

The Statement of Faith & Constitution
of
FIFE LAKE BAPTIST CHURCH
of Fife Lake Grand Traverse Co., MICHIGAN
(Revised 2-3-2021)

Section 1-Statement of Faith

ARTICLE I
THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men controlled by the Holy Spirit^a, that it has truth without any admixture of error for its matter^b and therefore is and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man, the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried^c.

^a II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:19-21, Acts 1:16, Acts 28:25. ^b Psalms 119:160, Psalms 119:105, Psalms 119:130, Luke 24:25-27, John 17:17, Luke 24:44-45. ^c Psalms 119:89, Proverbs 30:5-6, Romans 3:4, I Peter 1:23, Revelation 22:19, John 12:48, Isaiah 8:20, Ephesians 6:17, Romans 15:4, Luke 16:31, Psalms 19:7-11, John 5:45-47, John 5:39.

Explanatory:

1. By "*The Holy Bible*," we mean that collection of sixty-six books, from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written, does not merely contain and convey the Word of God, but is the very Word of God.

2. By "*Inspiration*," we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.

ARTICLE II
THE TRUE GOD

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, who is infinite, intelligent spirit, the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth^a, inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love^b, that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption^c.

^a Exodus 20:2-3, Genesis 17:1, I Corinthians 8:6, Ephesians 4:6, John 4:24, Psalms 147:5, Psalms, 83:18, Psalms 90:2, Jeremiah 10:10. ^b Exodus 15:11, Mark 12:30, Romans 11:33, I Timothy 1:17, Revelation 4:11. ^c Matthew 28:19, John 10:30, John 15:26, John 17:5, Acts 5: 3-4, I Corinthians 2:10-11, I Corinthians 12:4-6, II Corinthians 13:14, Ephesians 2:18, Philippians 2:5-6, I John 5:7.

ARTICLE III
THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST

Concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, we believe 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 men^a. He accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice, and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and then 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^c.

^a Isaiah 7:14, 9:6, Luke 1:35, John 1:1-2, 14, II Corinthians 5:19-21, Galatians 4:4-5, Philippians 2:5-8. ^b Acts 2:18-36, Romans 3:24-25, Ephesians 1:7, 1 Peter 2:24, 1 Peter 1:3-5. ^c Acts 1:9-10, Romans 8:34, Hebrews 9:24, 7:25, 1 John 2:1-2.

ARTICLE IV THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with God the Father^a and God the Son^b and of the same nature^c, that He was active in the creation^d, that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled^e, that He convicts of sin, of righteousness, of judgment^f, that He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony^g, that He is the agent in the new birth^h, that He seals, baptizes, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer, and that the fruit of the spirit (love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance) is the evidence of His indwelling rather than the speaking in tongues and other spectacular demonstrationsⁱ.

^a John 14:16-17. ^b Matthew 28:19. ^c Hebrews 9:14, John 14:26, Luke 1:35. ^d Genesis 1:1-3. ^e II Thessalonians 2:7. ^f John 16:8-11. ^g John 15:6-27, Acts 5:30-32. ^h John 3:5-6. ⁱ Ephesians 1:13-14, Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33, Acts 11:16, Luke 24:49, John 16:13, John 14:26, Romans 8:14, Romans 8:16, II Thessalonians 2:13, I Peter 1:2, Romans 8:26-27, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 5:18-21.

ARTICLE V SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification has a twofold meaning, that of setting apart of things, days or persons specifically for God and that the believer at the time of his regeneration is so set apart by God the Father^a. There is also the progressive work of the Holy Spirit (called sanctification) whereby the believer, obedient to the Word of God experiences the power of the indwelling Christ for holiness of life and victory over the old nature, which work will be completed when the believer stands in Christ's presence^b.

^a I Corinthians 1:30, Hebrews 10:10-14. ^b Colossians 1:26-28, John 17:17, I Thessalonians 5:23, II Corinthians 3:18.

ARTICLE VI THE DEVIL OR SATAN

We believe that Satan was once, holy, and enjoyed heavenly honors, but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell^a and drew after him a host of angels, that he is now^b, the malignant prince of the power of the air and the unholy god of this world^c, we hold him to be man's great tempter^d, the enemy of God and His Christ^e, the accuser of the saints^f, the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy^g, the lord of the Antichrist^h, and the author of all powers of darknessⁱ. He is destined to final defeat at the hands of God's Son^j, and to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels^k.

^a Isaiah 14:12-15, Ezekiel 28:14-17. ^b Revelation 12:9, Jude 6, II Peter 2:4. ^c Ephesians 2:2, John 14:30. ^d I Peter 5:8, I Thessalonians 3:5, Matthew 4:1-3. ^e Zechariah 1:3, I John 3:8, Matthew 13:25, Matthew 13:37-39, Luke 22:3-4. ^f Revelation 12:10. ^g II Corinthians 11:13-15, Mark 13:21-22. ^h I John 4:3, II John 7, I John 2:22. ⁱ Revelation 13:13-14, II Thessalonians 2:8-11. ^j Revelation 19:11, Revelation 16:20, Revelation 12:7-9, Revelation 20:1-3. ^k Revelation 20:10, Matthew 25:41.

