

1 **CONSTITUTION**

2 *of the*

3 **CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH**

4 **MARION, OH**

5 *Adopted by the membership, June 5, 2016; Latest Update, March 21, 2021*

7 **Article 1 -- Name**

8 The name of this church is Central Baptist Church.

10 **Article 2 – Purpose**

11 Our purpose as a church is to carry out the Great Commission Jesus Christ gave in
12 Matthew 28:18-20: *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth*
13 *has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the*
14 *name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I*
15 *have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

18 **Article 3 – Core Beliefs**

19 Section 1—Statement of Faith

20 We believe the Bible is the Holy Spirit-inspired Word of God and is the final standard
21 of truth and the framework upon which the church is built, guided and governed. It is profitable
22 for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16). We believe the
23 Bible is complete (Psalm 119:89; Proverbs 30:5-7; Hebrews 1:1-2; Revelation 22:18-19) and is
24 fully sufficient for life (Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Pet. 1:3-4). We exist to worship Him and to build up
25 the body of Christ by serving God in the ministry for which He has gifted us (Rom. 11:36;
26 1 Cor. 12:4-11).

27 Central Baptist Church is a local assembly of the body of Christ universal which
28 consists of many assemblies worldwide. We count as brothers and sisters in Christ any church
29 that believes that Jesus Christ is Lord, our only Savior and the Bible is the inerrant word of God.
30 As a Doctrinal Statement we subscribe to The Baptist Faith and Message 2000 (see Appendix
31 A).

32 Section 2 – Statement on Marriage, Sex, and Sexuality

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

37 We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and
38 one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen 2:18-25). We believe
39 that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to
40 each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4).

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

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

46 We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Central Baptist Church
47 as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Central Baptist members
48 and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Central Baptist in any
49 capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Sex, and
50 Sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess. 5:22).

51 We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake
52 their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10;
53 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

54 We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and
55 dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior (words or actions) directed
56 toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines
57 of Central Baptist Church.

58
59 Section 3—Sanctity of Human Life

60 We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is
61 of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or
62 mentally challenged and every other stage of condition from conception through natural death.
63 We are therefore called to defend, protect and value all human life (Psalm 139).

64
65 Section 4 – Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct

66 Our Statement of Faith and our Statement on Marriage, Sex, and Sexuality do not
67 exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that
68 speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the
69 sole and final source of all that we believe.

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71
72 Article 4 – Membership

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74 Section 1 - Qualifications

75 To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ,
76 who has been baptized by immersion in obedience to Christ following his or her regeneration,
77 and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member
78 must agree to submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in our Core Beliefs and must
79 promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. Prospective members

80 also must complete Central Baptist Church's membership class.

81 Section 2 - Admission of Members

82 The Elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for
83 membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or
84 by transfer letter from another Baptist or church of like faith and order, provided such person
85 has been baptized according to the teachings of the New Testament (Mark 1:9-11). Once
86 convinced, the Elders will present each person to the church for admission into membership.
87 Members shall at that point relinquish their membership in any other church.

88 Section 3 - Duties and Privileges of Membership

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

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

100

101 Section 4 - Designation of Membership

102 In order to properly identify members of the Church in good standing, the membership
103 shall be updated periodically as determined by the Elder Body. The Elders reserve the right to
104 recommend terminating the membership of a member who is not fulfilling his/her covenant
105 responsibilities.

106

107 Section 5—Inactive Members

108 It is the responsibility of all church members to minister to one another. When any
109 member is aware that fellow members are becoming inactive (as evidenced by their absence
110 from regular worship services or declining involvement in church ministries) it is that member's
111 responsibility to reach out to them to offer encouragement and to determine if there is a reason,
112 concern, etc., that is causing their inactivity. Any feedback from those discussions should be
113 shared with the Elders. If members continue to be inactive, Elders should meet with the
114 members involved to discuss and, if possible, resolve any concerns. In addition, Elders will
115 determine whether the members wish to continue in fellowship with CBC or to be removed from
116 the church roll. (Note: a member will not be considered inactive because of illness or who is
117 physically unable to attend worship services or other church functions.)

118

119 Section 6—Termination of Membership

120 Members shall be removed from the Church roll for the following reasons: 1) death;
121 2) transfer of membership to another church; 3) request of the member; 4) dismissal when the
122 member's life and conduct is not in accordance with the membership covenant in such a way
123 that the member hinders the ministry and/or the influence of the Church in the community
124 and, in addition, the member refuses to comply with church discipline (Matt. 18:15-21); or
125 5) the member becomes inactive. The Elders will oversee membership termination, always

126 being mindful of seeking reconciliation, when necessary. These actions will be shared with
127 the membership of the church.

128
129 Section 7—Restoration of Membership

130 The Elders shall pursue restoration of members dismissed according to the spirit of
131 2 Corinthians 2:7-8, when repentance is evident.

132 The members of this church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or
133 fellowship with this church, understand that Central Baptist is an autonomous church composed
134 of members who have voluntarily joined together to carry out the vision for Central Baptist as
135 given by God and led by Elders.

