

Gospel Light Baptist Church

Constitution & Statement of Faith

PREAMBLE

So that things may be done decently and in order in accordance with what we hold as Scriptural Precedent laid out in the book of Acts and other New Testament books, and that we may more readily help other Churches of like faith in our Christian service, we declare and establish this constitution to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE 1 - NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION 1 – NAME

This congregation of born again believers shall be known as the Gospel Light Baptist Church, Inc., in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation.

SECTION 2 – PURPOSE

- (A) This congregation is organized as a Church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes, including but not limited to, for such purposes, within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, the establishing and maintaining of religious services, the building, maintaining and operating of Churches, parsonages, schools, chapels, radio stations, rescue missions, print shops, day-care centers, camps, nursing homes, and cemeteries, and any other ministries that the Church may be led of God to establish.
- (B) The Church shall also ordain and license men to the Gospel Ministry; evangelize the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ wherever they may be; educate believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Holy Scripture, both Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education; maintain missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country; and engage in any other ministry that the Church may decide, from time to time, to pursue in obedience to the will of God.
- (C) The Church, now and in the future, shall not become officially connected with any convention or association of churches, but shall remain as an independent, self governing body which conducts its business in accordance with the Word of God, (but may choose to fellowship with churches or pastors of like faith).

ARTICLE 2 - STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT

SECTION 1 – STATEMENT OF FAITH

- (A) **The Holy Scriptures** We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are the inerrant, infallible, and God-breathed, and therefore are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning, where no one passage is taken, contextually, out of the normal and consistent doctrines of the Word of God. The King James Version of the Bible shall be the official and only translation used by the Church, as we believe it to be the perfect preserved Word of God. (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:20-21)
- (B) **Dispensationalism** We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life, which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three dispensations – the law, the Church, and the Kingdom – are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture (Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor 9:17; 2 Cor 3:9-18; Gal 3:13-25; Eph 1:10; 3:2-10; Col 1:24-25, 27; Rev 20:2-6)
- (C) **The Godhead** We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – each coeternal in being, coidential in nature, coequal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections, but given to specific roles for which man identifies and interacts with God. (Deut 6:4; Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; John 14:10, 26)
- (D) **The Person and Work of Christ**
1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. (Isa 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Cor 5:19-21; Gal 4:4-5; Phil 2:5-8)
 2. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross and the shedding of His blood as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and, that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and the application of His blood in Heaven. (Acts 2:18-36; Rom 3:24-25; 1 Pet 2:24; Eph 1:7; Heb 9:1-28; 1 Peter 1:3-5)
 3. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven, and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9-10; Heb 7:25; 9:24; Rom 8:34; 1 John 2:1-2)
- (E) **The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**
1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement; and, that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8-11; Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 12:12-14; 2 Cor 3:6; Eph 1:13-14)
 2. We believe that He is the Divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (Eph 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27)
 3. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly and order that they can do the work of the ministry. (Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:4-11, 28; Eph 4:7-12)
 4. We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing were, in every case, to bring a person to the knowledge of the Gospel. The gift of 'Tongues' being another spoken language by which a person can come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. God can and has chosen to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. (1 Cor 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22)
- (F) **The Total Depravity of Man** We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and with understanding of sin becomes accountable for sin, and thus alienated from God; and, that man is totally depraved, and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Eph 2:1-3; 4:17-19)
- (G) **Salvation** We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness and washing away of our sins. The receiving of that gift is the only acceptable salvation plan. (John 1:12; Eph 1:17; 2:8-10; Heb 9:22-28; 1 Pet 1:4-5)
- (H) **The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers**
1. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom 8:1, 38-39; 1 Cor 1:4-8; 1 Pet 1:4-5)

2. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian Liberty as an occasion to the flesh. However, a believer who sins will suffer the natural consequences of sin and is not exempt from the natural punishments that the sin brings. (Rom 12:12-14; Gal 5:13; Titus 2:11-15, Gal 6:7)

