



Church Constitution and Bylaws

Revised August 19, 2015

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Preamble to Church Constitution

For the certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to others of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

Article I - Name

This body shall be known as the Forks of Dix River Baptist Church of Lancaster, KY 40444, located in Garrard County, KY.

Article II - Purpose

The purpose of this body shall be to provide regular opportunities for public worship; to sustain the ordinances, doctrines and ethics set forth in the New Testament for the local church to nurture its members through a program of Christian Education; to channel its offerings to the support of the objects of the Redeemer's Kingdom; and to preach and propagate among all people the gospel of the Revelation of God through Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Article III - Articles of Faith

On June 14th, 2000, the Southern Baptist Convention adopted a revised summary of our faith:

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world,

the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

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

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

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

Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

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

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

C. God the Holy Spirit

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

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

III. Man

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

sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

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

IV. Salvation

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

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

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

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

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to

progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

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

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

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16;

5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

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

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a

church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

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

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

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

IX. The Kingdom

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

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

1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

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

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

XI. Evangelism and Missions

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

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-

40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is coordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

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

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and

should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

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

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

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

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

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

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

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

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

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

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

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the

channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

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

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

Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hatred and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Forks of Dix River Baptist Church.

Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe.

Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life

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

Church Membership Agreement

The membership of this Church shall be composed of individuals who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and affirm the tenets of the Church Constitution, and who offer evidence, by their confession and their conduct, that they are living in accord with their affirmations and this Constitution and Bylaws, and are actively pursuing and continuing in a vital fellowship with the Lord, Jesus Christ. The membership of this Church shall have final authority in all matters of church governance, as set forth and described in the Bylaws.

Marriage Policy

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Forks of Dix River Baptist Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the pastor(s) and staff of Forks of Dix River Baptist Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Forks of Dix River Baptist Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.

Article IV - Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and the on profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in 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 doctrine; 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 family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

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 in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it 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.

Article V - Character

Section 1- Polity

The government of this church is vested solely in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist Churches

Section 2 - Affiliation

We affiliate ourselves with any association, or convention of like belief, faith and order and the Southern Baptist Convention under the spirit as published in Article IV of the 1958 Annual of the Southern Baptist Conventions which reads “Authority: While independent and sovereign in its own sphere, the convention does not claim and never will attempt to exercise any authority over any other Baptist body, whether church, auxiliary organizations, associations, or convention.” We, therefore, argee to participate in these organizations through our duly elected messengers and our support of the cause which these organizations represent and foster

Section 3 – Doctrine

This church accepts the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained as indicated in the Articles of Faith herewith.

Article VI - General

Section 1 - License

When a member of this church announces that he feels the call of God to the Ministry, the church may license him as an acknowledgment of his call to the ministry and encourage him to make preparation for it. The clerk of the church may furnish him with a copy of minutes and a certificate of license as his credentials. It is understood that the performance of civil duties by the member shall be governed by state law.

Section 2 - Ordination

In the event this church has been requested to ordain a member who has been called as Pastor of a Baptist Church, the following procedure shall be followed. The Church will express its approval of the candidate by voting to consider his ordination. It shall invite messengers from neighboring Baptist Churches to form a council to examine the candidate and report to this church. Upon receipt of a favorable report from the council the church shall proceed with the ordination.

Section 3 - Property Holding

The securing and maintaining of real property, buildings and equipment by this church shall be for the express purpose of providing facilities for public worship and for the engagement upon the missionary, educational, and benevolent interests of this church, of the character and in the spirit of the Constitution and Articles of Faith of this Congregation.

If at any time this church shall determine to alter the quality of its beliefs and practices so as in important respects to be at variance with the character describes in this Constitution and in these Articles of Faith, the proposed alteration shall be given to the clerk in writing, shall be presented to the church at least thirty (30) days before the time the vote is taken, and shall be read from the pulpit to the congregation on the Lord's Day following its being presented to the church. If the decision is by less than a unanimous vote of those present, it is understood that the rights of the property of the church shall inhere in that part of the congregation which shall agree to continue to use the property for the purpose for which it was purchased and has been to that time maintained.

Article VII - Adoption and Amendments

Section 1 - Adoption

This constitution shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when this church votes in favor of same

Section 2 - Amendments

This Constitution may be amended, altered, or repealed by a two-thirds majority of votes cast at any regular business meeting of the church or at any specially called meeting for that purpose, provided that such amendment, alteration, or repeal as is proposed shall be given to the clerk in writing, shall be presented to the church at least thirty (30) days before the time the vote is taken, and shall be read from the pulpit to the congregation on the Lord's Day following its being presented to the church.