ARTICLE VII THE CREATION

We believe in the Genesis account of creation and that it is to be accepted literally and not allegorically or figuratively^a, that man was created directly in God's own image and after his own likeness^b, that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms^c, that all animal and vegetable life was made directly and God's established law was they should bring forth only, "after their kind^d."

^a Genesis 1:1, Exodus 20:11, Acts 4:24, Colossians 1:16-17, Hebrews 11:3, John 1:3, Revelation 10:6, Romans 1:20, Acts 17:23-26, Jerimiah 10:12, Nehemiah 9:6. ^b Genesis 1:26-27, I Corinthians 11:7. ^c Genesis 2:7, Genesis 2:21-23. ^d Genesis 1:11, Genesis 1:24.

ARTICLE VIII THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his maker^a, but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state^b, in consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but of choice^c and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse^d.

^a Genesis 3:1-6, Genesis 3:24. ^b Romans 5:12, Romans 5:19. ^c Romans 3:10-19, Ephesians 2:1-3, Romans 1:18, Ezekiel 18:19-20. ^d Romans 1:32, Romans 1:20, Romans 1:28, Galatians 3:22.

ARTICLE IX THE VIRGIN BIRTH

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner^a, born of Mary, a virgin as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman^b and that He is both the Son of God and God the Son^c.

^a Genesis 3:15. ^b Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 1:35, Mark 1:1, John 1.14, Psalms 2:7, Galatians 4:4. ^c I John 5:20, I Corinthians 15:47.

ARTICLE X THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN

We believe, that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace^a, through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins^b, that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the just dying for the unjust, Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree^c, that, having risen from the dead, He is

now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection. He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and an all sufficient Savior^d.

^a Ephesians 2:8, Acts 15:11, Romans 3:24. ^b John 3:16, Matthew 18:11, Philippians 2:7, Hebrews 2:14, Isaiah 53:4-7, Romans 3:25, I John 4:10, I Corinthians 15:3, II Corinthians 5:21. ^c John 10:18, Philippians 2:8, Galatians 1:4, I Peter. 2:24, I Peter 3:18, Isaiah 53:11, Hebrews 12:2. ^d I Corinthians 15:20, Isaiah 53:12, Hebrews 9:12-15, Hebrews 7:25, I John 2:2.

ARTICLE XI GRACE IN THE NEW CREATION

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again^a, that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus^b, that it is instantaneous and not a process^c, that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God^d, that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel^e, that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life^f.

^a John 3:3. ^b II Corinthians 5:17. ^c Luke 5:27, I John 5:1, John 3:6-7, Acts 2:41, Acts 16:30-33. ^d II Peter 1:4, Romans 6:23, Ephesians 2:1, II Corinthians 5:19, Colossians 2:13. ^e John 3:8, John 1:12-13. ^f Galatians 5:22, Ephesians 5:9.

ARTICLE XII SALVATION

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace^a and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ^b, Whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins^c. We believe that all sins^d, except blasphemy of the Holy Spirit^e, are forgivable.

^a Ephesians.2:8-10. ^b John 1:12. ^c Ephesians. 1:7, I Pet. 1:18-19. ^d I John 1:9. ^e Matthew. 12:31-32.

ARTICLE XIII JUSTIFICATION

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification, that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness^a, that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us^b.

^a Acts 13:39, Isaiah 53:11, Zechariah 13:1, Romans 8:1, Romans 5:9, Romans 5:1. ^b Titus 3:5-7, Romans 1:17, Habakkuk 2:4, Galatians 3:11, Romans 4:1-8, Hebrews 10:38.

ARTICLE XIV REPENTANCE AND FAITH

We believe that repentance and faith are solemn obligations^a and inseparable graces^b, wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God^c, thereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy^d, at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Savior^e.

^a Acts 20:21. ^b Mark 1:15. ^c Acts 2:27-38. ^d Luke 18:13, Romans 10:13, Psalms 51:1-4, Psalms 51:7, Isaiah 55:6-7.
^e Luke 12:8, Romans 9:11.

ARTICLE XV THE CHURCH

We believe that a church of Christ is a congregation of immersed believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel^a, observing the ordinances of Christ^b, governed by His laws^c and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His word^d, that its scripturally designated officers are pastors (elders) and deacons whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the scriptures^e. We believe the true mission of the church is found in the great commission, first, to make individual disciples, second, to baptize them, third, to teach and instruct as He has commanded. We do not believe in the reversal of this order^f, we hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit^g, that it is scriptural for true churches to co-operate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel, that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its co-operation^h, on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is finalⁱ.

^a Acts 2:41, 42. ^b I Corinthians 11:2, Acts 2:42. ^c Ephesians 1:22-23. ^d Ephesians 4:11, I Corinthians 12:4, I Corinthians 12:8-11. ^e Acts 14:23, Acts 6:5-6, Acts 15:23, Acts 20:17-28, I Timothy 3:1-7, I Timothy 3:8-13. ^f Matthew 28:19-20.
^g Colossians 1:18, Ephesians 5:23-24, 1 Peter 5:1-4. ^h Acts 15:22, Jude 3-4, II Corinthians 8:23-24, 1 Corinthians 16:1. Malachi 3:10, Leviticus 27:32, 1 Corinthians 16:2. ⁱ I Corinthians 6:1-3, I Corinthians 5:11-13.

