

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

Having been led by the Spirit of God and embracing the Word of God as our final authority for faith and practice, we solemnly set forth and willingly agree to be governed by this Constitution with its By-Laws for the orderly performance of the work of God to His eternal glory and praise.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this church shall be **Faith Family Fellowship**. Presently located at 1002 Bushkill Center Road in Nazareth, Pennsylvania and incorporated under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania, effective May 13, 2013.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The **purpose Faith Family Fellowship** has been established and exists is:

To **Glorify God** by fulfilling the **Great Commandment** (Matthew 22:36-40), the **Great Commitment** (Mk.10:43-45) and the **Great Commission** (Matthew 28:18-20). It shall seek to attain this through:

- the **Exaltation of God** by praising His Name through corporate worship;
- the **Edification of Christian believers** by promoting spiritual growth through education, the use of spiritual gifts, service, giving and fellowship; and
- the **Evangelization of unbelievers** by proclaiming the Gospel of Christ through local outreach and missionary endeavors.

ARTICLE III – DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

1. **Who is GOD?** – We believe that an All-Powerful and All-Knowing Creator exists Who precedes time and cannot be confined within space. Though inexplicable, this singular God exists in three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He devised a Plan in eternity past that included the Creation of mankind and His desire to establish an intimate and eternal relationship with Him.
2. **Who is MAN?** – We believe that God created mankind in His image, both male and female; but everyone has broken His moral law, what we familiarly know as “sin”. Consequently, every person is separated from God and cannot enjoy the intimate and eternal relationship with Him that He so desires.
3. **What is the BIBLE?** – We believe that God took the initiative to reach out to mankind in the hope of restoring that broken relationship. He did this by putting His Will and Words into human minds who then scripted them within 66 separate books, collectively called the Bible. In simplest terms, it is His love letter to mankind, revealing how anyone can enjoy a reconciled relationship with Him. Further, from a careful study of this Book, we can discover answers to many of the perplexing questions we routinely face throughout the various stages of our lives.

4. **Who is JESUS?** – We believe that Jesus is God the Son Who came to earth 2,000 years ago to give mankind an up-close-and-personal glimpse of God. But more significantly, He came to mend the breach that separates people from God. He did this by dying on Calvary’s cross in order to pay the incalculable price incurred by all men’s sins throughout history. In His life, He taught us how to live; but in His death, He prepared us to die so that we can really live –_eternally – and with Him.
5. **What is SALVATION?** – We believe that anyone can be restored to this intimate and eternal relationship with God when he/she trusts that Jesus died on the cross. This sacrifice satisfied the Perfect Justice of the Perfectly Holy God Who cannot tolerate sin in His Presence. But the person must also believe that Jesus rose from the dead as the confirmation that the payment was sufficient. Belief in these two historic events alone secure reconciliation with God. Relying on one’s own religious heritage and/or good works and/or religious rituals can never attain the perfection God requires to appease His hatred for men’s sins.
6. **Who is the HOLY SPIRIT?** – We believe that God the Holy Spirit transforms people who have given their lives to Jesus so they can reflect His righteous character. Further, the Holy Spirit brings a superior quality to life here and now while preserving the prospect of a blissful eternity in Heaven!
7. **What is the CHURCH?** – We believe that the Church is the collection of transformed people (called “Christians”) who strive to encourage each other to please God in everything they do. These rejuvenated people serve to worship God, build each other up spiritually and represent Jesus to a world that desperately needs to know His Love for it.
8. **How should Christians LIVE?** – We believe that though Christians still sin in their daily experience, they must strive in their conduct to reflect the character of Jesus; that they should be faithful stewards of the spiritual gifts, talents and possessions God has given them; and that they should faithfully testify to the gospel.
9. **Where is HISTORY Headed?** – We believe that one future day God will conclude His Plan for human history. He will set up a Universal Kingdom on earth where Jesus will reign and all who have given their lives to Him will share in His Rule. When this comes about, the current intimate relationship we now have with Him will be fully and eternally realized.