136
137 All members and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with
138 this church, agree that any appeal of a termination of membership or any request for restoration
139 of active membership shall be made, in writing, to the Elders and agree to abide by their
140 decision and shall not seek any appeal to any outside ecclesiastical or governmental body,
141 including, but not limited to, the Buckeye Central-Erie Association, the state or national
142 convention or a local, state or federal judicial system. With the concurrence of the Elders,
143 petitioners seeking reinstatement of membership will be presented to the congregation for
144 approval.

145
146 Section 8 – Church Covenant

147 Having been led, as I believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as
148 my Savior, and on the profession of my faith in Him, having been baptized in the name of the
149 Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, I do now, in the presence of God and this local
150 assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with the members of Central Baptist
151 Church as one local body in Christ.

152 Being in agreement with the essential beliefs of Central Baptist Church as outlined in
153 our Statement of Faith, our Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality, and our statement on
154 the Sanctity of Human Life, I engage, therefore, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to walk in
155 Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge, in holiness and
156 comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality by employing my spiritual giftedness in the
157 local body; to sustain its worship, ordinances, disciplines and doctrines; to contribute
158 generously, cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church,
159 the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

160 I also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate my family in the
161 Christian faith; to seek the salvation of my family, associates and acquaintances; to live
162 carefully in the world; to be just in my dealings, faithful in my engagements and blameless in
163 my attitudes and conduct; to avoid gossip, murmuring and excessive anger; to seek God's help
164 in abstaining from the use of illegal substances and practices that harm the body or jeopardize
165 my own or another's faith.

166 I further engage to watch over others in brotherly love; to remember others in prayer; to
167 aid others in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in
168 speech; to be slow to take offense and always ready for reconciliation and, mindful of the rules
169 of our Savior, to secure it without delay.

170 I moreover engage to follow the leaders of the church, submitting myself to their teaching,
171 guidance, encouragement, and if need be, correction.

172 **Article 5—Church Ordinances**

173
174 Section 1—Baptism

175 Baptism will occur after a person repents and believes in the Gospel (Mark 1:14-15).
176 Baptism shall be by immersion only and shall be administered by the Church in obedience to
177 God.

178
179 Section 2—The Lord’s Supper

180 Any person who has received Christ into his/her life as Lord and Savior is eligible to
181 partake of the Lord’s Supper. The Lord’s Supper shall be observed as taught in the Scriptures
182 by those who know Christ as Lord and after self-examination. The Lord’s Supper shall be
183 observed at least once each quarter.

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186 **Article 6 - Meetings**

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188 Section 1 - Worship Meetings

189 Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day (Sunday), and other services (special
190 services, small group meetings, etc.) may be held throughout the week as the church
191 determines.

192 Section 2 – Informational Meetings

193 Informational meetings will be scheduled at the discretion of the Elders. Announcement
194 of the meeting shall be made at least one week in advance in one of the following ways:

- 195 • Distribution of written material to the congregation in attendance at a regular
196 Sunday worship service.
197 • Announcement of the meeting in a church newsletter, either electronic or printed.
198 • Oral announcement to the congregation at a Sunday worship service.
199 • Delivery by email (preferred) or U.S. mail to each active member identified on the
200 membership role.

201
202 Matters requiring approval by a vote of the membership include:

- 203 • The annual budget.
204 • Election of Vocational Pastors, Volunteer Pastor/Elders and Deacons.
205 • Other issues/decisions as deemed by the Elders.

206
207 In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust,
208 openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord
209 Jesus Christ.

210 One of the Elders will preside as moderator at all members' meetings of the
211 church. The Elders shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and
212 that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.

213 Every member in good standing age 18 or above shall have the right to vote on matters
214 brought before the Central Baptist membership.

215 At least 20 percent of active members must be present at a meeting to constitute a
216 quorum.

217 All voting matters considered shall be decided by a majority of the members present
218 unless otherwise specified.

219 All members must be present in person to vote at any informational meeting. No
220 proxies shall be permitted.

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Article 7—Church Leadership

224 Section 1 – Structure and Function

225 Central Baptist is an Elder-led, Deacon-served, congregationally accountable church. In
226 addition to Elders and Deacons, other staff persons serve in support positions necessary for
227 ministry. (A full explanation of our church government can be found on the church website and
228 in the church office.)

229

230 Section 2—Affiliations

231 Central Baptist is an autonomous church who participates in the Cooperative Program
232 of the Southern Baptist Convention along with other churches who affiliate with the Southern
233 Baptist Convention. Central Baptist is affiliated with the Buckeye Central-Erie Baptist
234 Association within the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio.

235

236 Section 3—Elders/Pastors

237 The Elder Body consists of Central Baptist’s full-time pastors and ordained volunteer
238 pastors. Elders are responsible for spiritual oversight and vision, teaching/preaching, counseling
239 and church discipline. Elders are elected by the Central Baptist membership to an indefinite
240 term.