ARTICLE XVI BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that Christian baptism is the believer's immersion in water^a, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost^b, to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life^c, that in scriptural order it (baptism) precedes the privileges of church membership and is the public recognition of the Lordship of Jesus Christ^d. The Lord's Supper is a memorial service in which the elements of bread and wine remind us of the love of God in Christ Jesus, "Who spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all," that this ordinance is to be observed in anticipation of His coming and preceded always by solemn self-examination^e.

^a Acts 8:36-39, Matthew 3:6, John 3:23, Romans 6:4-5, Matthew 3:16. ^b Matthew 28:19. ^c Romans 6:3-5, Colossians 2:12.
^d Acts 2:41-42, Matthew 28:19-20. ^e I Corinthians 11:23-28, Romans 8:32.

ARTICLE XVII THE PERSEVERANCE AND PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end^a, that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors^b, that a special providence watches over their welfare^c and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto

eternal salvation^d.

^a John 8:31-32, Colossians 1:21-23. ^b I John 2:19, Matthew 13:19-20. ^c Romans 8:28, Matthew 6:30, Psalms 121:3, Hebrews 1:14. ^d I Peter 1:5, Philippians 1:6, John 10:28, John 10:29, John 16:8, Romans 8:35-39.

ARTICLE XVIII SEPARATION

We believe that believers should maintain a godly testimony and live in such a way that that their lives do not bring reproach upon their Savior^a. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy^b, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations^c, and to refrain from all immodest and immoderate appearances, piercings, and bodily markings^d. We stand against any and all worldly philosophies that seek to destroy or undermine the truth of Biblical Christianity^e.

^a Romans 12:1-2, I Corinthians 6:19-20, II Corinthians 6:14-7:1. ^b II John 9-11. ^c I John 2:15-17, James 4:4. ^d Romans 14:13. ^e II Corinthians 10:4-5, Colossians 2:8.

ARTICLE XIX THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe that there is radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked^a, and that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem^b, and that all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse^c. There will be a bodily resurrection of all men, the righteous (saved) to eternal life, and the wicked (unsaved) to judgment and everlasting punishment^d. The souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord^e, and the souls of the wicked remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body are reunited, and they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment^f.

^a Malachi 3:18, Genesis. 18:23, Romans 6:17-18, Proverbs 11:31, I Peter 4:18. ^b Romans 1:17, Romans 6:16 I Corinthians 15:22, Acts 10:34-35, I John 2:29, I John 3:7. ^c I John 5:19, Galatians 3:10, Romans 6:16, Romans 7:6, Romans 6:23.

^d Matthew 25:46, John 5:28-29, 11:25-26, Revelation 20:5-6, 12-13. ^e Luke 23:43, II Corinthians 5:8, Philippians 1:23, 3:21, I Thessalonians 4:16-17, Revelation 20:4-6. ^f Matthew 25:41-46, Mark 9:43-48, Luke 16:19-26, II Thessalonians 1:7-9, Jude 6-7, Revelation 20:11-15.

ARTICLE XX CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society^a, that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed^b, except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ^c, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth^d.

^a Romans 13:1-7, II Samuel 23:3, Exodus 18:21-22. ^b Acts 23:5, Matthew 22:21, Titus 3:1, I Peter 2:13-14, I Peter 2:17.

^c Acts 5:29, Acts 4:19-20, Daniel 3:17-18. ^d Matthew 10:28, Matthew 23:10, Revelation 10:6, Philippians 2:10-11, Psalms 72:11.

ARTICLE XXI
THE RESURRECTION, RETURN OF
CHRIST AND RELATED EVENTS

We believe the Lord Jesus was physically resurrected the third day according to the Scriptures^a. After 40 days, in which He taught His disciples of things pertaining to the kingdom of God, the Lord literally ascended into heaven and was set down at the right hand of God in heavenly places^b, where he now intercedes for us as our Great High Priest^c. We further believe in a physical and literal second coming of Jesus Christ^d. This event will take place prior to His one-thousand-year reign on the earth^e, at which time He will rule from the throne of David^f. Included in His second coming there will be the resurrection of the righteous dead in which they will receive new bodies and will be united with their soul in heaven^g. The living righteous will then be caught up and changed and will ever be with the Lord^h.

^aMatthew 28:6-7, Luke 24:39, John 20:27, I Corinthians 15:4, Mark 16:6, Luke 24:2, Luke 24:4-6. ^b Acts 1:9, Acts 1:11, Luke 24:51, Mark 16:19, Revelation. 3:21, Hebrews 8:1, Hebrews 12:2. Eph. 1:20. ^c Hebrews 8:6, I Timothy 2:5, I John 2:1, Hebrews 2:17, Hebrews 5:9-10. ^d John 14:3, Acts 1:11, I Thessalonians 4:16, Matthew 24:27, Matthew 25:13, James 5:8, Matthew 24:42, Hebrews 9:28. ^e I Corinthians 15:25, Isaiah 32:1, Isaiah 11:4-5, Psalms 72:8, Revelation 20:1-4, Revelation 20:6. ^f Luke 1:32, Isaiah 9:6-7, Acts 2:29-30. ^g I Thessalonians 4:16, I Corinthians 15:42-44. ^h I Corinthians 15:51-53, I Thessalonians 4:17, Philippians 3:20-21.