10. Moral Issues

Faith Family Fellowship resolutely and unshakably believes in the authority of Scripture and its faithful witness to God's purposes for all mankind, our church membership believes the following:

- A. Abortion – We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn is a living human creation/being. Therefore, abortion at any stage of pregnancy, is murder. Psalm 139:13-16
- B. Sexuality - God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as either male or female. These two distinct, yet complementary sexes together reflect the image and

nature of the Triune God. To reject one's biological sex at any time throughout one's lifetime constitutes a rejection of God's will, purpose, plan and glory for his/her life. Any form of sexual immorality (including premarital sex, adultery, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, incest, sex alteration, bestiality and even pornography) is sinful and contrary to God's plan and purpose for one's life and thus cannot enjoy His Blessing. Furthermore, sexual intimacy, one of God's most beautiful expressions of marital love and commitment, is preserved for one's mate only for purposes of mutual pleasure and procreation.

Genesis 1:26-27

- C. Marriage - God created and sanctified "*marriage*". Accordingly, it has but one meaning, the joining together of one man (defined as one who is biologically male at his birth) and one woman (defined as one who is biologically female at her birth.) This is an exclusive and God ordained covenant and a legally-binding, and state-sanctioned union. Thus, **FFF** cannot advise its legitimizing and therefore will not bless any same-sex marriage, nor the ordination of persons involved in such unions. Genesis 2:24
- D. In order to preserve the function and integrity of **FFF** as a local Body of Christ in Bushkill Township, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the surrounding communities, all persons employed by our church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, must agree with this "Moral Issues Policy " and strive to conduct themselves accordingly. **FFF** believes God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. All **FFF** members minister graciously and sensitively to all persons irrespective of their sexual behaviors or orientation. Every person should be treated with love, kindness, compassion, respect, and dignity as fellow persons created in God's Image.

ARTICLE IV - CHURCH MEMBERS' COVENANT

We confess that we are an unspeakably blessed people because by God's grace we have come to trust Jesus Christ and Him only for our salvation. Therefore we have declared our union with Him as well as our desire to live like Him by the help and power of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, we affirm in His presence our mutual desire to live and serve according to the duties of this Covenant:

- to love our families, by providing them the time and attention they need, while leading them in the Word of God and living before them the Person of Jesus.
- to faithfully pray for one another;

- to faithfully study the Scriptures with the intent that they become the pattern for our thoughts, attitudes, words and actions;
- to regularly worship and serve God together with this fellowship of believers;
- to regularly observe the two ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper;
- to regularly give in proportion to God's blessing upon our individual lives in supporting the financial needs of this church;
- to strive in obeying the paramount commands of the Great Commandment, the Great Commitment and the Great Commission;
- to routinely witness to the love, grace, mercy and power of Jesus Christ in our lives;
- to highly value all people, from conception to death, giving special attention and care to our brothers and sisters in Christ as well as to "orphans and widows needing assistance";
- to strive in protecting the bond of peace that unites this assembly by insisting on unity in Christian essentials, allowing for liberty in disputed beliefs and abiding by charity in all things;
- to humbly submit with honor to the authority of our leaders so long as they reflect the character of Christ and submit to His Authority as the Head of this church;
- to submit to the internal promptings of the Holy Spirit to say and do all that He wants.

ARTICLE V - GOVERNMENT

The government of Faith Family Fellowship is wholly vested in its membership. As such, we are not subject to the control of any external or ecclesiastical body, but recognize and sustain the biblical duty to support other churches of like-faith through prayer and joint ministry efforts, irrespective of denominational affiliation.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS

The officers of this church are **Elders** and **Deacons**. Whereas the Bible lists the necessary qualifications to serve on these two boards, the By-Laws outline their individual job descriptions. Essentially, the Elders are vested with the ultimate authority to lead this church, whereas the Deacons serve the church family by assisting the Elders in matters they request.

ARTICLE VII - MEMBERSHIP

Any person who shows **evidence of trust** in Jesus Christ as his/her personal Savior and Lord and agrees with our **Doctrinal Statement** (Article III), and who can support our **Members' Statement of Responsibility** (Article IV) and agree to abide by our **By-Laws** is eligible for membership.

ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS

The meetings for worship, prayer, praise, fellowship, Bible study, business and other purposes are set forth in the By-Laws.

