

# CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF NACOGDOCHES BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

## Preamble

We the members of Nacogdoches Bible Fellowship do ordain and establish the following articles, which form our Constitution, this 8<sup>th</sup> day of August in the year of our Lord 2015.

## Article I

The name of this church shall be Nacogdoches Bible Fellowship.

## Article II

### PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE CHURCH

1. The purpose for which this church is formed is to Evangelize, Disciple and Minister, the Word of God, in a Spirit of Love to families in the Nacogdoches Community by means of Powerful Preaching, Practical Teaching; Meditative Music; Valued Visitation; and Fellowship.
2. Since that we believe that the Bible is God's holy and inspired word, it is our goal to draw from the Scriptures the principles that determine our beliefs and practices. It is the Word of God rather than the word of men that ultimately directs our church.
3. The purpose for which this church is formed is to corporately and publicly worship, praise, glorify and give thanks to the Trinity God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
4. It is our purpose to meet frequently for worship, instruction, fellowship, and outreach in accordance with Acts 2:42. The message we declare is based upon a literal grammatical and historical interpretation of the entire Bible. We proclaim the truths of the Bible, being confident that God is glorified and man's needs are met when God's truths are presented and obeyed.

5. In keeping with Acts 2:42 this Church has four major areas through which it fulfills its mission in the world.

A. Worship has as its primary goal expressing to God the esteem which His people hold for Him.

B. Fellowship is designed to promote the interpersonal caring and sharing of God's people one to another as an outgrowth of their fellowship with God.

C. Christian education promotes learning among God's people and an obedient response to His Word.

D. Outreach touches the world at large with the good news of Jesus Christ and the salvation He offers.

Each of the four areas is designed to provide a distinct, divine option to the world's approach to living, starting within the church and extending to society at large.

6. Since Nacogdoches Bible Fellowship believes that each member of the body has received from the Holy Spirit a spiritual gift which he/she is to discover and develop, it is our goal to see that these spiritual gifts are exercised, thereby contributing to the life of the body.

## Article III Doctrinal Statement

### 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; 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 Savior, 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 Savior, 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 Savior.

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 Savior, 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 under girded 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. Eschatology**

We believe that pre-millennium and pre-tribulation view is the most accurate reflection of what will occur in the end times.

Dan 6,9,11; 1 Cor. 15:50. ff.; 1 Thes 4:13 - 5:11

## **XIII. Gifts of the Spirit**

We believe the primary purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is the edification of believers. Thus, any public use of the gifts that does not edify the body is inappropriate. Ultimately every gift is given that God may be glorified and not man.

1 Cor 12:1 ff.

## **XIV. 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 co-ordinate 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.

## **XV. 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.

## **XVI. 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.

## **XVII. 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.

## **XVIII. 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.

## **XIX. 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.

## XX. The Family and Marriage

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.

Nacogdoches Bible Fellowship will marry only couples that meet the standard for marriage. Each member must be a member in good standing and each member must successfully complete premarital council by one of the Pastors before being married. Pastors reserve the right not to marry any couple that does not meet the standard of the Bible for a successful marriage.

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.

## Article IV Membership of the Church

**The following bylaws are subject for review a maximum of five (5) years. Bylaws may be reviewed prior to that date if another Pastor is selected.**

### Section 1. QUALIFICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

#### A. Permanent Members

Membership in the church shall be acquired upon affirmation of personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the believer's baptism, the signing of an agreement with the purposes, goals, and major essentials of doctrinal statement of the church, and the successful completion of the church's pre-membership classes. The applicant shall be interviewed by the Pastors and/or by specified representatives regarding their personal salvation.

#### B. Members Under Watch Care

Applicants who desire to retain their membership in another church outside the city or state, but who are residing temporarily in the Nacogdoches area for educational, vocational, military, or other purposes, may be admitted into the membership. Members under watch care shall possess the same rights and privileges of regular members while attending and meet all of the requirements of "Permanent Members" above.

#### C. Receiving Members

All applicants shall be publicly presented to the church body at a regular worship service. At the said time, they shall be extended the right hand of fellowship, consequently signifying their memberships.

## Article VI Senior Pastor

### Section 1. VACANCY OF SENIOR PASTOR

#### A. Nomination of Senior Pastor

Pastoral Search Committee will be selected within two weeks of the Senior Pastor vacating office for any cause.