(I) The Church

1. We believe that the local Church, which is the body and espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again persons. (1 Cor 12:12-14; 2 Cor 11:2; Eph 1:22-23; 5:25-27)
2. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local Churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Tim 3:1-3; Titus 1:5-11)
3. We believe in the autonomy of the local Church free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom 16:1,4; 1 Cor 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4)
4. We recognize water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the Church. (Matt 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:18; 1 Cor 11:23-26)
5. We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day and as such is the day where the members of the Church shall come together. (Acts 20:7; Ps 118:24; Heb 10:24-25. 1 Cor 16:2; Rev 1:10; John 20:1, 19)

- (J) Separation** We believe that all believers should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Saviour and Lord; and, that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded of God. (Rom 12:1-2; 14:13; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11)

- (K) The Second Coming of Christ and the Thousand Year Reign of Christ** We believe in that "blessed hope," the personal, imminent return of Christ Who will rapture His Church prior to the seven-year period, known by some as the "Tribulation", and as Scripture calls "The Day of the Lord". At the end of this seven year period, Christ will personally and visibly return with his saints, to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom for a thousand years, which was promised to the nation of Israel. (Ps 89:3-4; Dan 2:31-45; Zech 14:4-11; 1 Thess 1:10; 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Rev 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6)

(L) The Eternal State of the Soul and of Heaven and Hell

1. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgement and everlasting punishment. (Mat 25:46; John 5:28, 29; 11:25-26; Rev 20:5-6, 12-14)
2. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord in Heaven, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thess 4:16-17; Rev 20:4-6)
3. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne of Judgement, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. We believe that Hell was not created for man, but for Satan and his angels; however it was man's choice to sin that condemned him to Hell and it will be man's choice of the acceptance of Jesus Christ as his Saviour that will save him. (Matt 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev 20:11-15, Rom 10:13; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6; Mat 25:41)

- (M) The Personality of Satan** We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and, that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. "He is the accuser of the brethren" and our adversary, "seeking whom he may devour". (Job 1:6-7; Isa 14:12-17; Matt 4:2-11; 25:41; 1 Pet 5:8; Rev 12:10; 20:10)

- (N) Creation** We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (Gen 1-2; Ex 20:11)

- (O) Civil Government** We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home; 2) the Church; and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and has balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the Church and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Rom 13:1-7; Eph 5:22-24; Heb 13:17; 1 Pet 2:13-14)

(P) Human Sexuality

1. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and

pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. An employee of the Church becoming pregnant or causing pregnancy as a result of consensual intercourse, outside of the marriage relationship, shall be terminated from employment as well as any employee engaging in any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, or pornography (Gen 2:24; Gen 19:5, 13; Gen 26:8-9; Lev 18:1-30; Rom 1:26-29; 1 Cor 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess 4:1-8; Heb 13:4).

2. We believe that only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman (Gen 2:24; Rom 7:2; 1 Cor 7:10; Eph 5:22-23).
3. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the Church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the Church (Gal 3:28; Col 3:18, 1 Tim 2:8-15; 3:4-5,12)

(Q) **Divorce and Remarriage** We believe that God hates divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses' dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as sin except on the grounds of fornication. However, divorced and remarried people can still be used of God in any capacity that God intends for them. Though from the scripture we are in doubt that they may hold the offices of deacon or pastor. (Mal 2:14-17; Matt 19:3-12; Rom 7:1-3; 1 Tim 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

(R) **Abortion** We believe that human life begins upon being conceived and that unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused murder of unborn human life. Abortion without doubt is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, youth in Asia, or mental well being of the mother are acceptable. Birth control is acceptable provided the means used are to prevent a person from being conceived only, all other forms of birth control we regard as a type of abortion (job 3:16; Ps 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

(S) **Missions** We believe that God has given the Church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Mat 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor 5:20)

(T) **Law suits Between Believers** We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or our Church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the Church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between its members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor 6:1-8; Eph 4:31-32)

(U) **Giving** We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated, by scripture, to support his local Church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should prayerfully seek God's will for other giving as they feel God leads them, for the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. Though we believe that every Christian should tithe of the first fruits of all his increase, it is not the job of the Church or of the Pastor to demand giving, nor to send statements to the effect of demanding the tithe. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all right to direct use of tithe or offering once the gift has been made. (Gen 14:20; Prov 3:9-10; Mal 3:7-12; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 9:6-7; Gal 6:6; Eph 4:28; 1 Tim 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

SECTION 2 – AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing statement of faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible, and therefore, is binding upon the Church and its members as to the direction of all teaching and preaching. All literature in the Church shall be in complete accordance with the statement of faith.