ARTICLE IX - AFFILIATION

This church is an **independent, non-denominational church** that **self-governs** under the leadership of the Elders and affirmed by the agreement of the church membership.

ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS

This Constitution with its By-Laws may be amended in accordance with the provisions as set forth in the By-Laws (Article XI).

ARTICLE XI – PROPERTY AND DISSOLUTION

All property of this church shall remain in the control of its members and in the custody of the Elders and Deacons. No part of its net earnings or assets' distribution shall ever benefit any donor, member, staff, or officer. Upon dissolution, any net assets will be distributed to a church or ministry of like faith and practice.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Reception of Members:

1. **By Protocol:** Any person attending and participating in the life of Faith Family Fellowship for a period of 3 or more months may be received into membership after fulfilling these provisions:
 - a. Agrees with and states one's willingness to adhere to the Church Constitution and By-Laws, by reviewing with the pastor
 - b. Testifies to one's personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior in the presence of the pastor and elder(s), in the fellowship hall, or to the congregation.
 - c. If not already baptized, be baptized at the earliest possible time
 - d. Is approved by an unanimous decision of the Elder Board; and
 - e. Receives the right hand of fellowship and is welcomed into the church family at the next convenient public worship service of the church.
2. **By Restoration:** Any former member having been placed under church discipline may be welcomed back into membership after fulfilling these provisions:
 - a. Meets with the Elder Board to confess the sin that led to the discipline;
 - b. Demonstrates satisfactory evidence of repentance by sustaining a consistent Christian life before the rest of the church family; and

- c. Receives the right hand of fellowship and is welcomed back into the church family at the next convenient public worship service of the church.

Section 2 – Dismissal from Membership:

1. For Reasons of Sin:

- a. **Public Sin:** Any member performing any sin that harms the testimony of Jesus Christ and His Church will be subject to church discipline.
- b. **False Doctrine:** Any member propagating unscriptural doctrines that threaten the Scriptural integrity of this church will be subject to church discipline.
- c. **Church Conflict:** Any member promoting strife by gossip or false accusation that threatens to divide this church family will be subject to church discipline.

2. Protocol for Dismissal:

- a. The Pastor/Elder Board will insist that the biblical model of church discipline be fairly exercised within the church family (Matthew 18:15-27), always for the purpose of restoration:
- b. Any and all offended church members are instructed to lovingly confront the offending person. If repentance occurs, the person will be treated with respect and confidentiality. If repentance does not occur within a reasonable timeframe:
- c. The Pastor/Elder Board will arrange a meeting with the accused person to afford him/her the opportunity to offer a defense with the intent to determine degree of culpability. If guilt is determined, but repentance occurs at this point, then the person will be treated with respect and confidentiality. But if repentance does not occur within a reasonable timeframe:
- d. The Pastor, or member of the Elder board if no pastor available, will inform the church family to withdraw from fellowshiping with the offending person, while making his/her restoration a matter of daily intercession. No specific details of the sin committed will be shared.
- e. The disciplined person will be encouraged to attend worship services, but will be denied The Lord's Table and any ministry opportunities. If repentance occurs sometime after this point, then the instruction provided in the By-Laws under Article 1, Section 1b applies.

3. Restoration to Membership: Upon repentance at any stage of the discipline process,

- a. All persons knowing the situation are instructed to welcome the sinner back with forgiveness, respect and the strictest confidence.
- b. The once-guilty person is encouraged to place him/herself under some accountability with the church leadership so that he/she enjoys some protective barriers from the sin being repeated.

Section 3 – Termination of Membership:

1. **By Request:** Upon written request by any church member, his/her name will be removed from the membership roll.
2. **By Joining Another Church:** Should a church member unite with another local church, his/her name will be removed from the membership roll.
3. **By Relocation:** Should a church member move beyond the range to maintain a consistent testimony with this church, his/her name will be removed from the membership roll.
4. **By Inactivity:** Should a church member stop supporting this church as evidenced by his/her absence and lack of participation in church-related functions for a period of 6 months, his/her name will be removed from the membership roll.
5. **By Death:** Upon the death of any church member, his/her name will be removed from the membership roll.