241 Section 4—Lead Pastor

242 The Lead Pastor, in conjunction with the other Elders, shall be responsible for the
243 overall leadership and vision of the church. Together they shall lead the church in a fellowship
244 of worship, witness, education, ministry and application. They shall proclaim the gospel to
245 unbelievers and believers alike, and, along with the Deacons, shall be concerned with the care of
246 church members and others in the community.

247

248 Section 5—Associate Pastor

249 The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the Lead Pastor is that of
250 associate. An Associate Pastor shall be an Elder. He shall perform the duties of an Elder
251 described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted
252 and called to the ministry. In the absence or incapacity of the Lead Pastor for defined periods of
253 time, the Associate Pastor(s) shall assume the responsibility for his duties under the oversight of
254 the Elders.

255

256 Section 6—Deacons

257 The Deacon Body consists of men called and ordained to manage business and
258 ministry needs of the church. In concert with the Elders, Deacons are responsible for finances
259 and facilities, as well as the care and service ministry. They also serve as the primary counsel
260 to the Elders on church matters. Deacons are elected by the Central Baptist membership to an
261 indefinite term.

262

263 Section 7—Ministry Staff

264 Ministry staff positions are created and appointed by the Elder Body (with
265 consultation of Deacons as appropriate) and filled by paid or volunteer staff based on ministry
266 needs. Creation of budgeted positions shall be recommended by the Elders and approved by
267 the Central Baptist membership.

268 Elders will be responsible for reviewing the church leadership structure and may
269 make recommendations on additional staff positions, define term limits, etc., for approval by
270 the church membership.

271 More information on the structure, positions and responsibilities of the church
272 leadership is contained in the Central Baptist Church *Leadership Handbook* (see Appendix B).
273

274 **Article 8—Selection of Vocational Pastors**

275 Section 1—Selection of Vocational Pastors (Lead or Associate Pastors)

276 When it becomes necessary to elect a Pastor, a six-member Pastor Search Committee
277 shall seek a man who meets the qualifications required by the church. (For details on the
278 formation of the Pastor Search Committee, see Article 8, Section 2.) In all the deliberations, the
279 committee, Elders, Deacons and members of the church shall seek the leadership of the Holy
280 Spirit.

281 Any member of the church can suggest prospective pastoral candidates to the Pastor
282 Search Committee for its consideration. But only this committee can make a nomination to the
283 church.

284 As the final step to nominate a particular pastor to the position, the committee shall,
285 working with the Elders and Deacons, arrange a time for church members to visit with the
286 prospective pastor. The Pastor Search Committee, Elders and Deacons should work closely
287 with the prospective pastor in putting together a final economic package, which would be
288 presented to the church for approval. When the qualified man has been heard, the committee
289 shall nominate him by consensus.

290 The church will vote on the prospective pastor at a called meeting. However, the
291 membership shall be notified of the meeting and its purpose at least one week in advance. The
292 meeting will not be held on the same day the prospective pastor's visit to the church. The pastor
293 shall be elected by secret ballot by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members comprising the
294 quorum (see Quorum, Article 6, Section 2). Ballots shall be collected and counted by the
295 Deacons.

296 Should the church not elect the first person recommended, the same procedure shall be
297 followed until a qualified person is elected. However, at no time shall the church consider more
298 than one person at a time.
299

300 Section 2—Qualifications

301 Vocational pastors shall be chosen on the basis of qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy
302 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. In accordance with and in addition to, vocational pastors shall:

- 303 • Be an adult male.
- 304 • Seek and be responsive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, exercising faith and
305 wisdom in his judgments.
- 306 • Understand and support the gospel of Christ, the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, the
307 CBC Core Beliefs and CBC Church Covenant.
- 308 • Handle his financial, social and moral affairs in an upright manner and his conduct
309 shall be above reproach.

- Be the husband of one wife.
- Support the church with tithes as taught in the Scriptures.

Section 3—Formation of Pastor Search Committee

When forming a Pastor Search Committee, the Elders and Deacons will invite members to submit their names (or names of other members) as candidates for a six-member committee. The Elders and Deacons will consider those candidates, as well as others they may identify, based on qualifications, skill sets, experience and willingness/availability to serve. To the extent possible, the Elders and Deacons will select a group that is a representative cross section of the church membership.

Article 9—Selection of Volunteer Pastor/Elders

Section 1—Selection of Volunteer Pastor/Elders

The Elders shall identify men whom they believe meet the qualifications set forth in this document for consideration.

Section 2—Qualifications

Pastor/Elders shall be selected on the basis of qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. In accordance with and in addition to, a Volunteer Pastor/Elder shall:

- Be an adult male.
- Be a member of this church for at least one year before being considered for the office.
- Seek and be responsive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, exercising faith and wisdom in his judgments.
- Understand and support the gospel of Christ, the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, the CBC Core Beliefs and CBC Church Covenant.
- Handle his financial, social and moral affairs in an upright manner and his conduct shall be above reproach.
- Be the husband of one wife.
- Support the church with tithes as taught in the Scriptures.