1. The Executive Pastor shall appoint a Pastoral Search committee, composed of the congregation and chaired by a Deacon, to seek candidates for the position of Senior Pastor. This committee shall develop a profile, seek candidates, qualify candidates and then recommend candidates for the office of Senior Pastor to the Executive Pastor. In the case of a vacancy the Executive Pastor will function in the office of the Pastor. In this case, Executive Pastor will have no authority to make leadership or doctrinal changes.
2. If there are Service Pastors on staff, the Search Committee will first determine whether any Pastor is qualified for the office of Senior Pastor. If any are found, they will be interviewed to determine if they are interested in the job. They will then be voted on by the congregation. If there are no qualified candidates; if no Service Pastor is interested, or if the Church does not accept any candidate, the process will continue with outside applicants.

The process with Service Pastor should happen immediately after a vacancy and should take no more than 30 days.

3. The candidate for Senior Pastor shall be nominated by a majority vote of the Pastoral Search Committee, a quorum being present. He shall thereafter be recommended to the members of the church at a meeting of the church called for that purpose.

#### B. Election and Calling of the Senior Pastor

After the nomination and recommendation of the Senior Pastor by the Pastoral Search Committee, he shall be elected by a majority vote of those members present at a congregational meeting called for the purpose of electing the Senior Pastor. This meeting shall have been

announced from the pulpit for two consecutive Sundays prior to said meeting. Should the candidate receive less than a majority vote of the members present, the matter of nomination and affirmation shall be returned to the Search committee for further considerations and then back to the Executive Pastor. The Executive Pastor may then resubmit the same name or other names until a Senior Pastor is selected. Final approval belongs to the congregation.

## Section 2. **RESPONSIBILITIES OF SENIOR PASTOR**

- A. The Senior Pastor shall be the recognized leader of the church. He shall be responsible for providing general guidance to the church and overseeing the implementation of established policies. He shall be a member of the Board and eligible to hold any office on the Board except the office of Treasurer.
- B. As the chief administrator of the church, the Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the general oversight, coordination, administration, and operation of all programs and personnel of the church.
- C. It shall be the duty and obligation of the Senior Pastor to be the primary teacher of the Word of God as contained in the Old and New Testaments and to oversee the spiritual ministry of the church, which shall include but not limited to the administration of the ordinances and direction of worship services.
- D. The Senior Pastor, if he desires, shall be a member of each and every board, council, and committee of the church.
- E. It shall be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor to be the primary spokesperson of the policies, goals, direction, vision, and ministry of the church to the members as well as to the broader community at large.

## Section 3. **DISMISSAL OF SENIOR PASTOR**

- A. If, for any reason, whether for unfaithfulness, unfitness or other causes, the Deacon Ministry at a properly held meeting shall deem it necessary or desirable to remove the Senior Pastor from office, the Deacon Ministry, with the approval of the Executive Pastor, at such meeting shall select and appoint a committee to inquire into,

investigate, and examine the validity of the reasons or cause. The Executive Pastor shall chair the committee. The Senior Pastor, who is the subject of such inquiry, shall not have the power to vote and shall not cast a vote at any meeting relating to such inquiry or removal from office.

- B. The removal of the Senior Pastor shall be by the same procedures as is provided for the calling, nomination, and affirmation of a Senior Pastor. Before such action of removal is taken, the Deacon Ministry shall allow the Senior Pastor to speak to the Deacon Ministry and to the congregation in his own defense. During any inquiry of this nature, the Executive Pastor will assume the duties of the Pastor until such procedures are complete. During this procedure no changes to doctrine or leadership will be made by the Executive Pastor.

## **Article VII DEACONS**

### **Section 1. QUALIFICATION OF DEACONS**

The qualification of the Deacons shall be in accordance with the guidelines established in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 where it is written that deacons are to be “men worthy of respect, sincerely not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain.” They must keep hold of the deep truth of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested and then, if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers, but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A Deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Section 2. PURPOSE OF DEACONS**

The purpose of Deacons is to assist the Pastor in serving the needs of the members of the church.

### **Section 3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEACONS**

The duties of deacons are to assist in meeting the spiritual, physical, material, and temporal needs of the members; to encourage and develop

individual moral and spiritual character; to serve as advisors and support group to the Pastor; and to guard the unity of the Spirit within the church.

#### Section 4. **NOMINATION, APPOINTMENT, AND ELECTION OF DEACONS**

##### A. Nomination of Deacons

The Deacon Ministry shall solicit from the congregation and Pastor names of such persons in good standing in the church as the congregation deems qualified to be nominated and invited into the Deacon's training program.

##### B. Appointment of Deacons

Upon successful completion of the Deacon's training program, each nominee will be submitted to the Deacon Ministry for approval as a qualified candidate for the office of Deacon. Upon approval of the Deacon Ministry by a majority, a quorum, being present, the qualified candidate shall be presented before the Pastor for approval and the congregation.