Section 4 – Standing:

1. **Good Standing:** Any member faithfully fulfilling his responsibilities to attend the various church services, adhere to the doctrines as listed in the Church Constitution, participate in the ordinances and contribute regularly and cheerfully to sustain this church's witness in the greater community will be considered in "Good Standing".
2. **Change of Standing:** If a church member in Good Standing shows evidence of failing to fulfill his/her responsibilities, an Elder will arrange to meet with this person in an effort to encourage him/her to fully recommit to his/her original intention when aligning with this church.

ARTICLE II – CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Section 1 – Officers:

1. **Elders:** Though the Elders are vested with the primary duty to rule the church, they come under the Headship of the "*Great Shepherd of the Sheep*", the Lord Jesus and are to lead as Servants.
 - a. **Role:**
 - 1) An **experienced leader** (*presbuteros*): This word simply means "*advanced in age*", but signals those who preside over local churches. While no specific age is given, the term **emphasizes the character** of the elder, thereby affirming the depth of his maturity, dignity, experience and honor.
 - 2) An **overseer** (*episkopos*): This word literally means to "*oversee*" and as such **emphasizes the functions** of the elder. It signals his overall authority and superintendence of the church, and as such, he rules, manages and directs the affairs of the church family.

- 3) A **shepherd** (poimen): This word simply means “*shepherd*”. The term **emphasizes the heart attitude** of the elder as one who cares, feeds, guides and protects his flock.

b. Qualifications: To serve as an elder, a man must already evidence a:

- 1) Sincere desire to serve as an elder (1 Timothy 3:1b) based on an inner calling from the Holy Spirit;
- 2) Routine practice in the private disciplines of Bible reading and meditation, prayer and fasting;
- 3) Routine practice in the public disciplines of worship, fellowship, service and evangelism;
- 4) Comprehensive knowledge of the Bible with a clear indication that it directs his personal and public life;
- 5) Core understanding of Biblical Theology, including the Authority of the Bible, the Sovereignty of God, the sinfulness of man, the Full Deity and Humanity of Jesus, the Salvation He provided and the victorious Christian life made possible only by a moment-by-moment reliance on the Holy Spirit;
- 6) Blameless character that matches the “elder” requirements as spelled out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9;
- 7) Sustained support of the vision and leadership of the church; and
- 8) Proven track record of a lifestyle characterized by a deep love for Christ and a self-denying and grace-filled service to others.

c. Calling:

- 1) Any church member may recommend a man to serve on the Elder Board. He must receive a unanimous vote of the existing Elder Board before being presented to the congregation as a candidate.
- 2) The Elders will announce its list of Elder candidates at least thirty (30) days before the election.
- 3) If any church member has a valid Biblical objection to the candidate’s nomination, he/she should meet confidentially with the Elder Board before his appointment to disclose the reason/s for such objection.
- 4) All candidates will require a three-quarter (3/4) majority vote cast by the church members.
- 5) Every elder will require an annual “Vote of Confidence” at the time of the Annual Business Meeting to continue serving on the Elder Board.
- 6) The length of an Elder’s service on the Board is not fixed, but will be annually reviewable by the Board itself and the congregation.

d. Duties:

- 1) Actively participate in the Leadership Development class before assuming the role of an elder;

- 2) Faithfully pray for and with the church family and specific church members, revealing one's personal conviction of the essential nature of prayer while cultivating a corporate culture for prayer;
- 3) Publicly champion the vision, direction and leadership of the church;
- 4) Routinely encourage and support the pastoral staff by praying for them, providing Biblical counsel to them, affirming them before the congregation and holding them accountable for their duties;
- 5) Routinely encourage the church family to do ministry with excellence, equipping the people by affirming their spiritual gifts and talents, and by identifying ministry opportunities, setting boundaries and correcting misalignments;
- 6) Lovingly serve as the primary shepherd for an assigned portion of the congregation;
- 7) Willingly assist in the administration of the sacraments;
- 8) Gracefully visit the shut-ins, the elderly, the sick and the discouraged to encourage them in and through their trial;
- 9) Creatively build and protect Godly relationships so that this church lives up to its middle name of "Family", employing the Biblical guidelines for discipline only when necessary;
- 10) Carefully guard the church family from false teaching and teachers; and
- 11) Transparently hold oneself accountable to one's fellow elders privately and the entire church family publicly in areas of doctrine, biblical teachings, Board responsibilities and personal conduct.