SECTION 3 – COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and on profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of our Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as the body of Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor; and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred, acquaintances, and all others; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful to our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from worldly amusements such as movie attendance, gambling, rock music, and dancing; to be free from all oath bound secret societies and partnerships with unbelievers; to abstain from the sale or use of tobacco in any form, narcotic drugs, or intoxicating drink as a beverage; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy of speech; to be slow to take offense, but to always be ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour, to secure reconciliation without delay.

We moreover engage, that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible, unite with some other Church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

We also engage to observe the Bible as our final authority in faith and in practice, to grow in grace as the Lord commands, and to seek out God's individual will for us. And to uphold our Saviour, Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church, to follow Him and His teachings as we find them in the Holy Scriptures, and that His teachings and commands are supreme above man's, whether it be Church or secular.

We further engage to promote the propitiation of the Gospel to every man, woman and child who may be ignorant of the gift of Salvation. Having partaken of God's eternal gift, we see it as our privilege and duty to proclaim the Gospel so that others may share in the joy and knowledge of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

ARTICLE 3 -MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 – QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Upon a majority vote of the members present at any Church service or meeting, membership shall be extended to all who wish it and who endeavors to conform to the constitution contained herein. Only by failing to meet any of the following conditions shall a person be refused membership:

1. The individual seeking membership must have had a personal experience of regeneration by Jesus Christ (Salvation).
2. The individual seeking membership must have been baptized by immersion by a Church of like faith after Salvation and not before.
3. The individual seeking membership is not intending harm to the Church or its members through deceptive means through the membership.

A person who meets the above conditions may be accepted into Church membership by doing either of the following:

1. By declaring intent to join at any meeting of the Church and by, either a statement of faith that the above conditions have been met or by a letter of transfer from a Church of like faith so stating, or
2. By restoration, if having been removed by membership, upon a majority vote of the congregation after confession is made publicly before the Church membership of the sin or sins involved, and satisfactory

evidence of repentance (change of heart) to the Pastor (or Board of Deacons if the office of Pastor is vacant).

SECTION 2 – DUTIES OF MEMBERS

On becoming a member of this Church, in addition to the covenant contained in Article II, Section 3, each one further covenants to be loyal to the Pastor (or Board of Deacons if the office of Pastor is vacant); to pray for him; and to recognize his authority in spiritual affairs of the Church, in particular the preaching.

SECTION 3 – PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS

- (A) This congregation functions, not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and His direction of the Pastor as the undershepherd with the counsel of the Board of Deacons. Membership in this Church does not afford to those individuals with any property, contract, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Determination of the internal affairs of this Church is an ecclesiastical matter and shall be determined exclusively by the Church's own rules and procedures. The Pastor shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this Church. The Board of Deacons shall give counsel and assistance to the Pastor as requested by him or as he may request from any member. The membership of this Church has certain limited areas of exercising a vote. Members may not vote to initiate any Church action, but rather the vote of members is to confirm and ratify the direction of the Church as determined by the Pastor and Board of Deacons.
- (B) Each member of the Church shall be entitled to vote on all matters including the purchase or sale of real property, finances, and the dismissal or calling of a pastor, in the which only members at least eighteen years of age, and who are faithful in attendance and serving, shall be entitled to vote.
- (C) No vote of the membership shall pertain to any matter which are clearly ecclesiastical matters, such as the Preaching, which missions or missionaries are supported, the spreading of the Gospel and the material to be taught in Sunday School or at any other function of the Church. These matters and such matters similar are under the direct authority and direction of the Pastor.

SECTION 4 – DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER

Any member of this Church who willingly and knowingly teaches and or disperses literature contrary to the doctrinal position of this Church may be subjected to Church discipline.

Any member of this Church who no longer agrees with the doctrinal position stated in this constitution should voluntarily remove himself from the Church membership, and should not attempt to aggregate, propitiate or adhere to what the Church deems false doctrine. If such a member refuses to remove himself from the membership the member may be subjected to Church discipline.

