body of believers were not expected.

The biblical call for a membership of mutual accountability in a local body of believers suggests the need for believers to make a covenant with one another. This is simply implied in agreeing to hold each other accountable to walk in a manner pleasing to the Lord.

The church covenant is a written summary of biblical practice that a church agrees should be the basis of its accountability. The covenant allows for freedom of conscience in areas where the Bible is not definite in its guidance. The covenant focuses on principles, especially as they relate to our corporate life together.

Statement of Basic Beliefs

The following beliefs represent the core of central orthodox beliefs from a biblical and historical perspective. While a full understanding and the ability to adequately articulate these beliefs is not required, the explicit rejection of any one of these particular beliefs disqualifies one from membership at Gospel Light Baptist Church.

We believe...

- **THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD:** The Bible is God's written revelation of Himself to mankind divinely given through human authors who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is entirely true, totally sufficient, and completely authoritative for matters of life and faith.

(Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

• **THERE IS ONE TRIUNE GOD:** There is only one true and living God who is the Creator of the universe. He exists eternally in three Persons – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

(Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-6; Isaiah 46:9-10; John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; 1 Timothy 2:5; Genesis 1:26; Psalm 45: 6-7; Psalm 110:1; Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28:17-20; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

• **PEOPLE ARE IN NEED OF REDEMPTION:** Because of the Fall, the image of God in people is distorted but not lost. All people have disobeyed God willfully through sin; thus inheriting both physical and spiritual death and the need for redemption. All human beings are born with a sin nature and into an environment inclined toward sin. Only by the grace of God through Jesus Christ can they experience salvation.

(Genesis 6:5; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23; 5:8, 12-21; 7:18; Ephesians 2:1-3).

• **JESUS IS BOTH LORD AND CHRIST:** Jesus is both fully God and fully human. He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died on the Cross as a substitute for mankind, was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will one day return.

(Matthew 1:20; Luke 2:52; John 1:1-4, 14; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:1-3).

• **JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY OF SALVATION:** Salvation comes only through Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and man. No other religion, belief, or person can reconcile God and man. He alone can provide forgiveness and eternal salvation.

(John 1:29; 10:1-18; Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 3:18).

• **JESUS CHRIST WILL RETURN:** God will bring the world to its appropriate end in His own time and in His own way. At that time, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth. Christ will judge both the saved and un-saved. Those who have trusted Christ will receive a glorified body and dwell forever with the Lord. Those who have not trusted in Christ will spend eternity in hell, the place of everlasting punishment.

(Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15).

• **SALVATION IS BY FAITH ALONE:** Salvation comes only through a faith relationship with Jesus Christ, the Savior, as a person repents of sin and receives Christ's forgiveness and eternal life. Salvation is instantaneous and accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. This salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of Christ's life, death and resurrection, not on the basis of human works. All the redeemed are secured in Christ forever.

(John 3:18,14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 1 Timothy 2:5-6)

Elders Covenant Obligations to the Church Body

As shepherds of a local church, elders are men entrusted with protecting, leading, equipping and caring for the corporate church body and her individual members. The following is an overview of the covenant obligations for elders as defined within the Scriptures.

The elders covenant...

- to, along with the aid of members, appoint elders and deacons according to the criteria assigned to them in Scripture

(1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter. 5:1-4)

- to prayerfully seek God's will for our church community and steward her resources to the best of our ability based on our study of the Scriptures and following of the Spirit

(Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

- To oversee the growth of members as disciples of Christ and give an account for their growth in grace, truth, and love

(Matthew 28:16-20; Ephesians 4:15-16; Colossians 1:28; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

- to provide teaching and counsel from the whole of Scripture

(Acts 20:27-28; 1 Timothy 4:16; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Titus 2:1).

- to equip the members of the church for the work of ministry

(Ephesians 4:11-16).

- to be on guard against false teachers and teachings

(Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 1 John 4:1).

- to lovingly oversee the exercise of discipline when necessary, for the glory of God, the good of the one disciplined and the health of the church as a whole.

(Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20).

- to set an example and join members in fulfilling the obligations of church membership stated in the Member-ship Covenant, Statement of Faith, and By-laws.

(Philippians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7-8; 1 Peter 5:3).

Church Members Covenant Obligations

One of our greatest convictions is that church membership should be meaningful. Therefore, we believe it is important to covenant together as a church family. As members of Gospel Light Baptist Church, we affirm this covenant with one another, by God's grace, for our growth, and ultimately for the glory of God.

We covenant...

- to delight in the glory of God, depend on the presence of God, and grow in the knowledge of God by submitting to the Word of God in all matters of life, as the all sufficient authority in our lives and in His Church.

(Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21).

- to grow in Christ and his Gospel through the consistent practice of spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, fasting, Scripture reading, worship, and service.

(Luke 18:1; Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Ephesians 5: 1-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22).

- to participate regularly in the Lord's Supper as we reverently and joyfully remember the past work of Christ's atoning sacrifice, celebrate the present help of Christ, as our mediator who ever lives to intercede for us at the Father's right hand

(Luke. 22:7-23; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:23-32)

- to live life together and challenge one another to grow as disciples of Christ; to commit to living out the Gospel and its implications for every day life and to spur one another on to love and good deeds by: meeting with one another consistently in small groups actively participating in the corporate gatherings of this local church, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, praying for one another regularly and serving one another selflessly

(Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25; Titus 3:14).

- to steward our spiritual gifts, time, resources, and money in a sacrificial manner consistent with the Gospel and for its progress. To give cheerfully, regularly, and generously to the support of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel both in our city and through all nations

(Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

- to affirm, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to exercise our Christian liberty with responsibility, remembering that because of the Gospel, we have a special obligation to lead a new and holy life (i.e. issues such as cohabitation, extra-marital sex, homosexuality, drug addictions, alcohol abuse, etc. are not consistent with this special obligation to lead a new and holy life).

(1 Peter 1:13-16, 4:1-3; Romans 1:28 -32, 13:13; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:18).

- to seek to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace by affirming that we are God's church and not our own therefore our preferences, needs, and desires are secondary to the mission and vision of the church.

(Ephesians 4:3; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Psalm 141:5).

Part of maintaining unity and peace means:

we will adhere to Gospel Light Baptist Church's "Statement of Basic Beliefs"
we will not be divisive over Gospel Light Baptist Church's "Statement of Faith"

- to humbly and gently confront one another and receive correction from one another in accordance with a New Testament understanding of church discipline and restoration and to willingly submit to and prayerfully support the leadership of our pastors (elders) as they seek to oversee discipline among our church.

(Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5: 9-13).

- to cooperate with, submit to, and prayerfully support the leadership of the pastors and elders who have been entrusted by God to serve and care for this body by teaching the Word of Christ to us and modeling the character of Christ before us.

(Ephesians 4:1-3; Hebrews 13:7, 17; 1 Peter 5:5).

- to endeavor to build Gospel-centered homes. Husbands will seek to lead their wives and children sacrificially as Christ leads the church wives will seek to submit to their husbands, as the church does to Christ. As parents, we will raise the children under our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family.

(Ephesians 5).



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