Section 3—Election Process

Using Acts 20:28 as our scripture guidance, the current Elders shall review and pray over those identified and shall approach those whom they determine meet the stated qualifications.

Those men who are determined to meet the qualifications of an Elder will be asked if they would consider the position. They will be asked to review, pray over and affirm they believe they meet the qualifications of an Elder as set forth in this document.

Men who feel called will be interviewed by a six-member Ordination Council. The council will examine the candidate through theological questioning to affirm his calling and aptitude to serve as an Elder. The council will be composed of current ordained Elders from Central Baptist, as well as other ordained pastors serving in the SBC. Following the meeting with the candidate, the council will report to the church with its recommendation on the candidate's ordination as a Pastor/Elder.

As the final step to select a particular Pastor/Elder, the Elders will arrange a time for church members to visit with the prospective candidate and to vote on his appointment at a

359 called meeting. The membership shall be notified of the meeting and its purpose at least one
360 week in advance. The Pastor/Elder shall be elected by secret ballot by a two-thirds affirmative
361 vote of the members comprising the quorum. Ballots shall be collected and counted by the
362 Deacons. Once elected by the membership, the candidate will be formally ordained as a
363 Pastor/Elder in a special ordination service.

364 A man can become an Elder by being ordained by this church or by transfer from
365 another Southern Baptist Church. Transfer Elders approved by the Elder Body shall be
366 recommended to the church membership for approval.

367
368 Section 4—Removal of Pastor/Elders

369 Any Volunteer Pastor/Elder may be removed from office at any meeting of the Elders if
370 he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to
371 pertinent Scripture, including 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9), after thorough corroborating
372 investigation by the Elders, in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture,
373 including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19.

374 Once the Elders reach a decision to remove a Pastor/Elder, that recommendation will be
375 taken to the CBC membership at a stated meeting and will require approval of two-thirds of the
376 members at that meeting (provided there is a quorum).

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379 **Article 10—Selection of Deacons**

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381 Section 1—Chairman of the Body

382 The Chairman of the Body shall be chosen from among the Deacons. He shall, when
383 present, preside at all meetings of the Deacon Body. He shall, in general, perform all duties
384 incident to the office of Chairman of the Body and such other duties as may be assigned to him
385 by the Deacon Body.

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387 Section 2—Qualifications for Deacons

388 Deacons shall be selected on the basis of qualifications outlined in Acts 6:3 and in 1 Timothy
389 3:8-13. In addition, the following specific qualifications apply:

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- A Deacon shall be an adult male.
- A Deacon must be a member of this church for at least one year before being considered for the office.
- A Deacon shall seek and be responsive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, exercising faith and wisdom in his judgments.
- A Deacon shall understand and support the gospel of Christ, the Baptist Faith and Message, the CBC Core Beliefs and CBC Church Covenant.
- A Deacon shall handle his financial, social and moral affairs in an upright manner and his conduct shall be above reproach.
- A Deacon shall be the husband of one wife.
- A Deacon shall support the church with tithes as taught in the Scriptures.

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403 Section 3—Election Process

404 The Elders and Deacons shall identify men whom they believe meet the qualifications
405 set forth in this document for consideration.

406 Using Acts 20:28 as our scripture guidance, the current Elders and Deacons shall review
407 and pray over all those identified and shall approach those whom they determine meet the
408 qualifications set forth in this document.

409 Those men who are determined to meet the qualifications of a Deacon will be asked if
410 they would consider the position. They will be asked to review, pray over and affirm they
411 believe they meet the qualifications of a Deacon as set forth in this document. They will be
412 interviewed at length and if, after the interview, they still aspire to the position and if the present
413 Elders and Deacons still believe they meet the qualifications set forth in this document, they will
414 be presented to the congregation as candidates for the position.

415 The members of Central Baptist Church will have the opportunity to meet with the
416 current Deacons to voice any concerns or objections to any man nominated, based on biblical
417 qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy and Titus. It is the members' responsibility to make an
418 appointment with the office administration in order to meet with the Deacons in such cases.

419 The Elders and Deacons shall reach consensus on the recommendation of any new
420 Deacon in accordance with these bylaws. This recommendation shall be made after the above
421 provisions have been satisfied and the candidates have been carefully examined, interviewed
422 and prayerfully considered. The Elders and Deacons will then present recommended candidates
423 at a business meeting for election by CBC's membership.

424 A man can become a Deacon by being ordained by this church or by being a transfer
425 Deacon from another Southern Baptist Church. Transfer Deacons approved by the Elders and
426 Deacon Body shall be recommended to the church for approval.

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428
429 Section 4—Removal of Deacons

430 Any Deacon may be removed from office at any meeting of the Elders and Deacon
431 Body if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified
432 (according to pertinent Scripture, including 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9), after thorough
433 corroborating investigation by the Elders and Deacons, in accord with the procedures prescribed
434 by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19.