ARTICLE XXII
HUMAN SEXUALITY

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman^a. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex^b. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance^c. The only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman for life^d.

^a Genesis 1:27, 2:24. ^b Genesis 19:5, 13, Leviticus 18:1-30, Romans 1: 26-29, I Corinthians 5:1, 6:9, I Thessalonians 4:1-8, Hebrews 13:4. ^c Matthew 19:4. ^d Genesis 2:24, Romans 7:2, I Corinthians 7:10, Ephesians 5:22-23.

ARTICLE XXIII
FAMILY RELATIONSHIP

We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God^a, but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church^b. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church^c. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society^d. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church^e. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ^f. Children are an heritage from the Lord^g. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction^h. We believe that God disapproves of divorceⁱ and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies^j. Due to the controversial nature of the subject of marriage and divorce, we uphold that divorce and remarriage shall be regarded and dealt with as adultery except on the grounds of fornication and abandonment^k.

^a Galatians 3:28, Colossians 3:18. ^b I Timothy 2:8-15. ^c I Timothy 3:4-5, 12. ^d Genesis 1:26-28, Exodus 20:12, Mark 10:6-12. ^e Ephesians 5:21-33. ^f I Corinthians 7:1-16, Ephesians 5:21-33, Colossians 3:18-21, I Peter 3:1-7. ^g Psalm 127:3-5. ^h Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Proverbs 19:18, 22:15, 23:13-14. ⁱ Malachi 2:14-17. ^j Romans 7:1-3. ^k Matthew 19:3-12, I Corinthians 7:12-16.

ARTICLE XXIV ABORTION

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well-being of the mother are acceptable.

Psalm 139:14-16, Isaiah 44:24, 49:1, 5, Jeremiah 1:5, 20:15-18, Luke 1:44.

ARTICLE XXV EUTHANASIA

We believe that the direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus we believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment.

Exodus 20:13, 23:7, Matthew 5:21, Acts 17:28.

ARTICLE XXVI LOVE

We believe that we should demonstrate love for others^a, not only toward fellow believers^b, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions^c. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly^d. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice^e. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions^f.

^a Leviticus 19:18, Romans 13:8-10. ^b John 13:34-35, I John 3:17-18. ^c Matthew 5:44-48. ^d Romans 12:9-10, Philippians 2:2-4. ^e Romans 12:17-21. ^f Matthew 5:44-48.

ARTICLE XXVII LAWSUITS BETWEEN BELIEVERS

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes^a. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members^b. 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.

^a I Corinthians 6:1-8. ^b Ephesians 4:31-32, Matthew 18:15-17.

Section 2- Authority of The 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 teachings of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature, whether print or electronic, used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

Section 3 - Constitution

THE PREAMBLE

Reposing our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation and believing in the teachings of the Holy Bible as the plenary and verbally inspired word of the living God, we have affiliated ourselves with one another as a body of immersed believers and we adopt this constitution as a declaration of our convictions so that we may carry on the Lord's work decently and in order.

ARTICLE I – NAME

This Church shall be identified as **The Fife Lake Baptist Church of Fife Lake**, Grand Traverse County, Michigan. It is incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Michigan.

ARTICLE II – GOVERNMENT

This organization is an independent, fundamental Baptist Church. All departments shall be subordinate to the church.

ARTICLE III – PURPOSE

This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational 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), for such purposes including, but not limited to, the maintaining of public Christian worship, the study and teaching of the bible, the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, the administration of the New Testament Ordinances, the spiritual improvement of its members, the winning of the lost to Christ and to exercise as far as possible a Christian and moral influence in the community and a missionary spirit in the world at large.

ARTICLE IV – ASSOCIATIONS

This church shall be an independent, autonomous church, subject only to Jesus Christ, the head of the church. It has the right to cooperate and associate with other biblical groups on a voluntary basis. There shall be no cooperation with a group that permits the presence of apostates or apostasy or that endorses groups that permit the presence of apostates or apostasy.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

Section 1 - Officers of the Church

(A) The elected officers of the church shall be: pastor, deacons, trustees, clerk, financial secretary, treasurer and Sunday school superintendent.

(B) No one shall be elected to office who has not been a member of this church for at least one year, except that upon recommendation of pastor and/or deacons, a person may be considered by the church for the office sooner if necessary.

(C) All officers, teachers, choir members and special speakers shall be spiritually mature, unquestioned Christian character, loyal to the Word of God, dedicated and devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the spiritual and material welfare of this church. Their moral conduct shall be beyond reproach and free of carnal indulgences, such as the use of intoxicating beverages, tobacco in all forms, narcotic drugs and other worldly practices. In light of I Timothy 3, the home and family relationships must be considered, as well as individual qualifications.

(D) All officers shall normally assume their duties on February 1st. Retiring officers shall hold office until the terms of newly elected officers begin.

(E) Any officer unable or unwilling to fulfill the duties of his office shall resign. If any officer refuses to subscribe to the Articles of Faith, the Constitution and the Church Covenant, his resignation shall be requested by the deacons. If it is not received within a reasonable time, the office shall be declared vacant by vote of the church.

