

CONSTITUTION & MINISTRY BY-LAWS
of
The Pilgrim's Baptist Church
27 Chase Hill Rd.
Ashaway, RI 02891

PREAMBLE

Reposing our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation, believing in the teachings of the Bible, and concurring with the practices of Bible-believing Christians and those great distinctives for which they stand, namely:

The Lordship of Jesus Christ
The Bible, the final authority of faith and practice
A regenerated membership
The priesthood of the believer
Baptism by immersion
The autonomy of the local church

This constitution and ministry by-laws is established for the security and preservation of the principles of our Christian faith and to the end that this body of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ may be governed in an orderly manner, consistent with the teachings of the Holy Bible. This constitution will preserve the liberty of each individual church member to seek God's will in his or her life and the freedom of action in its relation to other churches. We, the members of The Pilgrim's Baptist Church, having searched the Scriptures under the guidance of His Spirit, have recognized the need to reconstitute ourselves to more closely conform to His will for the Church in this age and prepare ourselves for greater efforts in His name. We band ourselves together as a body of immersed believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and adopt, ordain, and establish for our government the following:

ARTICLE 1 – NAME & PURPOSE

Section 1.01 - Name

This company of believers shall be known as The Pilgrim's Baptist Church.

Section 1.02 – Purpose

This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 © (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the building of churches, parsonages, schools, colleges, chapels, radio stations, television stations, rescue missions, print shops, daycare centers, and camps; the evangelizing of the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture, both in Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education; and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country.

ARTICLE 2 – STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT

Section 2.01 – Statement of Faith The following comprise the Scriptural beliefs of this church membership.

(A) The Holy Scriptures. We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and complete inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed and, therefore, are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning. We believe that the corporate volume of Scripture is divinely preserved against the inclusion of erroristic matter, and is intended to be the center

of Christian union, and the supreme authority and standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions shall be tried. We further believe that the King James Version or the Authorized Version is the preserved Word of God for the English speaking people and is authority as The Word of God and as such, shall be the official translation used by this church. (Psalm 12:6-7; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Heb. 4:12-13)

(B) Dispensations. We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these dispensations—the law, the church, and the kingdom—are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture. (Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25, 27; Rev. 20:2-6)

(C) The Godhead. We believe there is one and only one living and true God, and infinite Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three divine persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection; each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. (Ex. 20:2-3; Deut. 6:4; Matt. 3:16-17; Matt. 28:19; John 14:10, 26; 1 Cor. 8:6; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 John 5:7; Rev. 4:11)

The Person and Work of the Father. We believe in God the Father, not as being the one God, but merely one distinction of the True God. (The Son has voluntarily elected to do the will of the Father in dependence upon the Spirit). He is the Father of creation, Israel, Jesus Christ (not derivation or inferiority) and the believers. (Exodus 4:22; Malachi 2:10; John 20:17; Romans 8:15-16)

The Person and Work of Christ the Son.

1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, having an impeccable nature, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman, and that He is both the Son of God and God the Son. (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6-7; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-8)

2. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of the world; and, that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical, bodily resurrection from the dead. (John 20; Acts 2:18-36; Rom. 3:24-25; II Cor. 5:21; Eph. 1:7; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 18-19; 1 Pet. 2:24)

3. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended into 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. We believe that he will rapture his church and then return visibly to earth to set up his earthly Millennial Kingdom. (Acts 1:1-11; Rom. 8:34; I Thess. 4:13-18; Heb. 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1-2; Rev. 19, 20)

The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the world, he restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. He endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer. We believe that the Holy Spirit permanently indwells the church, and the body of every believer and that He is the efficient power for godly living, Christian service and spiritual worship. (Gen. 1:1-3; John 14:16-17; John 16:8-11; Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 3:16-17; I Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13-14)

2. We believe that He is the divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be continually filled with the Spirit. (John 14:26; John 16:13-15; Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27)

3. We believe that the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry under the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 28; Eph. 4:7-12)

4. We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. Speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit. Ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. (1 Cor. 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22)

D. Angels: Holy And Unholy. We believe that angels are created, spirit-beings of various ranks and orders. This company of everlasting beings is super-human in intelligence and strength. They were created holy and good, but due to sin many fell from their holy state and are now confirmed in wickedness. Those who preserved their integrity are God's messengers, whereas the fallen angels execute Satan's desires in hindering God's work and afflicting God's people. We believe in the distinct personality of Satan, that he is the unholy god of this age, author of all powers of darkness and sin, and was the cause of the Fall of Man. He is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire. (Job 1:6-7; Psalm 148:2,5; Isaiah 14; Ezekiel 28; Matthew 4:1-11; 25:41; John 8:44; II Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:14 Revelation 20:2-10)