435 Once the Elders and Deacons reach a decision to remove a Deacon, that
436 recommendation will be taken to the CBC membership at a stated meeting and will require
437 approval of two-thirds of the members at that meeting (provided there is a quorum).

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440 **Article 11—Church Financial Operations**

441 Section 1—Fiscal Year

442 The fiscal year of the Church shall be fixed by resolution of Elders and Deacons.

443 Section 2—Financial Support

444 This church shall be financed solely through tithes, love offerings and gifts.

445
446 Section 3—Unified Budget

447 A unified budget includes all accounts that are financed by undesignated receipts and
448 usually referred to as the General Fund.

449 Section 4—Handling of Funds

450 Funds for any and all purposes shall be handled through the Office Manager, in
451 conjunction with the Deacons.

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Section 5--Special Funds

All appeals for special funds not provided for in the unified budget shall require approval of the Senior Pastor and Elder Body with the exception of:

- The Lottie Moon offering supporting the work of the International Mission Board.
- The Annie Armstrong offering supporting the work of the North American Mission Board.
- Gideon Bible Ministry.
- World Hunger and Associational Offerings.
- Ray Roberts State Missions Offering.

All contributions designated for a specific purpose shall be used only for that purpose, unless there are surplus funds contributed for the project, or the Elders determine the project is no longer needed as part of CBC's ministries. While the church reserves the right to reallocate unused designated funds, a reasonable effort will be made by the Elders to consult with the original donor regarding the change and the reasons for the decision.

Section 6—Audit of Church Finances

The Elders and Deacons, at their discretion, shall periodically convene a committee to conduct either: (1) a full audit; or (2) a less-comprehensive review, of the church finances. The committee shall be composed of six members, including the Central Baptist Office Manager, a representative from the Deacon Body, three additional CBC members and an external (non-member) accountant.

In concert with the Office Manager, the Elders and Deacons will select the participating accountant. The Elders and Deacons also will invite members to submit their names (or names of other members) as candidates for the committee. The Elders and Deacons will consider those candidates, as well as others they may identify, based on qualifications, skill sets, experience and willingness/availability to serve. To the extent possible, the committee shall represent a cross section of the church membership.

Upon the conclusion of the audit/review, the committee will submit a summary of its report to the Elders, Deacons and congregation at an informational meeting.

Section 7—Contracts

The Elders may authorize any staff member to enter into any contract and to execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of Central Baptist Church; and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

Section 8—Loans

No loan shall be contracted on behalf of the church and no evidences of indebtedness shall be issued in its name unless authority is specifically given by a resolution of the Elders and Deacons and approved by the church's active members. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

Section 9—Checks, Drafts, etc.

All checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the church shall be signed only by those individuals authorized by the Deacon Body.

502 Section 10--Deposits

503 All funds of the church employed shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of
504 the church in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the Elder Body and Deacon
505 Body may select.

506
507 **Article 12—Leadership Handbook**

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509 Central Baptist’s *Leadership Handbook* provides more details on the policies,
510 procedures and day-to-day operations of the church. The Elders are empowered to review and
511 adopt any proposed changes/updates to the handbook, as long as those revisions are consistent
512 with the principles set forth in the CBC Constitution. When changes are made, the Elders will
513 update the CBC members at an informational meeting as they issue a revised edition of the
514 handbook.

515
516 **Article 13—Use of Church Facilities**

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518 Section 1--Purpose Statement

519 The church’s facilities are provided through God’s benevolence and by the sacrificial
520 generosity of church members. The church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of
521 the Body of Christ and to bring God glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the
522 public, we make our facilities available to approved non-members as a witness to our faith, in a
523 spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in
524 practice.

525 But facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or
526 advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church’s faith or moral teachings, which are
527 summarized in, among other places, the church’s constitution. Nor may church facilities be used
528 for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the church’s faith or moral
529 teachings. The Elders, or their official designees, are the final decision-makers concerning use
530 of church facilities.

531 Our policy for use of the Central Baptist Fellowship Hall is detailed in the Central
532 Baptist *Leadership Handbook*.

533
534
535 **Article 14--Amendments**

536
537 Section 1—Procedure

538 This constitution may be amended or repealed, and a new constitution may be adopted,
539 by a vote of the church members at a scheduled informational meeting. Any meeting at which
540 the constitution is amended or repealed must be preceded by notice given in accordance with
541 Article 6, Section 2. The notice shall be accompanied by a copy or summary of the amendment
542 or state the general nature of the amendment.

543 **APPENDICES**

544 **Appendix A:**

545 **THE BAPTIST FAITH & MESSAGE 2000**

546 **I. The Scriptures**

547 The Holy Bible was written by men who were divinely influenced. The Holy Bible is
548 God's explaining Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine teaching. God is the
549 author. Salvation is its purpose. Truth, without any mistakes, is its substance. For these
550 reasons, all Scripture is completely true. All Scripture is completely correct. It tells the
551 main beliefs that God uses to judge us. It is the true center of Christianity. It will remain
552 the center of Christianity until the end of the world. It is the most excellent ideal. It is
553 with this ideal that all human behavior, all statements of belief, and all religious
554 opinions should be tested. All Scripture is proof of the Christ. Christ is the center of
555 divine revelation.