(F) Only members of this church may hold office in any department.

(G) Upon termination of membership any officer of the church shall immediately forfeit his position and return any church property to the church office.

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 church clerk shall serve as secretary of the corporation; the church treasurer shall serve as treasurer of the corporation; and the chairman of the board of deacons shall serve as vice president of the corporation. The pastor and the board of deacons shall constitute the board of directors of the corporation.

Section 3 - Pastor

(A) As often as it may become necessary by death, resignation or removal, the pastorate shall become vacant, a successor shall be chosen by the church without necessary delay.

(B) A candidate for the pastorate shall be carefully examined by the pulpit committee as to his salvation, doctrine, Christian conduct and call to the ministry. If he has served in other churches, his ministry there shall be explored. He shall be required to state his acceptance of and adherence to the Statement of Faith, Constitution, and Covenant of the Church. The pulpit committee shall present only one man at a time for the consideration and vote of the church.

(C) A call to a pastor shall be extended at a church business meeting to be held on the first regularly scheduled prayer meeting night following the day on which the candidate, candidates. A three-fourths majority of those present and voting shall be necessary for a call. Voting shall be by ballot. A written call and agreement shall be presented to the prospective pastor, giving details of church-pastoral relationship, including salary, housing and car allowances, insurance, vacations, etc., after these matters have been discussed with the pastor and approved mutually.

(D) The pastor shall continue in office until he resigns or is dismissed by a three-fourths majority of those present and voting at a special meeting called for that purpose. Such a meeting shall be announced from the pulpit for two Sundays immediately preceding the date of such a meeting.

(E) The pastor shall give the church not less than thirty days nor more than sixty days' notice of his intentions to discontinue as pastor. This time limit may be shortened if mutually agreed upon by the pastor and deacons. The church shall give the pastor not less than sixty days' notice of dismissal. If, in the judgment of the church, the conduct of the pastor justifies immediate termination of his ministry, the church may declare the pulpit vacant and pay one month's salary beyond that date.

(F) The Pastor shall preach the gospel regularly and shall be at liberty to preach the whole counsel of God as the Lord shall lead. He shall administer the ordinances, supervise the teaching ministries, and tenderly watch over the spiritual interests of the members.

(G) The pastor shall moderate the business sessions of the church. In his absence, the chairman of the deacons shall act as moderator. If the pastor is to be under discussion in the business session, another moderator shall be elected, and the pastor and his family shall withdraw from the meeting.

(H) The pastor shall be an ex officio member of all boards and committees. He shall also be a member of this church.

(I) The pastor's salary shall be reviewed and determined at least once a year, with determination also being given to rising cost of living.

(J) The pastor shall be responsible, in coordination with the deacons, to establish mandatory safety and security procedures for all ministries and programs involving minors.

Section 4 - Deacons

(A) The selection of deacons shall be made from among the membership of the church as deemed necessary by the pastor of the church. Deacons shall be selected according to the model of Acts 6:

- When deemed necessary, the pastor shall present the need before the church, along with the number deemed necessary.
- The qualifications for the office, as declared in I Tim. 3:8-13 shall be presented.
- Nominations shall be made by the church.
- Approval or disapproval shall be determined by the pastor(s)

(B) The election of deacons shall be by a majority vote of the members present at a business meeting scheduled for this purpose. Voting shall be by ballot.

(C) Deacons shall hold office as long as stated need continues unless disqualified or determined to be unfit by pastor and deacons or he resigns.

(D) 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.

(E) They shall be helpers and advisors with the pastor in the oversight of the spiritual interests of the church and in the administration of the ordinances.

(F) They shall constitute a pulpit committee and take necessary steps to secure a candidate for office of pastor.

(G) They shall have charge of all meetings of the church in the absence of the pastor.

(H) The pastor and deacons shall appoint soon after each election, from the membership of the church, suitable personnel to such offices as may be needed to carry on effectually the work of the Lord, i.e. - music committee, a flower committee, an auditing committee, an advertising committee, a nominating committee, a librarian, ushers and others deemed necessary.

(I) It shall be the duty of the deacons, together with the Sunday school superintendent and pastor to determine the literature to be used in the education program of the church. The "Authorized King James Version Bible" shall be used exclusively, and all materials shall be consistent with this position.

(J) The deacons shall oversee all trustees.

Section 5 – Board of Directors

(A) The pastor and the board of deacons shall constitute the board of directors of the corporation.

(B) The board of directors shall exercise the following specific powers only upon authorization by a majority vote of the members present at a duly called church administration meeting:

(1) To purchase, 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 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; and

(3) To exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church corporation.

(4) All powers of the directors, (whether deacons or other appointed group) shall be compatible with the laws of the state of Michigan.

Section 6 - Trustees

(A) The need for trustees may be determined by the deacons to assist in the temporal needs of the church.

(B) Trustees must be approved by the pastor and majority vote of the church at any meeting determined for such purpose. All trustees shall be reaffirmed at the annual business meetings of the church.

(C) Trustees, if determined unfit, may be removed at anytime at the discretion of the pastor and deacons.

(D) Trustees shall take charge of all temporalities of the church, control and give attention to the ordinary business interests of the church, provided they shall not have the authority to sell, lease, give away or dispose of church property in any manner without the approval of the Board of Directors.