Any member, who continually disturbs the public service; seeks to cause strife, contention, dissention or harm the unity of the Church may be subjected to Church discipline.

Any member who by any means attempts to undermine the purpose and covenant of this Church may be subjected to Church discipline. Any Member who attempts to cause factions of members in the Church and disturb the unity of the Church may be subjected to Church discipline.

Although we believe that a Christian should live a separated life at all times, we see it as a personal matter between the member and God about how the member conducts himself outside the Church.

If the need arises to discipline a member the following procedure shall be followed:

- (A) There shall be a Disciple committee consisting of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons. These men shall have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the Statement of Faith and violations of the Church covenant. If the Pastor or a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the Discipline Committee. He shall be entitled to the same steps as other Church members and be subject to the same discipline.
- (B) Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and testimony, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.
- (C) If reconciliation is not reached, a second member, either a deacon or the Pastor is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination, and exercised in the a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
- (D) If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, the Disciple Committee, as the Church representatives Biblically responsible for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the hearing before the Committee, the Committee shall recommend to the members of the Church that they, after self-examination, make an effort personally to go to the offending member and seek the member's restoration.
- (E) If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B), (C) and (D) have been taken, such members who refuse to repent and to be restored are to be removed from the membership of the Church in a majority vote of the membership present at the meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action.
- (F) No matter may be heard by the Discipline Committee or the Church unless the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, except in the case of public offence.
- (G) If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the Church membership, all contact with him from that point forward must be for the sake of restoration (except family members).

SECTION 5 – TRANSFER FROM MEMBERSHIP

Members, not under the disciplining process of Section 4 of this article, may request that letters of transfer may be sent to another Church of like faith.

SECTION 6 – TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- (A) The membership of any individual member shall be automatically terminated without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular service of the Church in the preceding six months. Upon good cause being shown to the Pastor, this provision for termination may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the Pastor.
- (B) No member of this Church may hold membership in another Church. If any member unites in membership with another Church, that person is automatically terminated without notice from membership in this Church.
- (C) A member may resign at any time, but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the Pastor.

ARTICLE 4 - OFFICERS

SECTION 1 – CHURCH OFFICERS

One person may hold two or more offices. The Pastor may only hold additional offices when the membership is less than one hundred (100) active members. In such cases the Pastor may act as Minister of Records and/or Minister of Finance until there is an active Board of Deacons (see sections 1 (in its entirety) and Article 5,

Section 2). The Pastor, from time to time as he deems appropriate, may appoint other Church officers, subject to a confirmation vote of the Church membership. The Church officers are as follows:

- (a) Pastor (see article V, section 1)
- (b) Deacon (see article V, section 2)
- (c) Minister of Records (see article V, section 3)
- (d) Minister of Finance (see article V, section 4)

In the event that the active Church membership is less than one hundred (100) the Church and/or pastor is not required to designate standing deacons or a Board of Deacons. In such cases the entire Church membership then acts as a Board of Deacons and is empowered to perform all duties of said office (see Article 5, Section 2).

SECTION 2 – DESIGNATION OF CORPORATE OFFICERS

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the Church, the Pastor shall serve as president of the corporation; the minister of records shall serve as secretary of the corporation; the minister of finances shall serve as treasurer of the corporation; and the chairman of the Board of Deacons shall serve as vice president of the corporation.

SECTION 3 – ELIGIBILITY FOR CONTINUANCE IN OFFICE

- (A) All Church officers shall affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith (as set forth in Article II) annually in the presence of each other.
- (B) All Church officers must be approved initially and thereafter annually by the Pastor in order for them to commence or continue in their offices.
- (C) Only Church members are eligible for election or appointment to any Church office or position.