556 Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10;
557 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18;
558 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans
559 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

560 **II. God**

561 There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and
562 personal Being. He is the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God
563 is never-ending in purity. God is perfect. God is all powerful. God is all knowing. He
564 knows about all things in the past, present, and future. He knows about all of the future
565 decisions that His free created beings will make. To Him we owe the highest love,
566 respect, and obedience. The never-ending God shows Himself to us as Father, Son, and
567 Holy Spirit. These three have separate personal characteristics. There is no difference in
568 their nature, essence, or being.

569 **A. God the Father**

570 God as Father rules with kind care over His universe, His creatures, and human history
571 according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful. He is all knowing. He is all
572 loving. He is all wise. God is Father to people who become children of God through
573 faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

574 Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy
575 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10;
576 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-

577 8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6;
578 Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

579 **B. God the Son**

580 Christ is the never-ending Son of God. In His life as Jesus Christ, He was brought into
581 being by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus completely showed and did
582 the will of God. He became a human being with all the stress and needs of human
583 beings. He identified completely with humans. Even though He was human, He had no
584 sin. He respected the divine law. He personally obeyed God. When He died for others
585 on the cross, He made a way for the salvation of men from sin. He was raised from the
586 dead with a glorified body. He appeared to His disciples. They knew that He was the
587 person who was with them before His death on the cross. He went up into heaven. He is
588 now honored at the right hand of God. He is the One Mediator. He is completely God.
589 He is completely man. In Him are God and man brought together. He will return in
590 power and majesty to judge the world. When He returns, He will complete His work of
591 salvation. He now lives in all believers as the living and always present Lord.

592 Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29;
593 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;
594 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-
595 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;
596 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;
597 Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22;
598 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3;
599 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;
600 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

601 **C. God the Holy Spirit**

602 The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit is completely divine. He
603 influenced holy men of Bible times to write the Scriptures. By explanation He allows
604 men to understand truth. He honors Christ. He shows men their sin. He shows men the
605 worthiness of Christ. He shows men their punishment. He calls men to the Saviour. He
606 is the source of rebirth. At the moment of rebirth, He takes every believer into the Body
607 of Christ. He grows believers into mature Christians. He comforts believers. He gives
608 the spiritual gifts to believers. With these gifts, believers can serve God through His
609 church. He keeps the believer safe until the day of the last salvation. His presence in the
610 Christian is the promise that God will make the believer completely like Christ. He
611 explains and gives power to the believer and to the church in worship, evangelism, and
612 service.

613 Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-
614 32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19;

615 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;
616 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
617 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1
618 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2
619 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

620 **III. Man**

621 Man is the special creation of God. Man is made in God's likeness. God created them
622 as male and female. They are the greatest work of His creation. Being made male or
623 female by God is a part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was
624 innocent of sin. He was given the gift of freedom of choice by his Creator. By his free
625 choice man sinned against God. Man brought sin into all people in the entire world.
626 Through the temptation of Satan, man disobeyed the command of God. He lost his
627 original innocence. Now all men inherit a life and a background willing to sin. As a
628 result, as soon as they are able to make right decisions and actions, they become
629 sinners. They are guilty of sin. Only the kindness of God can bring man into His holy
630 fellowship. Only the kindness of God can let man complete the creative purpose of
631 God. The godliness of all people is obvious, because God made man in His own
632 likeness. The godliness of all people is obvious, because Christ died for all men. Now
633 every person of every race should receive respect and Christian love.

634 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
635 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6;
636 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians
637 1:21-22; 3:9- 11.

638 **IV. Salvation**

639 Salvation includes the whole man. Salvation is given to all who accept Jesus Christ as
640 Lord and Saviour. Jesus Christ by His own blood brought never-ending salvation to the
641 believer. Salvation includes being accepted just as you are when you turn from your
642 sin. Salvation includes being set apart for His work. Salvation includes being made to
643 worship God. There is no salvation without personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

644 A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's kindness. Believers become new
645 creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart created by the Holy Spirit. The
646 Holy Spirit shows us our sin. The sinner begins by turning from sin and turning to
647 God. The sinner has faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Turning from sin and turning to
648 God and faith are experiences of God's kindness that are never separated.
649 Repentance is a real turning from sin to God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ
650 and commitment of the whole person to Him as Lord and Saviour.

651 B. Justification is God's kind and complete pardon from sin of all sinners because of

652 His righteousness. All sinners must turn from their sin and turn to God. All sinners
653 must believe in Christ to receive justification. Justification brings the believer into
654 a relationship of peace and approval with God.

655 C. Sanctification is the way a believer is set apart for God's purposes. Sanctification
656 begins with new birth. The believer grows toward moral and spiritual maturity. The
657 believer grows because of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit living in him.
658 Growth should continue throughout the believer's life.