E. Creation. We accept the Biblical account of the origin of the Heavens and the earth, together with all forms of life; that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We believe that man came by a direct creative act of God who made man in His own image and likeness. We therefore reject the idea of evolution in all its forms. (Genesis 1,2; Exodus 20:11; Isaiah 43:1,7; Colossians 1:16-17; John 1:3)

F. Man And Sin. We believe that man was created in innocence, in the image and likeness of the Creator, but that in Adam's sin, by voluntary transgression, the human race fell from its sinless and happy state, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved, not only by constraint, but by choice and is, therefore, under just condemnation without excuse or defense and of himself is utterly unable to remedy his lost condition.

We believe that man, naturally, is wholly unrighteous, at enmity with God; and that from birth is spiritually dead in trespasses and sins. (Gen. 1:26-27; Gen. 2:16-17; Genesis 3; Isaiah 53:6; Isaiah 64:6-7; John 3:18; Rom. 1:18-32; 3:9-19; 3:22-23; Romans 5:10,12; 5:19; 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-9; Eph. 4:17-19; Titus 3:3-5)

G. The Atonement For Sin. We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial office 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. His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust; Christ, the Lord, bearing our sin in His own body on the tree. Having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in Heaven, and uniting in His wonderful person the most tender sympathies with divine perfection. He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate and all-sufficient Savior. (Isaiah 53:4-7; Matthew 18:11; John 3:16; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24-25; I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:14; I John 4:10)

- H. Grace In The New Creation.** We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; 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. The new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; that it's proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life. (John 3:3; John 3:6-7; Acts 16:30-33; Romans 6:23; II Corinthians 5:17,19; Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13; II Peter 1:1-4; I John 5:1)
- I. The Freeness Of Salvation.** We believe in God's electing grace; that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the sacrificial offering of the blood of Jesus Christ shed for him; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation. Matthew 11:28; John 1:12; John 3:15-16; John 3:18, 36; John 5:40; John 6:37; Romans 8:29-30; Romans 10:13; I Cor. 15:10; Ephesians 2:4-5; 2:8-9; Colossians 3:12; I Thessalonians 1:4; I Timothy 1:15; I Peter 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Revelation 22:17;
- J. Justification** We believe that the great Gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification; that it is the gracious declaration, by God, of righteousness according to his divine standards.
- (a) That justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life, on principles of righteousness;
- (b) That it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done; but entirely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, at which time His righteousness is imputed to us. (Isaiah 53:11; Zechariah 13:1; Acts 13:39; Romans 4:1-8; 5:1; 5:9; 8:1; Titus 3:5-6)
- K. Repentance And Faith** We believe that repentance and faith are solemn obligations, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God 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; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and All-Sufficient Savior. (Psalm 51:1-7; Isaiah 55:6-7; Mark 1:15; Luke 18:13; Acts 17:22-31; 20:21; 26:19-23; Rom. 7:13; 10:9-10)
- L. Sanctification and Christian Deportment** We believe that the Scriptures clearly teach non-conformity to the world for every believer; that born-again people should be separated from the world system to Christ; that it is clearly commanded of God to all believers to live their lives in separation from all worldly and sinful practices.
- We believe that positional sanctification occurs at the moment of regeneration and practical sanctification depends on yieldedness to God, and is progressive throughout the entire life span of a believer here on earth. God's provision for holy living is:
- (a) in the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection and ascension;
- (b) the indwelling person and power of the Holy Spirit as the believer yields to Him; and by
- (c) the powerful Word of God.
- We further believe that the child of God must abstain even from the mere appearance of evil, and that he is to be transformed into the instrument of the will of God, rather than to be conformed to the course of this world. (John 17:17; Romans 6:1-14, 7, 8; 12:1-21; I Corinthians 6:11, 19-20; II Corinthians 3:18, 6:14-17, 7:1; Colossians 1:13, 3:1-4; I Thessalonians 5:15-24; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 4:12; I Peter 1:14-16; I John 2:15-17)
- M. The Local Church** We believe that a local church is a congregation of immersed believers, associated by covenant of faith and by fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word; that it's officers are pastors (elders) and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties, are clearly defined in the

scriptures. We believe the great and true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity. 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 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 each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of it's co-operation on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, and that the will of the local church is final. (Acts 2:41-42; 15:13-20; 20:17-28; I Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:11-12; 5:23-25; Colossians 1:18; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9)