2. **Deacons:** Though not vested with ultimate authority, the Deacons are to be equally respected as the Elders under whom they serve because the biblical qualifications are equally demanding.

- a. **Role:** The word for **Deacon/ess** (*diakonos*) simply means "a servant". As such, they serve as Servant Leaders under the direction of the Elders.
- b. **Qualifications:** To serve as a deacon/ess, a man/woman must already evidence a:
 - 1) Sustained life of spiritual commitment, exemplary character, compassionate spirit, and sound judgment;
 - 2) Routine practice in the public disciplines of worship, fellowship, service and evangelism;
 - 3) Blameless character that matches the "deacon" requirements as spelled out in 1 Timothy 3:8-13;
 - 4) Sustained support of the vision and leadership of the church; and

- 5) Proven track record of a lifestyle characterized by a deep love for Christ and a self-denying and grace-filled service to others.

c. Calling:

- 1) Any church member may recommend a man to serve on the Deacon Board. He/She must receive a unanimous vote of the Elder Board before being presented to the congregation as a candidate.
- 2) The Elders will announce its list of Deacon Candidates at least thirty (30) days before the election.
- 3) If any church member has a valid Biblical objection to the candidate's nomination, he/she should meet confidentially with the Elder Board before his appointment to disclose the reason/s for such objection.
- 4) All candidates will require a three-quarter (3/4) majority vote cast of the church members.
- 5) Every deacon will require an annual "Vote of Confidence" at the time of the Annual Business Meeting to continue serving on the Deacon Board.
- 6) The length of a Deacon's service on the Board is not fixed, but will be annually reviewable by the Deacon and Elder Boards themselves and the congregation.

d. Duties:

- 1) Actively participate in the Leadership Development class before assuming the role of a deacon/ess;
- 2) Publicly champion the vision, direction and leadership of the church;
- 3) Willingly support and/or assist the Elders in the practical matters of service by:
 - a) visiting church families in meeting financial, food and/or property needs;
 - b) expressing compassion towards the poor, widowed, orphaned and foreigner through practical expressions of care;
 - c) visiting shut-ins, the elderly, the sick and the discouraged;
- 4) Prayerfully manage the stewardship of the congregation's contributions with integrity; and
- 5) Properly supervise, maintain, repair and expand any property owned or rented by the church.
- 6) Transparently hold oneself accountable to one's fellow deacons and the Elder Board privately and the entire church family publicly in areas of Board responsibilities and personal conduct.

Section 2 – Staff:

1. Pastors:

- a. Qualifications:** All Pastors shall meet the qualifications for an Elder in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He shall have a reputation for living a Godly and Christian lifestyle. He shall give evidence of God's calling to this ministry. He shall be in complete harmony with the Doctrine and Covenant of this church, and be willing to abide by the Church Constitution and By-Laws.
- b. Duties:**
 - 1) Senior Pastor:** He shall be a male minister and church elder who oversees the day-to-day operations of the church and the rest of the staff. His primary duty is to preach God's Word with relevance and practical application to today's world such that he equips the church family to be God's ministers in the world.
 - 2) Other Pastors:** Other pastors may be called to serve as needs arise. These positions may or may not be salaried services.
- c. Accountability:** All pastors will be directly accountable to the Elder Board, but minister to the entire church family as Servant Leaders with Christ-like integrity.
- d. Calling:** As particular leadership needs arise, the Elder Board will select a Pulpit Committee from among the members of the church family. It will evaluate and interview prospective candidates and pray for the Holy Spirit's direction. It will then recommend to the Elder Board but one candidate at a time. The Elder Board will accept or reject the committee's nomination. Upon acceptance, the Elder Board will call a special business meeting so the congregation can ask questions of the candidate. A call will be extended to the candidate upon a three-quarters written-ballot vote of the members present.
- e. Term of Office:** All Pastors will serve for an indefinite period of time. They will be reviewed annually by the Elder Board, allowing for congregational input. The purpose of this review is constructive and unifying and will be conducted in a way to affirm one's calling, build confidence, sharpen skills and examine the current direction of the church.
- f. Salary:** Any salary package will be determined by a joint decision of the Elder and Deacon Boards. The Deacons will review the salary package annually and make recommendation to the Elders and eventually to the church family for any modifications. The Senior Pastor and all unpaid pastoral staff will be afforded four (4) weeks of annual vacation time with full salary. All other pastoral staff will be afforded a minimum of 2 weeks vacation time.
- g. Termination:** The Elder Board will regularly review all pastoral staff and may recommend to the church family the release of any pastor at any time for failing to fulfill his/her specified duties. A fair and reasonable severance package, including a timeframe and compensation, will be agreed upon by the Elder Board and departing pastor.