659 D. Glorification is the result of salvation. Glorification is the last blessed condition of
660 the believer. This condition never ends for the believer as he worships God forever
661 in heaven.

662 Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke
663 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
664 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-
665 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;
666 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-
667 16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy
668 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
669 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

670 **V. God's Purpose of Grace**

671 Becoming one of God's children is the caring work of God. He accepts us just as we are.
672 He sets us apart for His work. He wants us to be with Him and to worship Him forever.
673 God's kind plan does not deny the free will of man. God's plan includes all the ways to
674 accomplish this. God's plan is the great evidence of God's most excellent goodness.
675 God's plan is very wise, holy, and cannot be changed. God's plan does not include
676 boasting. God's plan encourages humility.

677 All true believers continue forever. Believers that God has accepted in Christ and set
678 apart for His work by His Spirit will never lose their salvation. They shall continue
679 forever. Believers may sin because of neglect and temptation. Believers grieve the Spirit
680 because they sin. Believers damage their graces and comforts because of sin. Believers
681 bring criticism on the cause of Christ because of sin. Believers bring worldly judgments
682 on themselves because of sin. Even though they may sin, true believers will still be saved
683 by the power of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

684 Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.;
685 Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-
686 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;
687 Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28;
688 Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2

689 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39–12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1
690 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

691 **VI. The Church**

692 A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an independent local congregation
693 of baptized believers. These believers are joined by shared agreement. These believers
694 share in the same faith and fellowship of the gospel. This group of baptized believers
695 observes the two ordinances of Christ. They are guided by His laws. They use the gifts,
696 rights, and privileges given to them by His Word. They are trying to present the gospel
697 to all people on the earth. Each congregation works under the Lordship of Christ by
698 self-governing methods.

699 In this kind of congregation, each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as
700 Lord. The church's scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. Both men and women
701 are given gifts by the Holy Spirit for service in the church. The office of pastor is
702 limited to men that meet the qualifications found in Scripture.

703 The New Testament describes the church as the Body of Christ. This church includes
704 all of the believers from throughout history. These believers come from every people
705 group. They come from every language group. They come from all people from every
706 country.

707 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-
708 30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12;
709 Ephesians 1:22- 23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1
710 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

711 **VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

712 Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the
713 Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience. Baptism is the picture of the
714 believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour. Baptism is a picture of the
715 believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in a new
716 life in Christ Jesus. Baptism shows the believer's faith in the final resurrection of the
717 dead. Baptism is required before church membership. Baptism is also required before
718 taking the Lord's Supper.

719 The Lord's Supper is a picture of obedience. Church members eat the bread and drink
720 the fruit of the vine. They remember the death of the Redeemer. They look forward to
721 His second coming.

722 Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20;
723 John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians
724 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

725 **VIII. The Lord's Day**

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

731 Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36;
732 John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians
733 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

734 **IX. The Kingdom**

735 The Kingdom of God includes His general rule over the universe. The Kingdom of God
736 also includes His rule over men. These men of their own free will accept Him as King.
737 The Kingdom is the area of salvation. Men receive this salvation by having trust like a
738 child and making a commitment like a child to Jesus Christ. Christians should pray and
739 work so that the Kingdom of God may come. Christians should pray and work so that
740 God's will may be done on earth. The Kingdom of God will be complete when Jesus
741 Christ returns to earth again at the end of this time.

742 Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52;
743 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;
744 John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28;
745 Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10;
746 11:15; 21-22.

747 **X. Last Things**

748 God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its right end. In
749 keeping with His promise, Jesus Christ will return to earth in person. He will be seen in
750 all His greatness by all people on the earth. The dead will be raised. Christ will judge
751 all men with honesty. The unworthy will be sent to Hell, the place of never-ending
752 punishment. The worthy, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their
753 reward. They will live forever in Heaven with the Lord.

754 Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark
755 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;
756 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10;

757 Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2
758 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28;
759 James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

760 **XI. Evangelism and Missions**

761 It is the job and honor of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus
762 Christ to try to make disciples of the people from all nations. The new birth of man's
763 spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Winning the lost world to
764 faith in Jesus Christ depends on all believers. Making disciples is a Christian duty for
765 the person who has already accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Making
766 disciples is clearly commanded many times in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus
767 Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every
768 child of God to try always to win the lost to Christ by a spoken witness. The child of
769 God should also present a Christian way of life. The methods used to witness should be
770 in agreement with the gospel of Christ.

771 Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-
772 43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-
773 8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15;
774 Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1
775 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

776 **XII. Education**

777 Christianity is the faith of explanation and intelligence. In Jesus Christ are all the riches
778 of understanding and learning. All good learning is a part of our Christian history. The
779 new birth opens all human abilities. The new birth creates a desire for learning. The
780 reason for education in the Kingdom of Christ is brought together with missions and
781 general kindness to others. These should receive the generous support of the churches.
782 A system of Christian education is necessary for a complete spiritual program for
783 Christ's people.