- N. Baptism And The Lord's Supper** We believe that Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with it's effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is pre-requisite to the privileges of a local church relationship.
We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by a solemn self-examination. We do not hold in any way to the doctrines of Transubstantiation or Consubstantiation perpetrated by the Roman and Lutheran church. (Matthew 3:16; Acts 8:26-39; Romans 6:3-5; I Corinthians 11:23-28)
- O. The Eternal Security Of The Saint** We believe that such as are real believers endure to the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special providence watches over their welfare; and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation.
We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. (Psalm 121:3; John 8:31-32; 10:28-29; Rom. 8:23, 35-39; 13:13-14; I Cor. 8:9; Gal. 5:13; Ephesians 1:13-14; Philippians 1:6; Colossians 1:21-23; Titus 2:11-15; Hebrews 1:13-14; I Peter 1:3-5; I John 2:19; Jude 1)
- P. The Righteous And The Wicked** We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of God, are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved in Heaven and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in the Lake of Fire. (Genesis 18:23; Proverbs 14:32; Malachi 3:18; Matthew 25:34-46; Luke 16:19-31; John 8:21; Romans 6:17-18, 23; 7:6; I John 5:19)
- Q. Separation** We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and to refrain from all immodest appearances. (Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; II Cor. 6:14-7:1; I Thess. 5:22; II Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; II John 9-11)
- R. The Resurrection** We believe that Christ rose bodily "the third day according to the Scriptures"; that He ascended "to the right hand of the throne of God"; that He alone is our "merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God."
We believe in the bodily resurrection of the Just beginning at the rapture of the church, and completed at the end of the tribulation and in the resurrection of the unjust at the end of time just prior to the Great White Throne Judgment. (Matthew 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-20; Luke 24:36-53; John 20:11-31; I Corinthians 15:1-20, 51-57; Revelation 20:1-6, 10-15)
- S. The Return of Christ And Related Events** We believe in the blessed hope, the personal, pre-tribulational, pre-millennial and imminent return of Christ our Lord which is known as the Rapture of the Church. We also believe in the personal, visible and glorious return of Christ to the earth with His saints at the end of the Great Tribulation. This phase of His coming is known as the Revelation of Jesus Christ. When He returns to earth with His saints, we believe that Jesus Christ will establish His

Millennial Kingdom and will reign for one thousand years. Following this reign, Satan shall make his final rebellion, the New Jerusalem will descend and the Eternal Kingdom will begin.

We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; John 14:3; I Cor. 15:23-25; I Thess. 4:13-17; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Titus 3:13; Jude 6-7; Revelation 19:11-21; 20, 21)

T. Civil Government We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God.

We believe that civil government was created by God for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed; except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth. (Exodus 18:21-22; Daniel 3:17-18; Matt. 22:21; Acts 4:19-20; 5:17-25; 23:5; Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)

U. Human Sexuality We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. Marriage is a sacred, spiritual and Biblical union between a man and a woman and thusly is not governed by politics, culture or the changing laws of man. Marriage is a created institution of God based on His design for humanity – as an expression of God’s image (diversity Gen.1:27, and unity Gen. 2:24).

We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God’s gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one’s gender by surgery or appearance.

Believing that the definition of marriage is the joining together of one man and one woman under the authority of God Almighty as defined in the Bible, this church will not marry or perform weddings between homosexuals or lesbians, transgenders, any person who has altered their gender by surgery or appearance, those who embrace polygamy or any union (wedding or marriage ceremony) or lifestyle outside of the Biblical, traditional (understanding of marriage prior to the June 26, 2015 Supreme Court Ruling on same sex marriage), union between one man and one woman . Gen. 2:24; 19:5,13; 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10-15; Eph. 5:22-33)

V. Family Relationships

1. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)

2. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are an heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

3. We believe that God's ideal intent is for marriage to last until one of the spouses dies at which time the remaining spouse is free to remarry in the Lord. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication and abandonment. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; I Cor. 7:12-15)

W. Abortion and Euthanasia.

1. 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 of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well-being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

2. 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. (Ex. 20:13, 23:7; Matt. 5:21; Acts 17:28)

X. Love. We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; II Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)

Y. Lawsuits Between Believers. We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as a claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)

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

Z-1 Giving. We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to financially support his local church. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of his offerings once the gift has been made. (See Article 11, Designated Contributions) (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

Section 2.02 – 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 teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.