(E) A trustee may not mortgage or encumber the same with debt to exceed (in one month) an amount approved by the Board of Directors to carry out his duties without the approval of a board member. All projects involving the expenditure of more than \$150.00 are to be submitted to the church for approval, except in routine or emergency matters which may be approved by the Board of Directors.

Section 7 - Clerk

(A) The church clerk shall be elected biennially, whose business it shall be to have charge of all papers and records belonging to the church.

(B) The clerk shall make a full record of all business transactions and resolutions passed by the church.

(C) The clerk shall write all letters of the church unless otherwise directed and shall read all minutes of regular and special meetings of the church and perform such other duties as may pertain to the clerk's office.

(D) The clerk shall also keep a regular and up to date list of the church members that shall show date and manner of admission, dismissal, exclusion or death as will be the case and shall read, when requested to the church a report of all changes during the period since the last report was given.

(E) The church Clerk shall have the authority to write checks in the absence of the treasurer.

Section 8 - Financial Secretary

(A) It shall be the duty of the financial secretary, together with one or more of the deacons or trustees, to count and record in a permanent record all moneys received in the offerings of the church.

(B) Records shall be kept in accordance with written instructions issued by the auditing committee and approved by the pastor/deacons.

- (C) The financial secretary shall provide the treasurer with a record of all moneys received from organizations within the church or from individuals.
- (D) The financial secretary shall be responsible for depositing all funds in the bank, including moneys received from organizations within the church or from individuals.
- (E) The financial secretary shall provide the treasurer with a record of all moneys received and deposited, specifying the distribution into various funds, as indicated by donors or by special offerings.
- (F) The chairman of the deacons shall assume the duties of the financial secretary in the absence of the latter.
- (G) The financial secretary shall be elected biennially.

Section 9 - Treasurer

- (A) The treasurer shall be responsible for the recording of all financial transactions in the permanent records and shall make a quarterly and annual report to the church.
- (B) The treasurer shall pay all bills of the church after they have been approved by the deacons he or she shall write, sign, record and mail all checks. All disbursements shall be made by check. The church clerk shall assume the responsibility of signing the checks in the treasurers' absence.
- (C) At least two directors of this corporation shall be authorized to sign church checks in the treasurer's absence. The chairman of the deacons shall not perform this duty if functioning as the financial secretary. No persons shall be permitted to sign checks written to themselves, and no expenditures of the church shall be made by cash.
- (D) The treasurer shall keep the books of record and report the financial transactions in accordance with the written instructions issued by the auditing committee and approved by the deacons.
- (E) The treasurer shall be elected biennially.

Section 10 - Sunday School Superintendent

- (A) The Sunday school superintendent shall be selected by the pastor and elected by the church.
- (B) They shall take the oversight of the Sunday school and appoint teachers and other officers subject to the approval of the pastor and deacons.
- (C) They shall hold position until resignation or time determined by the senior pastor.

ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES

Section 1 - Budget Committee

- (A) The budget committee shall consist of the deacons and pastor.
- (B) The duties of the committee shall be to prepare the budget for the ensuing year and presentation to the church for its approval at the annual meeting.
- (C) The committee shall function throughout the year to recommend budget revisions to the church as may be deemed necessary.

Section 2 - Nominating Committee

- (A) This committee shall be composed of at least four members. The nominating committee shall be appointed by the deacons at least one month before the annual election. It shall consist of at least one deacon, one trustee, and one member from the church at large.
- (B) The committee shall submit a list of nominees for all offices to be filled. This list shall be posted in the church building at least one Sunday prior to the election. When qualified candidates are available, two or more shall be nominated for each office.
- (C) All persons placed on the ballot by the nominating committee shall be thoroughly investigated by the said committee, and each nominated for any office of the church shall be required to answer the

following questions in the affirmative:

1. Do you believe the entire bible to be the verbally inspired Word of God?
2. Have you read the scriptural qualifications for the office of deacon? I Timothy 3:8-13.
3. Have you read the Constitution and Statement of Faith of this church, and are you in hearty accord therewith in every particular?
4. Will you endeavor to maintain the daily spiritual edification of your family?
5. Will you endeavor to habitually engage in personal soul winning?
6. Will you endeavor to practice "Proportionate Giving" as taught by the scriptures?
7. Will you faithfully endeavor to attend all regular services of this church?

(D) They shall provide ballot forms for the annual election.

(E) Members who wish to submit nominations should give their suggestions in writing to the nominating committee at least three weeks before the election to enable the committee to ascertain their qualifications under Article VI, Section 2, B & C. No nominations shall be made from the floor.

Section 3 - Additional Committees

- (A) If a building committee is needed, it shall be nominated by the deacons and elected by the church.
- (B) All committees shall report quarterly and annually to the church unless otherwise instructed.
- (C) Any additional committees may be approved by the pastor and deacons as the need arises and dissolved at their discretion.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

Section 1 - Business Meetings

(A) The fiscal year of this church shall end upon the 31st day of December. The annual business meeting shall be held on the third Wednesday of January. The monthly treasures report shall be posted in the foyer. Any questions regarding the report may be discussed with the pastor and/or deacons.