784 In Christian education, there should be a good balance between educational freedom
785 and educational responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is
786 always incomplete and never final. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school,
787 college, or seminary is controlled by the authority of Jesus Christ. The teacher is
788 controlled by the power of the Scriptures. The teacher is controlled by the obvious
789 purpose for which the school was started and continues.

790 Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.;
791 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2;
792 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians
793 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3;

794 James 1:5; 3:17.

795 **XIII. Stewardship**

796 God is the giver of all earthly and heavenly blessings. God is the giver of all that we
797 have and all that we are. Christians have a spiritual responsibility to the whole world.
798 Christians have a responsibility to share the gospel. Christians have a duty to be good
799 managers of their possessions. They have the responsibility to serve Him with their
800 time, talents, and material possessions. Christians should know that all of these are
801 given to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. The Scriptures say that
802 Christians should give a percentage of their income cheerfully, regularly, carefully, and
803 generously. Christians should give for the progress of the Redeemer's plan on earth.

804 Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-
805 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;
806 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
807 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

808 **XIV. Cooperation**

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

821 Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5;
822 Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14;
823 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9;
824 Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

825 **XV. The Christian and the Social Order**

826 All Christians have a responsibility to try to make the will of Christ first in our own
827 lives and in the world. The ways and methods used to improve society and to create
828 righteousness among men can be very helpful. These changes are helpful only if they
829 come because of the rebirth of the person by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ.

830 Just like Christ, Christians should be against racial discrimination, every form of greed,
831 self-interest, and evil, and all forms of sexual wrongdoing, including adultery,
832 homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for orphans, the poor, the
833 abused, the old, the weak, and the sick. We should speak for the unborn. We should
834 insist on the holiness of all human life from its creation to natural death. Every
835 Christian should try to bring business, government, and all people under the influence
836 of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. To do this Christians should be ready to
837 work with all men of good will in any good cause. Christians should always be careful
838 to act in love without giving up their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

839 Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8;
840 Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21;
841 Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1Corinthians 5:9-
842 10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-
843 17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

844 **XVI. Peace and War**

845 It is the duty of Christians to try to find peace with all men. In keeping with the
846 character and teachings of Christ, Christians should do everything they can to put an
847 end to war.

848 The true solution for war is the gospel of our Lord. The first need of the world is to
849 accept His teachings in all the actions of men and nations. The world needs to apply His
850 law of love to everything they do. Christian people all over the world should pray for
851 the time to come when the Prince of Peace will be in control.

852 Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36, 38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7;
853 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

854 **XVII. Religious Liberty**

855 God alone is Lord of what is right and wrong. Man's sense of what is right and wrong
856 is free from the rules and commandments of men. These rules and commandments may
857 be different from His Word. They may not be found in His Word. Church and state
858 should be separate. The state owes protection to every church. The state owes complete
859 freedom to every church in seeking spiritual matters. In giving this freedom, no
860 religious group or denomination should be given any special treatment by the state. The
861 national government was planned by God. It is the duty of Christians to give faithful
862 obedience in all things that are not against the known will of God. The church should
863 not expect the national government to do its work. The gospel of Christ considers only
864 spiritual methods to reach its purposes. The state has no right to require punishment for
865 religious beliefs of any kind. The state has no right to require taxes for the support of
866 any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal. This suggests

867 the right of free communication with God by all men. This also suggests the right to
868 start and spread religious opinions without trouble from the government.

869 Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans
870 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter
871 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

872 **XVIII. The Family**

873 God has planned the family as the first institution of the world. It is made up of persons
874 joined to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

875 Marriage is the joining of one man and one woman with the promise of being faithful to
876 one another for a lifetime. Marriage is God's special gift. Marriage shows the union
877 between Christ and His church. Marriage gives the man and the woman the way for
878 intimate friendship. Marriage is the way of sexual expression according to the main
879 beliefs in the Bible. Marriage is the way for increasing of the human race.

880 The husband and wife are of the same worth before God. Both are created in God's
881 likeness. The marriage relationship shows the way God relates to His people. A
882 husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given duty to
883 provide for, to protect, and to guide his family. A wife is to submit herself with
884 kindness to the servant leadership of her husband. A wife submits just as the church
885 willingly submits to the leadership of Christ. She is made in the likeness of God. Her
886 husband is also made in the likeness of God. This makes the wife and husband equals.
887 She has the God-given duty respect her husband. She is to serve as his helper in running
888 the household and supporting the next generation.

889 Children, from the moment of creation, are a blessing and inheritance from the Lord.
890 Parents are to show to their children God's example for marriage. Parents are to teach
891 their children spiritual and right values. Parents are to guide their children to make
892 choices based on truths in the Bible. Parents are to guide their children by living a life
893 faithful to God. Parents are to guide their children with loving discipline. Children are
894 to respect and obey their parents.

895 Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1
896 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-
897 22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31;
898 Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-
899 12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-
900 21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.