SECTION 4 – TERMS OF OFFICE

The length of terms of office shall be as follows:

- (A) The relationship between the Pastor and the Church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of a month's notice, or less by mutual consent. The severance of the relationship between the Pastor and the Church may be considered at any regular Church administration meeting, provided notice to that effect shall have been given from the pulpit to the Church two Sundays prior to said regular Church administration meeting. A three-fourths majority of the members present and voting shall be required to decide the matter. Disciplinary removal of the Pastor from office automatically terminates his membership. A restoration to membership after disciplinary removal will be subject to the requirements of Article III, Section 1 (D).
- (B) The Term of service for the office of the Deacon shall be permanent unless the deacon board revokes the Deacon's ordination and removes him from office.
- (C) All other offices and positions in the Church, except the Pastor and Deacon, shall be one year, at the expiration of which they may be re-elected or re-appointed.
- (D) A vacancy occurring in any office or board, except in the case of Pastor and Deacon, may be filled at any regular Church administration meeting and shall serve only the remainder of the term.
- (E) All elected and appointed officers shall serve in their respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed.
- (F) Members of the Board of Deacons may be removed from office for unbiblical conduct, as determined by the other board members, upon a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board of Deacons.

SECTION 5 – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The annual election of officers by the Church membership shall occur during the month of December at the annual Church administration meeting.

SECTION 6 – PASTORAL OVERSIGHT OF OFFICERS AND STAFF

- (A) Subject to the approval of the Church membership and on the condition that they shall become a member of the Church upon assuming their duties, the Pastor may hire associates and assistants, to assist the Pastor in carrying out his God-given responsibilities.
- (B) All Church staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the Pastor who has the sole authority to hire, appoint, or dismiss the same.

ARTICLE 5 – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1 – THE PASTOR

- (A) The Pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly and shall be at liberty to preach the whole counsel of the Word of God as the Lord leads him. He shall administer the ordinances of the Church, act as moderator at all Church meetings for the transaction of Church matters, supervise the teaching ministries of the Church, and tenderly watch over the spiritual interests of the membership.
- (B) The Pastor shall appoint the members of the various committees at the annual Church administration meeting. He shall serve as the president of the corporation. He shall publicly inform all newly elected officers of the particular function and responsibilities of their respective offices. He shall extend the right hand of fellowship to all new members on behalf of the Church and perform such other duties as generally appertain to such a position. The Pastor shall be free to choose the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry that God has given him.
- (C) All appointments for public services and Bible study and the arrangements thereof including time and place and the use of the property belonging to the Church for purposes other than the stated appointments shall be under the control of the Pastor.
- (D) The Pastor shall be loyal to the members of the Church.

SECTION 2 – THE BOARD OF DEACONS

In the event that the active Church membership is less than one hundred (100) the Church and/or pastor is not required to designate standing deacons or a Board of Deacons. In such cases the Church membership present shall act as the Board of Deacons at any meeting wherein the Board of Deacons would be required and is therefore empowered to perform the following functions and duties:

- (A) The Board of Deacons shall assist the Pastor, in such a manner, as he shall request, in promoting the spiritual welfare of the Church, in conducting religious services, and in performing all other work of the Church. They shall make provision for the observance of the ordinance of the Church. They shall, if requested by the Pastor, consider applications for Church membership. They shall, in cooperation with the Pastor, disburse the benevolence fund. They shall assist the Pastor in visitation and all other evangelistic efforts of the Church. They shall provide the pulpit supply and act as leaders for Church meetings if the office of Pastor is vacant. The Board of Deacons shall assist the Pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the Church's various ministries as requested by the Pastor.
- (B) Immediately following the annual Church administration meeting, the Board of Deacons shall assemble and elect, from their own number, a chairman, who shall be vice president of the corporation, a vice chairman, and a secretary.
- (C) The Board of Deacons shall constitute the board of trustees of the corporation. The board of trustees shall exercise only the following specific powers:

1. To purchase, hold, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the Church, and to take real and personal property by will, gift or bequest on behalf of the Church.
 2. To sell, convey, alienate, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, and to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the Church, to borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and the use of the Church; to cause to be executed, issued and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the Church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and to secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, or pledges.
 3. To exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the Church corporation, if such action is mandated by a vote of the Church membership.
 4. To empower the Pastor or another Church Member to sign on behalf of the Church in legal matters, such as but not limited to, the procuring of loans and the signing of checks for the distribution of monies.
- (D) A nominee to the office of a Deacon must believe that he is called of God to that office as described in Acts 6:1-8 and 1 Timothy 3:8-16.
- (E) Deacons will be ordained according to Scripture (Acts 6:1-8).
- (F) Only the Deacon board can nominate future deacons, subject to Pastoral approval.
- (G) The Church must affirm the nominee to the office of the deacon by a general election at any scheduled business meeting and participate in the member's ordination.