2. **Support Staff:** The Elder and Deacon Boards will jointly recommend to the church family all support staff positions as different needs arise. These may or may not be salaried positions.
 - a. **Secretary:** This person will be responsible to represent this church in a Christ-like manner as he/she often serves as the contact person with the greater community. He/She will manage the church office and fulfill all duties as determined by and be directly accountable to the Senior Pastor for day-to-day operations and the Deacon Board for job performance.
 - b. **Janitor:** This person will maintain a clean and presentable facility and perform such other duties as determined by and be accountable to the Deacon Board.
 - c. **Other Staff:** Any additional staff may be “hired” as determined by the joint decision of the Elder and Deacon Boards. Their accountability will be determined upon “hire”.

Section 3 – Other Personnel:

1. **Church Clerk:** The duties of this service are as follows. He/She:
 - a. will be appointed by the Elders to serve for an undetermined period of time;
 - b. will record the minutes of all church business meetings; and
 - c. will maintain a current membership list. (In the absence of the Church Clerk at a business meeting, the Moderator will appoint a church member to record the minutes.)
2. **Treasurer:** The duties of this service are as follows. He/She:
 - a. will be appointed by the Deacon Board to serve for an undetermined period of time;
 - b. may or may not be a Deacon, but should strive to attend all Deacon Board meetings;
 - c. will record all monies received by the church and disburse them as directed by the Deacon Board;
 - d. will deposit weekly all monies received;
 - e. will present an annual financial report to the church family at the Annual Business Meeting;
 - f. distribute to each registered contributor a statement of his/her personal offerings; and
 - g. will maintain his/her bookkeeping current and open for inspection by either the Board of Deacons or Elders at all times.

Section 5 – Vacancies: The Elder Board maintains the authority to fill any vacancies that occur during the year.

Section 6 – Creating New Offices: The Elder Board may approve the creation of any new offices as the need for such arises.

ARTICLE III – APPOINTMENTS

Section 1 – Special Committees: The Elder Board may at any time appoint church members in Good Standing to Special Committees that are formed to address specific needs that arise and for only such a length of time as the need continues.

Section 2 – Church Representatives: The Elder Board may at any time appoint church members in Good Standing to represent the church at functions determined at the time of appointment.

ARTICLE IV – CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1 – Creation: The church may create such organizations as are needed to minister to the different age groups and varied interests of its members. Their formation will be consistent with the Church Constitution, presented to the Elder Board with a concisely-stated purpose and plan for its approval and subject to its oversight.

Section 2 – Preservation: Any new organization will be encouraged to adopt an Operational Plan, approved by the Elder Board that specifically defines its purpose, protocol and functions in greater detail.

Section 3 – Dissolution: The church, with the Elder Boards permission, may dissolve any organization that no longer addresses a specific need within the church.

ARTICLE V – CHURCH COMMITTEES

Section 1 – Steering Committee:

1. **Composition:** This committee will be composed of no set number of church members in Good Standing, approved by the Elder Board, who have evidenced their personal commitment to the Lord's Mission of this church and wish to ensure its preservation and refinement.
2. **Term:** Committee members will serve as long as they desire so long as they remain in Good Standing and are fulfilling their committee duties.
3. **Duties:** This committee will:
 - a. create a Mission strategy that reinforces our commitment to the Great Commandment, the Great Commitment and the Great Commission;
 - b. meet at least quarterly to refine the Church's Vision; and
 - c. draft the 3-month and six-month calendars to ensure our plans are accomplishing our purposes.