Bylaws

Article I - Membership

Section 1

Members are expected to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian Life, to attend regularly the services of the church, to contribute regularly and systematically to its support and Kingdom causes, to share in its organized work, and subscribe to the constitution of this church.

Section 2

An person who appears before this church to make a public profession of his or her personal faith in the Lord Jesus Chris, who gives evidence of regeneration, who is received by not less than a three-fourths majority of votes cast, and is baptized by the authority of the church, shall be received into its membership

Section 3

A member of another Baptist church of like faith and order may be received by a letter of recommendation from that church and by a three-fourths majority of votes cast.

Section 4

Any person who has been a member of a Baptist church of like faith and order, and in consequence of peculiar circumstances has no regular letter of recommendation, may be received by a statement of Christian experience and former relationship satisfactory to this church as expressed by a three-fourths vote.

Section 5

Any person coming from a church other than a Baptist church of like faith and order will qualify for membership in this church as set forth in Section 2 above.

Section 6

Letters of recommendation may be granted to any Baptist church of like faith and order for any member in good standing who requests it. When letters are granted, membership in this church shall terminate.

Section 7

When a member of this church joins a church of a different faith and order membership in this church shall terminate.

Section 8

If a member requests to be released from the obligation of membership in this church, such a may be granted and membership in this church shall terminate.

Section 9

Any person whose membership has been terminated under the provision of Section 7 or Section 8 above, may be restored to membership by a three-fourths majority of votes vast upon presentation of evidence of repentance and reformation, and a publicly expressed desire to assume the obligations and responsibilities of membership

Section 10

The pastor shall be in charge of presenting to the church those who request membership in the church. In the case of his absence the Moderator shall be in charge.

Article II - Church Officers

Section 1 - Officers

The officers of this church shall be a pastor, other vocational leaders as needed, Moderator, Deacons, Trustee, Clerk, Treasurer, Music Director, Organist, Pianist, and other such officers as shall be required for the work of the church in its departments and organizations. All of these shall be elected by the church and shall be members in good standing

Section 2 - Election and Duties

Pastor

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. He shall serve until the pastoral relationship is dissolved by request of either the pastor or the church. At least thirty (30) days notice shall be given of termination of the relationship unless otherwise mutually agreed, with both pastor and church seeking to follow the will of God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit. The call of the pastor shall take place at a meeting especially set for that purpose, which meeting shall have been announced to the membership at least one week in advance. The election shall be upon the recommendation of a special committee elected to seek out and recommend as pastor a minister of the Gospel whose Christian character and qualifications fit him for the responsibilities of pastor of this church. The committee shall bring only one name at a time for consideration to the church and no nomination shall be made except upon recommendation of the committee. Election shall be with an affirmative vote of three-fourths necessary for a call. Should the one recommended by the committee fail to receive three-fourths of the votes, the committee shall be instructed to seek out another minister, and the meeting shall adjourn without debate.

The pastor shall be charged with the general welfare and oversight of the church. He shall be an ex-officio member of all organizations, departments and committees. He may call a special meeting of any group or organization according to procedures set forth in these Bylaws. He shall conduct religious services on stated and special occasions, administer the ordinances of this church, minister to members of this church and community, and perform other duties that usually pertain to his office. He shall have charge of the pulpit ministry of the church and shall arrange for workers to assist in revival meetings, with approval of the church and other special services and shall provide for guest speakers when he is absent from the pulpit. He shall be the administrative head of the church and shall arrange and approve all absences, vacations, etc. of all church employees. The pastor shall be a salary mutually agreeable to him and

the church. The Finance Committee will study the salary annually and recommend any changes which should be made. He shall be give two weeks vacation each year except after a tenure of five years. Additional time may be granted upon the recommendation of the deacons and approval of the church in regular business session. He shall be permitted to hold revivals meetings as mutually agreeable to him and the church.

Moderator

The moderator shall be elected annually by the church upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee and from the floor. In the absence of the moderator the pastor shall preside. In the absence of the moderator and pastor, the clerk shall call the church to order and a moderator pro-term shall be elected.

Deacons

There shall be minimum of five deacons. They shall be elected from men of this church who have proven themselves to have scriptural qualifications. Deacons shall be elected at a regular church business meeting for this stated purpose. Nominations shall be made by the Nominating Committee and from the floor. You are encouraged to know if a man is scripturally qualified and would serve before he is nominated. After nominations are made the pastor and active deacons will contact the nominees concerning their scriptural qualifications and willingness to serve. These will be presented at the next regular business meeting and voted on by secret ballot. The man elected must be elected by majority vote. He will serve for a five years term. After completion of a full five year term, no deacon shall be eligible for re-election until the lapse of at least one full year. In case of death, removal, or inability to serve their time the church may elect a deacon to fill the unexpired term.