SECTION 3 – THE MINISTER OF RECORDS

The minister or records shall:

- (A) Certify and keep at the office of the Church, the original bylaws or a copy including all amendments or alteration to the bylaws.
- (B) Keep at the place where the bylaws or a copy are kept a record of the proceedings of the meetings of the Board of Deacons, with the time and place of holding, the notice of meeting given, the names of those present at the meetings.
- (C) Sign, certify, or attest documents as may be required by law.
- (D) See that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws. In case of the absence or disability of the Secretary, or his or her refusal or neglect to act, notice may be given and served by the Pastor, or by the Chairman of the Board of Deacons.
- (E) Be custodian of the records of the Church, including the membership roll, baptisms, and certificates of ordination, licenses and commissions.
- (F) See that the reports, statements, certificates, and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed.
- (G) Exhibit at all reasonable times to proper persons on terms provided by law the bylaws and minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Deacons or the minutes of the meetings of the Church members.
- (H) Keep an account of any special events in the life of the Church, which are of historical interest and give a report at the annual Church administration meeting of the status of the Church membership roll of the past year.
- (I) Keep all records at the office of the Church and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office.
- (J) Serve as the secretary of the corporation.

SECTION 4 – THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The minister of finance shall:

- (A) Have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds of the Corporation, and deposit all funds in the name of the Church in banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected by the Pastor or the Board of Deacons.

- (B) Receive, and give receipt for all contributions, gifts and donations to the Church.
- (C) Disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the Church as may be directed by the Pastor, the Board of Deacons, or the budget adopted by the members of the Church administration meeting, taking proper vouchers for the disbursements.
- (D) Keep and maintain adequate and correct accounts of the Church's properties and business transactions including account of its assets, liabilities, receipts and disbursements, and capital.
- (E) Make all expenditures of the Church (except miscellaneous petty cash disbursements) by check.
- (F) When and as requested, render to the Pastor and the Board of Deacons accounts of all his transactions as minister of finance and of the financial condition of the Church.
- (G) Present a written report of itemized disbursements at the regular quarterly Church administration meetings and make a general report for the year at the annual Church administration meeting.
- (H) Keep all Church financial records at the office of the Church and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office.
- (I) Serve as treasurer of the corporation.

SECTION 5 – ASSOCIATE PASTORS

Under the direction and guidance of the Pastor, the associate pastors of the Church shall assist the Pastor in carrying out the ministries of the Church.

SECTION 6 – DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS

- (A) All officers shall prepare a written report of their work for the annual Church administration meeting and shall surrender any records in their possession to the minister of records at the close of their term of office to be filed as permanent record of the work of the Church. All records are the property of the Church and must be kept in the Church office.
- (B) Any officer who neglects his duties as outlined in the constitution for a period of three months may be removed from his office at the discretion of the Pastor and another may be appointed by the Pastor to serve the unexpired term.

SECTION 7 – INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

A public installation service in which all newly-elected officers of the Church are to be dedicated to their respective offices and the ordination of newly-elected deacons shall be held at a public Church service following their election at the annual Church administration meeting.

ARTICLE 6 - MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH

SECTION 1 – MEETINGS

- (a) Sunday meetings. The Church shall meet twice every Lord's Day for fellowship, worship, praise and the preaching of the Word of God.
- (b) Bible Study. The Church shall meet at least once during the week for regular Bible Study and prayer.
- (c) The Lord's Supper. The Church shall observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper at the morning service of the first Sunday of each month, unless otherwise ordered by the Pastor or deacons; provided, however that the Lord's Supper be observed at least once a month.
- (d) Monthly administration meetings. The Church shall hold a regular business meeting each month with the membership. A quorum shall consist of the membership present.
- (e) Special meetings. Special meetings may be called by the moderator (the Pastor). Notice of such special meetings shall be given from the pulpit on the preceding Sunday.