Section 2 – Missions Committee:

1. **Composition:** This committee will be composed of no set number of church members in Good Standing, approved by the Elder Board, who have evidenced their personal commitment to the Lord's missionary mandate.
2. **Term:** Committee members will serve as long as they desire so long as they remain in Good Standing and are fulfilling their committee duties.
3. **Duties:** This committee will:
 - a. create a missions strategy that reinforces our commitment to the Great Commission;
 - b. advance the cause of home and foreign missions at every level of church life;
 - c. encourage the enlistment of called and gifted church members to serve the Lord in missions;
 - d. maintain communications with currently-supported missionaries, serving as their liaison with the church;
 - e. recommend support levels for currently-supported missionaries; and
 - f. recommend new missions or missionaries who meet the objectives of our mission strategy along with a responsible support amount to the Elder and Deacon Boards and church family.

Section 3 – Pastoral Search Committee:

1. **Composition:** This committee will be composed of no more than seven (7) church members in Good Standing, approved by the Elder Board, who have evidenced their personal commitment to this church and its Vision moving forward.
2. **Term:** Committee members will serve as long as the need to fill the open position remains.
3. **Duties:** This committee will take the necessary steps to secure all open pastoral staff positions by:
 - a. investigating the merits of every person under consideration with regard to his/her spiritual character, educational level, ministerial record, pastoral skills, and general qualifications in determining his/her fitness for the open position;
 - b. narrowing the search to but one candidate to be recommended to the Elder Board;
 - c. consulting with the Deacon Board for deciding the salary package to be offered and approved by the Elder Board; and
 - d. arranging two (2) separate opportunities for the congregation to meet, interact, question and hear the candidate preach and/or teach to his/her respective targeted audience.

Section 4 – Budget Committee:

1. **Composition:** This committee will be composed of no more than five (5) church members in Good Standing, who have evidenced a personal commitment to the ongoing financial needs of the church and possessing capable skills in monetary budgeting.
2. **Term:** Committee members will serve as long as they desire so long as they remain in Good Standing and are fulfilling their committee duties.
3. **Duties:** This committee will:
 - a. Wrap-up previous year; ask deacons, the leaders of kitchen, teachers, VBS, missions, others for monetary spend for upcoming year; create a new, draft budget for following year, review amongst the finance team including proposing a mission % (remain the same or increase)
 - b. Submit the finalized budget to the Elder Board for approval; then the LT (Leadership Team) approximately one (1) month prior to the Annual Business Meeting.
 - c. Post / email the finalized budget for the church members' observation two (2) weeks prior to the Annual Business Meeting so they can question line items in advance of the Annual Business Meeting.

Section 5 – Auditing Committee:

1. **Composition:** This committee will be composed of no more than three (3) church members in Good Standing, appointed by the Deacon Board, who have evidenced a personal commitment to the ongoing financial needs of the church and possessing capable skills in fiscal accountability.
2. **Term:** Committee members will serve as long as they desire so long as they remain in Good Standing and are fulfilling their committee duties.
3. **Duties:** This committee will:
 - a. audit all financial books of the church annually; and
 - b. draft an official report of the church's fiscal record in the Annual Report.

Section 6 – New Committees: The church members may recommend and the Elder Board appoint any other committees that experience deems needful. It should adopt an Operational Plan, approved by the Elders, that specifically defines its purpose, protocol and functions in greater detail.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

Section 1 – Spiritual Gatherings:

1. The church will meet weekly for worship that will include prayer, praise and the preaching of God's Word.
2. The church will host small groups where serious disciples meet in homes on various days of the week for worship, prayer, Bible Study, fellowship and encouragement.

3. The church will observe the Lord's Supper at least monthly in any of its corporate gatherings.
4. The church will collect a Benevolence Offering at worship services as directed by the combined Elder and Deacon Boards. The collected monies will primarily target members within the church who evidence serious financial reverses.
5. We believe that God intends for His people to gather regularly, 'not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.' (Heb.10:25) It is therefore our intent to keep the doors of our church open for all who wish to pray and worship regularly and in times of crisis. We further believe that no earthly authority has the power to dictate when God's people shall or shall not meet nor to dictate the terms of their meeting or the manner of their worship.