Deacons shall at times consider themselves servants of the church. With the pastor, and as the Holy Spirit may direct, they are to consider, and make recommendations to the church in all matters pertaining to its work and progress. They shall seek to know the spiritual, moral, physical needs and burdens of the members of the church; and shall serve the whole church in relieving, encouraging,

and developing all who are in such need. The deacons shall arrange for regular meetings and such committees as are necessary to discharge their duties. They shall elect annually their own chairman. The pastor, or any one of the deacons may call the deacon into a special session whenever need for such arises.

Trustees

There shall be a minimum of five trustees. These men shall be members who are actively interested in the work of the church. They shall be elected upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee of from the floor. Trustees shall be elected at a regular stated church business meeting for this stated purpose. The individual elected will serve for a five year period. After completion of a full five year period, no trustee shall be eligible for re-election until the lapse of at least one full year. In case of death, removal, or inability to serve their time the church may elect a trustee to fill the unexpired term. The Trustees shall, as provided by law and the action of the church, hold in trust the title to all property of the church and shall represent the church in all matters of legal responsibility regarding the purchase, improvement, and disposal of church property. They shall execute all legal papers relating to the church as the church may direct. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the church without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action. They shall have the actual care of the property, but they shall have control over the use of the property only by vote of the church.

In the absence of the treasurer the chairman of the Board of Trustees is authorized to sign checks.

The trustees have the responsibility for making the church the most attractive and well kept property in the community. God's house deserves the best attention that can be give to keep it worshipful and functional. Through regular systematic inspection of all church property the committee should seek to discover mechanical and structural faults before they become acute, repair properly (in keeping with the budget) and make recommendations to the church concerning major repairs and improvements. Much of the

effectiveness of the total program of the church is lost if the building is not in proper order. The trustees have a vital ministry that often must be performed behind the scenes. Some duties are:

1. Maintain adequate and attractive church property
2. Supervise painting and building repairs
3. Purchase equipment and maintenance supplies
4. Supervise maintenance of church grounds
5. Supervise janitor service and janitor personnel
6. Inspect regularly all doors and windows
7. Provide proper storage for maintenance supplies
8. Set schedule for general cleaning of entire building at regular intervals
9. Parking lot should be given regular inspection
10. The church parsonage should receive the same systematic supervisory care as the church buildings.

Clerk

The clerk shall be elected annually upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee or from the floor. It shall be the duty of the clerk to attend the church business meetings to maintain an accurate record of all business transactions, to prepare the annual Associational letter and to notify all officers, members of committees and messengers of their election or appointment. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal as authorized by the church, preserve all papers and valuable letters and records that belong to the church and preserve a true history of the church. It shall also be the duty of the clerk to keep an accurate roll of the church membership with dates and methods of admissions and dismissal, change in name, correct mailing addresses and other pertinent information

All books, records, and accounts kept by the clerk shall be considered property of the church and shall be delivered to the church periodically to be preserved as a permanent record of the church. All these items shall be delivered to the church upon the election of a successor.

The clerk shall give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary. The clerk shall do everything possible to promote church loyalty and efficiency in church life.

Treasurer

The treasurer shall be elected annually upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee or from the floor. The treasurer shall receive, keep in a bank, and disburse by check upon proper authority (a properly prepared voucher) all receipts of money for all causes represented by the financial program of the church. The treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements for all purposes and make a report at the regular monthly business meeting of the church and at other times as requested by the church. Copies of reports shall be kept by the church clerk as a part of the permanent record of the church. An annual report shall be made within thirty days of the end of the financial year and this report shall be audited by the trustees of their agent before it is presented to the church. All books, records, and accounts kept by the treasurer shall be considered property of the church and shall be delivered to the church periodically to be preserved as a permanent record of the church. All these items shall be delivered to the church upon the election of a successor.

The treasurer will receive the church offering enveloped, special offering envelopes, receipts, other evidences of money received, and post these to the individual's giving records. The treasurer shall consider it a part of a church member's responsibility to promote in every way the scriptural program of church finance.

Music Director

The Music Director shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee or from the floor. The Music Director shall work with the pastor and other musicians in planning the music program of the church. The Music Director shall be responsible along with the other members of this committee to see that the instruments are in properly working order.

Organist

The organist shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee or from the floor. The organist must recognize the value of music as it adds to the worshipful spirit of the church. This will require preparation for each service by dedicated and prayerful work.

Pianist

The pianist shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee or from the floor. The pianist must recognize the value of music as it adds to the worshipful spirit of the church. This will require preparation for each service by dedicated and prayerful work.