##### C. Affirmation of Deacons

The congregation shall have a specific period of time to bring any known reasons, whether unfaithfulness, unfitness, or other cause, that a candidate shall not be deemed worth to assume the office of Deacon. After that period of time, congregation shall, by majority vote, a quorum being present, affirm the approval candidate to the office of Deacon.

#### Section 5. **NUMBER AND TERM OF OFFICE OF DEACONS**

The number of Deacons shall be set by the Pastor and determined in accordance with the size of the congregation. The term of office for a Deacon shall be three (3) years. A Deacon may succeed himself in office, if affirmed by the church for additional terms.

#### Section 6. **RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL OF DEACONS**

##### A. Resignation of Deacons

The resignation of a Deacon shall be in writing, subscribed by him, and submitted to the Chairman of the Deacon Ministry. If because of illness, infirmity, or inability any Deacon is unable to serve, another Deacon may act on behalf of that Deacon in submitting his resignation to the Deacon Ministry.

B. Removal of Deacons

If for any reason, whether for unfaithfulness, unfitness or other cause, the Deacon Ministry at any officially held meeting shall deem it necessary to remove a Deacon, the Deacons shall appoint a committee of at least four Deacons, chaired by a Deacon, to inquire into, investigate, and examine such reason or cause. As part of the inquiry process, the Deacon in question will be allowed to speak on his own behalf.

The Deacon in question shall not have the power to vote at any meeting relating to such inquiry for removal. After such inquiry, the committee shall make a written report of its recommended action to the Deacons. If the committee recommends removal of the Deacon investigated, a majority vote of the Deacons, a quorum being present, shall be necessary to remove such Deacon. Before such a vote is taken, the Deacon Ministry shall, at its discretion, allow the Deacon to appear and speak on his own behalf.

## **Article VIII**

### **Trustees**

#### **Qualifications**

The trustee must meet the same qualifications as the deacons of the church.

Working along with the Pastor, the Trustee Ministry of Nacogdoches Bible Fellowship is responsible for managing the fiscal affairs of the Church, subject to the regulation by the laws of the State of Texas. The Trustee Ministry is comprised of 3-9 members who elect their own officers and committees. The Trustee Ministry appoints an executive officer and includes an executive committee consisting of the chairperson, two co-treasurers and financial secretary. All of these are subject to the approval of the Pastor and his pastoral staff.

#### **Responsibilities**

The Trustee Ministry is responsible for:

- Ensuring the Church will be able to meet its financial goals and objectives in fulfilling the spiritual needs of the congregation and the greater community which it serves.
- The control and protection of all monetary assets deemed the property of Nacogdoches Bible. Consequently, the Trustee Ministry must be consulted before any contract or agreement is entered into that will affect the Church's financial position. The Trustee Ministry in turn is expected to act responsibly by consulting with the Pastor on significant financial matters.
- Maintain church financial and accounting records and prepare monthly, quarterly, semi-annual and annual financial statements showing details of all the income and expenditures for the Church. These statements should be accompanied by an analysis of all significant factors influencing the Church's financial position.
- Overseeing any special committees in terms of any committee transactions involving the receipt and disbursements of funds.
- The care and custody of the property of the Church, including opening and closing the Church for all regularly scheduled services and special events.

#### **Other Duties**

- hold and maintain official church documents
- provide regular status reports to congregation of general condition of church property
- receive and review requests for repair/improvements from Congregation

- make recommendations and submit proposals to Congregation of any and all maintenance and/or improvement needs of church property
- tally contributions and benevolence received by Congregation
- deposit contributions in assigned financial institution
- assist appointed persons in preparing and filing required local, state, and federal tax returns if required.

The Trustee Ministry has no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer real estate property without specific authority by vote of the congregation.

## **Article IX Councils of the Church**

### **Section 1. PURPOSE OF COUNCILS**

Nacogdoches Bible Fellowship believes that membership input and involvement is necessary for the effective leadership and operation of the ministries and administration of the church. Therefore, the Deacons shall recommend to the Pastoral staff, by appropriate resolution church members to ministry and administrative councils to advise church staff and leadership in the development and implementation of church policies.

### **Section 2. AUTHORITY AND POWER OF COUNCILS**

No council shall have the power to manage the affairs or business of the church until it has approval of the Pastoral staff. Councils are advisory in nature and shall have the power of assisting, aiding, and serving the Deacons and ministry leaders, in the respective duties and functions for which they are created.

### **Section 3. QUALIFICATIONS OF COUNCILS**

Each member of a church council must have placed his/her personal faith in Jesus Christ and demonstrated consistent progress toward spiritual growth and commitment to the purposes, goals, and programs of Nacogdoches Bible Fellowship.