Section 2 – Elder and Deacon Board Meetings:

1. The Elder and Deacon Boards will meet separately at least monthly to ensure each is fulfilling its individual church duties as spelled out under Article II, Section 1, Numbers 1d and 2d.
2. The Elder and Deacon Boards will meet collectively at least quarterly to assess progress, address problem areas and refine the course direction;
3. The Pastoral Staff, the Elder and Deacon Boards and the Steering Committee will meet at least biannually to communicate and coordinate pertinent church business while refining the church's vision and direction.

Section 3 – Business Meetings:

1. **Unscheduled Business Meetings:** Business meetings may be called at any time by any church member who presents his/her petition to the Elders in writing. If approved, public notice must be given two (2) weeks prior to the meeting.
2. **Annual Business Meeting:** This meeting shall be held 2 months prior to the beginning of the fiscal calendar in order to decide on the church's budget, officers and direction for the coming fiscal year.

ARTICLE VII – VOTING

Section 1 – Qualification: Only church members age eighteen (18) or older and in Good Standing are eligible to vote on any church matter.

Section 2 – Procedure: A quorum of fifty percent (50%) of the active membership will be required to conduct any business that requires voting at any church meeting.

Section 3 – Passage: All decisions will require a three-quarter (3/4) vote cast by the church members present or who have voted in absentia prior to the official vote.

ARTICLE VIII – FINANCES

Section 1 – Church Income:

1. **Stewardship:** This church will be self-supporting, thriving on the voluntary giving of its total membership in obedience to the biblical principles regarding stewardship.
2. **Fundraisers:** Upon Elder and Deacon Board approval, different church groups may exchange money for services and/or products. These funds will be channeled to the specifically-designated project (unless readdressed by the Elders and Deacons). Any excess collected funds will be preserved for future church or mission projects.

Section 2 – Budget: The church will operate under an annual budget as recommended by the Budget Committee, refined by the Deacon Board, approved by the Elders, and voted on by the church members at the time of the Annual Business Meeting.

ARTICLE IX – CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Section 1 – Grievances: Any church member having a Biblical grievance against any of the Pastoral Staff, an Elder, a Deacon or any church member will confront the offending person, only after committing this matter to sustained prayer. Once the offended person senses the Holy Spirit's leading, he/she will meet privately with the offending person and speak the "*truth in love*". He/She must not air his/her grievance in any public forum or he/she may be held accountable for this sin before the Elders. The purpose for such an encounter must always be a restoration of the relationship.

Section 2 – Discipline: Any church member propagating unscriptural doctrines or committing known gross sin or promoting strife within the church family will be called before the Elders to give an account for his/her actions. Biblical discipline measures will be enforced in such cases as outlined in these By-Laws under Article I and Section 2b. If these efforts prove unsuccessful, the member will be removed from the membership role. The purpose for such an encounter must always seek complete repentance and restored fellowship.

ARTICLE X – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Section 1 – Standard: There exists between this church and its staff, church officers and church members a fiduciary responsibility and accountability that not only satisfies the laws of Pennsylvania and the IRS, but exceeds their demands as they answer to the higher standard of Almighty God.

Section 2 – Conduct: Business will be conducted with professionalism and the highest integrity. This means that the Elder and Deacon Boards will administer the business affairs of this church honestly, transparently, skillfully and prudently with the church's best interest and reputation at heart.

Section 3 – Benefit: No church member will use his/her church position for either financial benefit or even knowledge gained for his/her own personal benefit. Only the church's best interest and reputation within the greater community will dictate the proper course of action in all fiscal matters and decisions.

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS

Section 1 – Proposed: Any proposed amendment to this Constitution and By-Laws must be approved by the Elder Board and posted two (2) weeks prior to the specially-called meeting.

Section 2 – Passage: Any proposed amendment will pass by a three-quarter (3/4) majority vote cast by the church members present at a specifically-called meeting for such action or who have voted in absentia prior to the official vote.

This Constitution has been reviewed and approved by the ADF, Alliance Defending Freedom, June 2023.