(B) Special meetings for business shall be called by the pastor, majority of the board of deacons and trustees, or the majority of the membership present and voting providing there is a quorum present. Notice shall be read at the Lord's Day services prior to meeting. No business shall be transacted at a special meeting except that specified when meeting was called routine business such as receiving members or granting letters may be transacted when necessary at any stated meeting of the church without regard to the above requirements.

(C) The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling. The following order shall generally be observed at the regular church administration meetings consisting of at least 25% of the resident voting membership which shall constitute a quorum for business:

1. Open in prayer
2. Reading of minutes
3. Reception of members
4. Dismissal of members
5. Report of officers
6. Reports of standing committees
7. Reports of special committees
8. Unfinished matters

- 9. Election of officers
- 10. New matters
- 11. Adjournment
- 12. Benediction

- (D) Each church department shall make written annual reports to the church.
- (E) A voting member shall have passed his or her 18th birthday.
- (F) At the request of any member, voting shall be done by ballot.
- (G) The day for business meetings may be changed at the discretion of the pastor/deacons.
- (H) All business meetings shall terminate by 10:00 PM.
- (I) For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require nonmembers to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. The moderator shall have full authority to order the removal of all children (ages to be determined by the moderator) if the moderator determines, in his sole discretion, that circumstances so warrant. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, the moderator may, in his sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises in accordance with **Sec. 3.XI.2** and treat the person as a trespasser.

Section-2 —Motions

Members who desire that a certain motion be made, or subject matter be discussed during an annual, regular, or special business meeting must make a request to the pastor and deacons two weeks prior to the set meeting. The church leadership will then consider the proposal and proceed according to their conscience and what they understand to be in the best interests of the church. All other motions will be presented by the pastor and/or chairman of the board of deacons (or other moderator if the office of pastor is vacant) unless the pastor and/or deacons has delegated authority to another member and/or officer to raise certain motions.

ARTICLE VIII – ORDINATION

We believe that from time to time, spirit filled men will be called from among us to proclaim the Gospel of the Grace of God. Such men may be given commission to preach and administer the ordinances by a majority vote of the church members present and voting at a meeting called for this purpose, provided that a council called to examine the candidate advises the church to do so.

ARTICLE IX - CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1 - Sunday School

This organization shall be maintained for the express purpose of studying the bible and it shall be under the general supervision and control of the church.

Section 2 - Other Organizations

(A) There shall be such other organizations as the most efficient prosecution of our object shall demand, but none shall be started without the consent of the deacon board. These organizations shall be self-governing, but finally subject to the control of the church through its constitution and voted church policies.

(B) All major officers of auxiliary organizations and all regular teachers in the Sunday school must be members of the church in good and regular standing.

ARTICLE X – ORDINANCES

Section 1 - Baptism

Those professing saving faith in Jesus Christ shall, by the pastor or some person authorized by the church, be immersed in water in accordance with the scriptural teaching. Immersion shall be a prerequisite to church membership. This church recognizes only, "Believers Baptism" as valid.

Section 2 - Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper (Communion) shall normally be served to the assembled church by the pastor and deacons, or some person designated by the church, the first Sunday night of the month, or at the discretion of the pastor/deacons. Since it is the Lord's Table, none who are His shall be barred, but the pastor shall frequently state the scriptural order, which places baptism as a prerequisite to communion, and shall explain the meaning of the ordinances.

ARTICLE X1 – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Reception of Members

Those seeking membership must, through their actions, words, lifestyle, and affiliations, evidence a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior.

(A) Candidates for membership must meet with the pastor or member of the church approved by the pastor to study the Statement of Faith, the bylaws of this church, general church practices, and expectations of members.

(B) After specified meeting(s), the pastor may direct that candidates be interviewed by the pastoral staff and/or deacon board prior to being recommended for membership to ensure they fully subscribe to the Statement of Faith contained herein and agree to submit to the authority of the church and its leaders.

(C) After such recommendation, membership will be granted upon a majority, voice vote of the members present at any church service or meeting, and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:

- (1) By baptism (immersion) at this local church following a profession of faith as a believer in Christ Jesus as personal Savior;
- (2) By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith;
- (3) By testimony of faith, having been baptized by immersion in another Bible believing church of like faith and practice; or
- (4) By restoration, if having been removed from membership, upon majority, voice vote of the congregation after confession is made publicly before the church membership of the sin or sins involved, and satisfactorily evidencing repentance to the pastor (or the board of deacons if the office of pastor is vacant).

(D) Anyone who is a member of a secret society shall not be permitted to be a member of this church.

Section 2- Privileges of Membership

(A) Only members at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. The eligible membership of the church may only exercise voting privileges in those areas that are defined and limited by these bylaws. Members may not vote to initiate any church action, rather the vote of a

member is to confirm and ratify the direction of the church as determined by the pastor and the board of deacons.

(B) This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the under-shepherd with the counsel of the board of deacons. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters 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.

(C) Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board of deacons) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If, after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of the pastor, (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board of deacons), be treated as a trespasser.

(D) A member may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church and the minutes of the proceedings of church and committee meetings, provided they shall have made a written request upon the church and the church has received the written request at least five business days before the requested inspection date. Minutes from deacon board and discipline committee meetings are exempt from this provision and are not subject to inspection or copy.

(1) A member may not, under any circumstances, inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the church, the list of names and addresses of the church members, or the accounting books and financial records of the church.