#### Section 4. **COUNCIL COMPOSITION**

Each council shall include the head of that ministry area, and other persons recommended by the Pastoral Staff from the general membership.

#### Section 5. **REGULAR COUNCILS**

The church shall have five (5) regular or standing councils: Worship, Fellowship, Education, Outreach, and Administration.

(Administration will include two sub councils, Finance and Personnel) The Pastor may recommend additional councils if he deems necessary.

#### Section 6. **REVISION OF COUNCIL STATUS**

The Pastor may change a council status by changing its character to or from an advisory or policy status, abolishing the council, or making any other changes the Pastor and/or Pastoral Staff deems necessary.

#### Section 7. **GENERAL FUNCTION OF THE REGULAR MINISTRY COUNCIL**

##### A. The Worship Ministry council:

- Shall provide regular interface with the Pastor of Worship to seek worship improvement and structure.
- Shall review all aspects of worship for continuous improvement, including music, facility, appearance, and promotion of worship services.
- Shall give special attention to sound systems, speaker lighting, sermon tapes, and audio/video applications.

##### B. The Fellowship Ministry council:

- Shall interface with the Pastor of Fellowship in designing, developing, and coordinating the overall Fellowship Ministry.
- Shall make recommendations for programs and policy development.

##### C. The Christian Education Ministry council:

Shall provide the Pastor of Christian Education support and feedback in construction programs of continuous membership growth in Christian knowledge and Bible Study.

- Shall give special emphasis to facilitating a coordinated approach to youth, children, and adult programs of Bible study and Christian application in all church education activities, as well as education of the family unit.

D. The Outreach Ministry council:

- Shall assist the Pastor of Outreach in developing and reviewing each policy regarding missions, evangelism, and other related programs of home and world outreach.
- Shall assist the Pastor of Outreach in designing, promoting, and sponsoring mission/evangelism programs within the church family.

E. The Administrative Ministry council:

The Trustee Ministry, under the direction of the Executive Pastor, will be responsible for all functions of the Administrative Council.

- Shall assist the Business Administrator in developing and reviewing administrative policies, procedures, and business operations of the church.
- Shall provide the Business Administrator support and feedback to facilitate the development and use of prudent practices in the business and financial affairs of the church.
- Shall assist the Business Administrator in the acquisition, management, and maintenance of church property and facilities.

## **ARTICLE X RECORDS**

### **Section 1. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS**

The Church, or the duly appointed officers through action of the Pastor and/or Pastoral Staff, shall keep correct and complete financial, administrative, or other records, including minutes of the principal office record, of the names and addresses of the members entitled to vote.

### **Section 2. INSPECTION OF RECORDS**

Upon request of any member to inspect specific records of the Church, those records may be inspected at any reasonable time with an Deacon, committee chairman, or other representative present, unless the Pastor and/or Pastoral Staff that the showing of such records might be detrimental to an individual member(s) have determined it.

### **Section 3. REVISION OF MEMBERSHIP RECORDS**

In an effort to maintain accurate and complete church records, the membership list will be reviewed every six (6) months. If a member has not attended the church during the six months period under review, the Deacon or their appointee shall contact said member to determine the member's possible need for counsel or ministry and desire regarding church membership. If it is determined that said member no longer worships at Nacogdoches Bible Fellowship or if the member cannot by any reasonable means be located, his/her name shall be removed from the membership list.

## **ARTICLE XI DISPENSAL OF FUNDS TO MEMBERS**

The Finance Committee may consider a benevolence donation if warranted and the Church has sufficient budget to accommodate. Each request is considered under its own merit.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **Service Pastors**

The Senior Pastor shall have the ability to call Ministers into the offices of Executive Pastor, Education Pastor, Campus Pastor, Youth Pastor, Worship Pastor and others as he deems for the support of the ministry. After selection by the Senior Pastor these candidates will be presented to the congregation for approval.

The removal of any Service Pastor from service will be at the discretion of the Senior Pastor with the approval of the congregation.

Any and all of these Service Pastors may be paid if the church budget allows. The Senior Pastor will request such payment annually during the budget process. These positions have to be funded each calendar year. If the Financial Committee does not have sufficient budget to fund any position it will be deferred until the next calendar year. If funds are available during the calendar year the Senior Pastor may resubmit a position or positions for funding for the remainder of the year.

#### **Duties & Responsibilities**

Executive Pastor - Reports directly to the Senior Pastor and has operation responsibility for the entire church. In any absence of the Senior Pastor the Executive Pastor will be responsible for the church.

Duties of other Service Pastors will be dictated by the Senior Pastor if and when they are assigned.