Other Officers

Other officers of the church including heads of the various teaching departments and missionary organizations of the church shall be elected annually from the floor or upon recommendation from the Nominating Committee. The organizational heads shall be added to the Nominating Committee to bring recommendations for the personnel of the various organizations.

These organizations shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church. It is understood that the pastor is ex-officio a member of all organizations. These organizations shall follow the methods and procedures adopted by the respective agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Other Staff Members

All staff members shall be elected by the church and shall be under the general supervision of the pastor, aided by such committees as may be specifically designated for that purpose.

Article III - Church Committees

The church shall elect such standing committees and special committees as it may deem necessary to carry out the various phases of the program of the church effectively and efficiently

Section 1 - Church Council

The membership of the council shall be composed of the pastor, staff members, clerk, treasurer, music director, one representative of the deacon body and trustees and each of the organizations (Sunday School, Discipleship Training, WMU, and Baptist Men).

Duties of the council shall be:

1. Recommend objectives and goals
2. Outline a Church Calendar of activities for accomplishing these objectives and goals
3. Develop wholehearted cooperation
4. Evaluate the results

These functions should be carried out in the council meeting held quarterly, or as may be desired, or call od pastor or chairman at any time deemed necessary. All matters agreed upon by the council, calling for action not already provided for, shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

Section 2 - Nominating Committee

This committee shall be elected by the church during the January business meeting to permit time to make recommendations to the church in the April business meeting for the office of Deacon, Trustee, Sunday School Director, Discipleship Training Director, Baptist Men Director, WMU Director. Heads of the Departments: Sunday School, Discipleship Training, WMU, and Baptist Men to be added to the Nominating Committee to help secure officers for their organizations. There shall be three persons who compose this committee. The reports of the Nominating Committee shall be suggestive only, and any member of the church will have the privilege of nominating from the floor.

Section 3 - Pastor Search Committee

The pastor search committee shall consist of five members to be elected as soon as possible after the need for a pastor arises. Every effort should be made to have this committee to represent a cross section of the church. The following procedure is to be used in a

selecting a committee to represent the church, who, each individually reflect various organizations of the church.

1. By written ballot, nominate 1-5 members taken from a list of resident adult members, 18 years of age or older.
2. Take the seven individuals with the most votes, if a tie exists for seventh place add this name for eight place.
3. Of these seven or eight that have been nominated elect from this list five individuals.
4. There should be no two members from one immediate family.
5. The committee shall be prompt with their assignment and report to the church on the progress of their work with regularity so all know of the activities of this committee.

Section 4 - Memorial Committee

The Memorial Committee shall be made up of not less than two members plus a Chairman. It will provide memorials in case of death to any member of our church or Sunday School as the need arises and as the church deems appropriate.

Section 5 - Other Committees

Such committees as the church may deem necessary to permit the most effective and efficient completion of its missions may be elected by the church

Article IV - Meetings

Section 1 - Worship

Public services shall be held on the Lord's Day and on some regular evening or evenings of the week. The Lord's Supper shall be observed on the first Sunday of each Quarter or as such time as the church may determine. The deacons will assist in the serving of the Lord's Supper. They may request assistance from other men of the church when deemed necessary.

Section 2 - Business

A regular stated business meeting of the church shall be conducted monthly, unless by special arrangement by the church. Special business meetings may be called by the pastor, the deacons, the trustees, or some committee or by the clerk upon written application signed by five members, or more, of the church. Business meetings shall be conducted under the procedure of the current edition of Roberts Rules of Order.

Article V - Financial Practices

The financial program of this church shall be supported solely from free will offerings and tithes given by the individuals out of their love for Christ and for the advancement of His Kingdom. This church at no time, now or in the future, shall enter into practices of business, buying or selling, for the purpose of financing its programs.

Article VI - Adoption and Amendments

Section 1 - Adoption

These bylaws shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when this church votes in favor of same.

Section 2 - Amendments

These bylaws may be amended, altered, or repealed by a two-thirds majority of votes cast at any regular business meeting of the church or at any specially called meeting for that purpose, provided that such amendment, alteration, or repeal as is proposed shall be give to the clerk in writing, shall be presented to the church at least thirty (30) days before the time the vote is taken, and shall be read from the pulpit to the congregation on the Lord's Day following its being presented to the church.

Article VII - Preservation

A copy of this constitution and these bylaws shall at all times be kept by the church clerk among his records, and all amendments or revisions thereof shall, after passage by the church, be prepared by the clerks and permanently attached to copies of the Constitution and Bylaws and made available to the church members generally upon request.

Respectfully submitted,
Hazel Edwards, Treasurer
James McCane, Jr., Moderator
WD Sutton, Senior Deacon
Johnny Prewitt, Clerk
Leon Greer, Pastor