

## **PREARTICLE**

For the more certain preservation of, and security of, the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of the Southern Baptist denomination and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other Baptist churches of the same Faith, we so declare and establish this Constitution and By-Laws.

## **ARTICLE I**

### **SECTION 1: The Church Name**

This body shall be known as the Old Bethel Baptist Church, 180 Co Hwy 449, Sikeston, Missouri.

### **SECTION 2: Church Policy**

This church shall be and remain a Democratic body governed only by its members as they look to the Holy Spirit of God and to the Holy Scriptures of God for authority.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, 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 doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of, and use of, intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

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

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

## **ARTICLE III**

### **ARTICLES OF FAITH**

This body accepts as Articles of Faith the Statement adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in session at Atlanta, Georgia, June 14, 2000, common in use among Southern Baptist churches as indicated in the Articles of Faith found in the tract (The Baptist Faith and Message), published by the Southern Baptist Convention, with these additions and clarifications. <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/>

## **SECTION 1: Doctrine**

We accept the scriptures, the Holy Bible, King James Version, as one authority in pattern of faith and practice. This version shall be the only version used in the pulpit and Sunday School classes. ~~This church does not authorize or recommend the Living Bible or Good News for Modern Man or any other versions.~~

## **SECTION 2: Verbal Inspiration**

We believe the Holy Scriptures, to be the Word of God in the Old and New Testament, to be the verbally inspired Word and Revelation of God, inerrant, infallible, and God breathed. Psalm 19:7, 1 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:16-21, Luke 24:13-28, John 16:12-19, John 1:1

## **SECTION 3: Deity And Virgin Birth**

We believe in the Deity of Jesus Christ; his virgin birth, that He is the incarnate Son of God, the second person in the blessed Trinity, for whom and by whom all things were created. John 1:1-14; 14:9; Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25; John 10:36. Man is not an evolved beast, but a fallen creation. Gen. 1:26-27; 2:7. He can only be recreated in righteousness in Jesus Christ. II Cor. 5:17; Titus 3:4-5.

## **SECTION 4: Trinity**

God is revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being.

## **SECTION 5: Providence**

God from eternity decrees or permits all things that come to pass, and perpetually upholds, directs and governs all creatures and all events; yet so as not in any wise to be the author or approver of sin nor to destroy the free will and responsibility of intelligent creatures.

## **SECTION 6: The Fall of Man**

God originally created man in His own image, and free from sin; but, through the temptation of Satan, he transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; whereby him posterity inherit nature corrupt and wholly opposed to God and His law, are under condemnation; and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors.

## **SECTION 7: The Mediator**

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, Is the divinely appointed mediator between God and man. Having taken upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, He perfectly fulfilled the law, suffered and died upon the cross and ascended to His Father, at whose right hand He ever liveth to make intercession for His people. He is the only Mediator, the Prophet, Priest and King of the Church, and Sovereign of the Universe.

## **SECTION 8: Regeneration**

Regeneration is a change of heart, brought by the Holy Spirit, who quickeneth the dead in trespasses and sins, enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the Word of God, and renewing their whole nature, so that they love and practice holiness. It is a work of God's free and special grace alone.

## **SECTION 9: Repentance**

Repentance is an evangelical grace, wherein a person being, led by the Holy Spirit, made sensible of the manifold evil of his sins, humbleth himself for it, with Godly sorrow, detestation of it, and self-abhorrence, with a purpose and endeavor to walk with God so as to please Him in all things.

## **SECTION 10: Faith**

Saving faith is the belief, on God's authority, of whatsoever is revealed in His Word concerning Christ; accepting and resting upon Him alone for justification, sanctification and eternal life. It is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit and is accompanied by all other saving graces, and leads to a life of holiness.

## **SECTION 11: Justification**

Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal of sinners, who believe in Christ, from all sin, through the satisfaction that Christ has made; not for anything wrought in them or done by them; but on account of the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith.

## **SECTION 12: Sanctification**

Those who have been regenerated are also sanctified, by God's Word and Spirit dwelling in them. This sanctification is progressive through the supply of Divine strength, which all saints seek to obtain, pressing after a Heavenly life in cordial obedience to all Christ's commands.

## **SECTION 13: Perseverance Of The Saints**

Those whom God hath accepted in the Beloved, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere to the end; and though they may fall, through neglect and temptation, into sin, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the Church, and temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be renewed again unto repentance, and be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

## **SECTION 14: The Church**

The Lord Jesus is the Head of the Church, which is composed of all his true disciples, and in Him is invested supremely allpower for its government. ~~According to his commandment, Christians are to associate themselves into particular societies or churches; and to each of these churches He hath given needful authority for administering that order, discipline and worship which He hath appointed.~~ The regular officers of a Church are Bishops or Elders (Pastors), and Deacons.

## **SECTION 15: Baptism**

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer, wherein **the believer** is immersed in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as a sign of his fellowship with the death and resurrection of God, to live and walk in newness of life. ~~It is prerequisite to church fellowship, and to participation in the Lord's Supper.~~ (this is repeated in the Articles of Faith the Statement)

## **SECTION 16: The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Jesus Christ, to be administered with the elements of bread and **fruit of the vine**, and to be observed by his churches till the end of the world. ~~It is in no sense a sacrifice, but is designed to commemorate his death, to confirm the faith and other graces of Christians, and to be a bond, pledge and renewal of their communion with Him, and of their church fellowship.~~ This represents His body and blood and is to be observed by those that have trusted Jesus as their Lord and Savior and have examined themselves to be worthy. 1 Corinthians 11:23-32

## **SECTION 17: The Lord's Day**

See Section VIII in Articles of Faith the Statement adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention Atlanta, Georgia, June 14, 2000 (<https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/>)

## **SECTION 18: Liberty of Conscience**

God alone is Lord of the conscience; and He hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in anything contrary to His Word, or not contained in it. Civil magistrates being ordained of God, subjection in all lawful things commanded by them ought to be yielded by us in the Lord, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

## **SECTION 19: The Resurrection**

The bodies of men after death return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God-the righteous to rest with Him; the wicked, to be reserved under darkness to the judgment. At the last day, the bodies of all the dead, both just and unjust, will be raised.

## **SECTION 20: The Judgment**

God hath appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world by Jesus Christ, when every one shall receive according to his deeds: The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment; the righteous, into everlasting life.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **SECTION 1: Character**

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

### **SECTION 2: Objectives**

The purpose of this church shall be to win souls to Christ and bring about Christian growth in an effective and orderly manner under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and the Lordship of Christ.

1. Engage in services of worship to honor God, experience His presence, proclaim His Word, and respond in obedience to His leadership and command.
2. Provide opportunity for and encourage the study of the Bible.
3. Train persons in the meaning (s) and skill of Christian living and church membership.
4. Witness, as a church and as individuals, to God's saving grace through Jesus Christ to the lost of the community and world.
5. Minister unselfishly to persons in the church, community, and world through study, support, and involvement in missions.
6. Provide opportunities for Christian fellowship.
7. Organize and govern itself so as to achieve these objectives while bringing glory to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Glossary**

Self-aborrence – a feeling of repulsion and/or disgusted with one's self.

Posterity – all future generations of people.