SECTION 2 – VOTING

- (A) Only members of the Church are eligible to vote on any Church matter.
- (B) A voice, rising, or showing of hands vote is binding except where otherwise provided for whenever it is apparent that two thirds of the members present are voting. If more than one third of the members present do not signify their vote, then a ballot shall be taken. A majority vote shall decide all matters except the expulsion of members; the election of a Pastor (which shall be decided by a three fourths ballot vote of the members present), and the vote to amend this Constitution may be amended at any regular business meeting by a two thirds vote, provided that a four-week notice has been given to the Church.
- (C) A member must be eighteen years or older to vote.

SECTION 3 – ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS

The Pastor of the Church, or, in his absence, the Chairman of the Board of Deacons, shall act as moderator in all meetings for the transaction of business.

It shall be the duty of the Moderator to keep order, state and explain propositions.

No business meeting shall take the place of a regular public preaching service or Bible Study. Business meetings shall be conducted the third Wednesday night of each month following the public Bible study or preaching service.

The moderator shall call for the business of the Church in the following order:

- (a) Read the minutes of the previous meeting.
- (b) Present candidates for membership.
- (c) Receive letters of dismissal from sister Churches.
- (d) Grant letters of dismissal.
- (e) Hear the reports and recommendations of the deacons and other officers
- (f) Care for other unfinished business.
- (g) Present any new business.
- (h) Open floor for discussion.
- (i) Vote on any business that requires voting by the Church membership, by having a first recommendation and a second, and then the vote by the membership.
- (j) Adjournment.
- (k) Prayer.

SECTION 4 – FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin January 1st and end December 31st.

ARTICLE 7 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

SECTION 1 – PURPOSE

The Church believes that it has the option to provide for the member's Children an education which is based upon and consistent with Biblical teachings. To this end, the Church shall engage in ministries, as the membership shall see fit, that provides education in keeping with this Constitution and Bylaws.

SECTION 2 – CHURCH PARTICIPATION

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the Church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the Church; however, the Pastor may permit non-Church members to participate in Church educational programs or courses of instruction if he deems it in the best interest of the Church. Also, all participation of the membership is voluntary, except that of paid staff, teachers and administrators.

SECTION 3 – STAFF MEMBERSHIP

All instructors, teachers, and administrators shall be members of the Church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, or preachers engaged for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals, or other special meetings on a temporary basis.

SECTION 4 – STATEMENT OF FAITH ACCORD

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the Statement of Faith of the Church.

SECTION 5 – UNITY

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the Church, having the Pastor as the overseer.

SECTION 6 – TEACHING

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted consistent with the teachings of the inerrant Word of God. Any assertion or belief, which obviously conflicts with or questions a Biblical truth, is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth, which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every instructor or teacher to present the inerrant Word of God as the sole infallible source of knowledge and wisdom.

SECTION 7 – CHRISTIAN WALK

All administrators, instructors and teachers shall continue or adopt a life-style consistent with the precepts which they teach, whether in or out of the classroom.

ARTICLE 8 - ORDINATION

SECTION 1 – ORDINATION QUALIFICATIONS

Any member of this Church or its mission Churches, who gives evidence of a genuine call of God into the Gospel Ministry and possesses the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 may be ordained as a minister of the Gospel.

SECTION 2 – ORDINATION PROCEDURE

- (a) Upon a conference with the Pastor and after the Pastor has approved the candidate for ordination, the Pastor shall call a council to examine and pass on the qualifications of the candidate. The ordination council shall consist of the Board of Deacons and other ordained men of like faith.
- (b) If the candidate is found worthy of ordination by the council, the ordination council may ordain the candidate on behalf of the Church in a public service.

(c) The Pastor and the Chairman of the deacons shall arrange for the ordination service.

ARTICLE 9 – INDEMNIFICATION

SECTION 1 – ACTIONS SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

The Church may indemnify any person who was or is a part or is threatened to be made a part to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the Church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the Church, against expenses, including attorney's fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlements actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding; and if that person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the Church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suite, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the Church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

SECTION 2 – EXPENSES SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

To the extent that a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in this Article, or in defense of any claim, issue or matter in that action, suit, or proceeding, he or she may be indemnified against expenses, including attorney's fees, actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding.