(2) The church may impose a reasonable charge, covering the costs of labor and material, for copies of any documents provided to the member before releasing the copies to the member.

Section 2 - Discipline of Members

(A) There shall be a discipline 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. The pastor and deacons 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 the spiritual growth and testimony of an individual in the local church or the body as a whole, 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 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 discipline 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 discipline 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 that 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 be restored are to be removed from the membership of the church upon a majority vote of the membership present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action. The member subject to disciplinary action is not entitled to vote on his/her own discipline.

(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 a public offense.

(G) If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the church membership, the only contact members of the church should have with the individual from that point forward must be for the sake of restoration (except family members and normal business). Persons placed under church discipline must immediately return any property belonging to the church.

(H) The procedures provided in this section are based on Matt. 18:15-20; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:1-11; Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6, 10-15; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.

Section 3 - Dismissal of Members

(A) Any person in good standing shall be entitled at any time to a letter of dismissal in the usual form, with which to unite with another church of the same faith and order. Letters of dismissal shall be sent to the church with which the member desires to unite.

(B) Letters cannot be given to persons for the purpose of uniting with churches with which we could not fellowship.

Section 4- Automatic Termination of Membership

(A) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship 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. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member unites in membership with another church.

(C) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the deacons or pastor become aware of a member's open and unrepentant involvement in any sexual misconduct described in **Sec. 1. XXII** or if a member files a lawsuit in violation of **Sec. 1. XXVII**.

(D) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member openly and unashamedly disagrees with any provision found in the Statement of Faith.

(E) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in a spirit of dissension actively engages in secretive discussions and/or intentionally organized, secretive meetings in a concerted effort to overthrow the pastor or present church leadership.

(F) The membership of an individual will automatically terminate upon his or her death.

(G) No provision contained in this section shall be subject to or governed by the procedures regarding discipline of members set forth in **Sec. 3. XI. 2**.

(H) 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 XII – GENERAL

Section 1 - Use of Church Property and Name

(A) Use of the property for other than regularly scheduled meetings shall first be approved by the pastor and deacons.

(B) All gatherings off the church property held in the name of the church shall be subject to the

approval of the pastor and/or deacons.

(C) No secret society will be permitted to hold services in the church.

(D) No pastor or pulpit orator will be permitted to preach in the church who fails to clearly confess the fundamentals of the faith once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3). Any visiting speaker must have the approval of the pastor and/or deacons.

Section 2 - Monetary Principles

(A) The systematic giving of money for the support of the work of the Lord is worship as well as duty. It must be kept on a plane of voluntary free-will offerings, untarnished by any hope of material gain. All members are expected to give regular financial support to the church and to the advancement of the projects it shall sponsor. In determining the Lord's portion, we believe and affirm with the scriptures that at least one-tenth of one's income should be faithfully and cheerfully given by each one (II Corinthians 9:6-7) and many can and should give more than the tithe, for all we have belongs to Christ (I Chronicles 29:14&16, Acts 4:32-35.) No moneys shall be raised for the support of the church and its various activities by any but the biblical plan of tithes, offerings and gifts.

(B) A statement of each donor's account shall be given to him at the end of each year by the financial secretary or treasurer. Numbered envelopes can be offered to enable proper records to be kept, if so desired.

ARTICLE XIII- 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 bring 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

(A) 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 disagreement as befits Christians and in accord with Matthew 18:15-17.

(B) To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interests not to disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution.

(C) If they do not reach such 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 **Sec. 3. XIII. 1**, above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to **Sec.3.XIII.4**, below.

Section 3—Limitations of 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 **Sec. 3. XI. 2,3,4**, were followed.

(B) Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the pastor or deacons, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in **Sec. 3. V. 3 (D)(E)** and **Sec. 3.V.4 (C)** were followed.

Section 4 —Arbitration Procedures

The Procedures for Arbitration shall be as adopted by the pastor and the board of deacons.

ARTICLE XIV- DISSOLUTION CLAUSE

(A) Upon the dissolution of the corporation, after paying or making provision for payment of all its liabilities, the corporation shall dispose of all of its remaining assets to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

(B) Any action to dissolve the church must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the church present at a meeting called to specifically consider such action, for which meeting written notice has been issued to all members in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws.

(C) Assets may be distributed only to organizations that agree with the church's Statement of Faith.

ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENTS

Section 1

Amendments to these rules may be made by two-thirds majority vote at any annual or duly called special meeting, but this rule shall not be suspended at any time.

Section 2

The adoption of the forgoing rules (Articles I - XIII) shall be understood to rescind and annul any conflicting rules in force before their adoption.

CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and on profession of our faith, having been baptized by immersion in the name of the 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 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 throughout all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions, to educate our children in the Christian faith, to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances, to walk circumspectly in the world, to be just in our dealings, to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger, to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drink 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 one another in prayer, to aid one another in sickness and in 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, if possible, unite with a church where we can carry out the articles of the confession and the spirit of this covenant.

ADOPTION

These bylaws were adopted by the unanimous vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present. These bylaws supersede any other bylaws of **Fife Lake Baptist Church**.

Date: 02/03/2021

Pastor Jacob Terry

Deacon Alex Tallman

Deacon Wayne Seger

Church Clerk KaSandra Terry