SECTION 3 – LIMITATIONS OF INDEMNIFICATION

Any indemnification made under this Article, may be made by the Church only as authorized in the specific case on a determination that indemnification of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Section I of this Article. The determination shall be made (a) by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the Pastor and deacons who were not and are not parties to, or threatened with, the action, suit, or proceeding; (b) if the described quorum is not obtainable, or if a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested deacons so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by a majority vote of the members of the Church.

SECTION 4 – TIMING OF INDEMNIFICATION

Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article, may be paid by the Church as they are incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, as authorized by the Board of Deacons in the specific case, on receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the Church.

SECTION 5 – EXTENT OF INDEMNIFICATION

The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise required as a matter of law or under any agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the Church, both as to the action of each person seeking indemnification under this Article in his official capacity and as to the action in another capacity while holding that office, and may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a pastor, deacon,

officer, employee, or agent and may inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of the person.

SECTION 6 - INSURANCE

The Church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the Church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the Church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this Article.

ARTICLE 10 – TAX-EXEMPT PROVISIONS

SECTION 1 – PRIVATE INURNMENT

No part of the net earnings of the Church shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the Church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article I, Section 2 hereof.

SECTION 2 – POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

No substantial part of the activities of the Church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The Church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

SECTION 3 – DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the Church, the Trustees shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all liabilities of the Church, dispose of all of the assets of the Church to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) or the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Trustees shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to organizations which agree with the Church's Statement of Faith contained herein.

SECTION 4 – RACIAL NONDISCRIMINATION

The Church shall have a racially nondiscriminatory policy and therefore shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin.

SECTION 5 – LIMITATION OF ACTIVITIES

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, the Church shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes stated in Article I, Section 2.

ARTICLE 11 – DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS

From time to time the Church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Contributors may suggest uses for their contributions but all suggestions shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. All contributions made to specific

funds or otherwise designated shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the Church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Article I, Section 2.

ARTICLE 12 – BINDING ARBITRATION

SECTION 1 – SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION

Believing that lawsuits between believers are prohibited by Scripture, all members of this Church agree to submit to binding arbitration any matters which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bringing any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

SECTION 2 – NOTICE OF ARBITRATION

In the event of any dispute, claim, question, or disagreement arising out of or relating to these Bylaws or any other Church matter, the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreements as befits Christians. To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interest not to disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution. If they do not reach such a solution within a period of sixty (60) days, then upon notice by either party to the other disputes, claims, questions, or differences shall be finally settled by arbitration as described in Section 1, above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to the following two sections.

SECTION 3 – LIMITATIONS ON ARBITRATION DECISIONS

- (A) Should any dispute involve matters of Church discipline, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures for Church discipline as outlined under Article 3, section 4, were followed correctly.
- (B) Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the Pastor or any church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in Article 3 were followed correctly.

SECTION 4 – ARBITRATION PROCEDURES

The procedures for arbitration shall be as adopted by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.

ARTICLE 13 – BINDING OF THIS CONSTITUTION ON MEMBERS

This constitution becomes binding on an individual upon being accepted into the membership of this Church, whether or not they have read the document contained herein. This Constitution is binding on every member whether or not they have been given a copy.

The Statement of Faith can not be binding upon members as that is a matter of personal belief, which is answerable, we believe, to God and not to the Church. However, to retain unity in the Church and to avoid dissension the Statement of Faith is where the Church stands on those issues and is what will be taught and upheld in all forms of preaching and teaching in the Church. A member actively attempting to undermine this unity within the Church will be subject to Church Discipline.

A copy of this document shall not be denied any individual who requests one, regardless of their membership status. This includes non-members. It is the duty, but not a requirement for binding, of the Pastor or the Minister of Records to give a copy of this document to every existing or new member.

If a member finds, upon reading this document, that he or she is unwilling to be bound by this document, he or she must withdraw their membership to be loosed from this Constitution.

ARTICLE 14 – AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be revised or amended by a majority of the membership present and voting, at any regular Church administration meeting, provided that the said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing and announced from the pulpit fourteen (14) days before the vote is taken.

ADOPTION

This constitution was adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the Church in which a quorum was present.

This constitution and bylaws supersedes any other constitution and/or bylaws of Gospel Light Baptist Church.

May 14th 2008

Date

Greg S. Baker

Pastor or Minister of Records