

DECLARATION OF FAITH,
CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
OF THE

Firs
Baptis  ***Church***
OF CLEARWATER, KANSAS

**THE CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS
OF THE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
OF
CLEARWATER, KANSAS**

ARTICLE I NAME

The Church was formed September 9, 1876. It was originally incorporated as the Clearwater Baptist Church, February 1, 1882. On May 10, 1949, the name was changed to the First Baptist Church, Clearwater, Kansas.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

We, an organized body known as the First Baptist Church of Clearwater, Kansas, established for the purpose of the advancement of the kingdom of Jesus Christ seeking to attain this end through the public worship of God, the preaching of the Gospel, consistent Christian living by its members, personal evangelism, Missionary endeavor and Christian education, do adopt the following bylaws to govern all church procedures.

ARTICLE III DOCTRINE

It shall be the duty of the members of the Church to study the practice and teaching of the Bible, and to be faithful to the Baptist Faith and Message, and to adhere to the "Covenant" adopted by the Church. **Amended by vote on February 24, 2013**

**DECLARATION OF FAITH
(The Baptist Faith and Message)**

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

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

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we

owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

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

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

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

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

C. God the Holy Spirit

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

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12;

24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

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

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

IV. Salvation

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

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

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

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

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

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

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

9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

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

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

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

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

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

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

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen 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; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

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

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

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

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

XI. Evangelism and Missions

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

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is 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.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

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

XIV. Cooperation

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

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

13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

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

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

XVI. Peace and War

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

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

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

XVII. Religious Liberty

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

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

XVIII. The Family

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

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

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

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

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

THE CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God and angels, 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 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 devotion. To religiously educate our children. To seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances. To walk circumspectly in the world. To be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment. To avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger. To abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love. To remember each other in prayer. To aid each other in sickness and distress. To cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and

courtesy in speech. To be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay. We moreover engage, that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

ARTICLE IV: POLITY

Section 1

Be it known that we are affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Amended by vote on February 24, 2013.

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Eligibility and Reception of Members

- a. Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and accepting Him as his personal Savior and adopting views consistent with the New Testament teaching, may upon baptism by immersion, be received into the Church membership at any regular business or special meeting of the Church, by a vote of the members.
- b. Members from other Baptist Churches may be received by letters of recommendation, and dismissal from their respective Churches.
- c. Persons coming from other churches (denominations), who have been scripturally baptized (immersed) may upon a statement of their experience be accepted as members. If they have not been baptized (immersed) they may present themselves for baptism and be received by a vote of the church.

Procedure for profession of faith, baptism, and church membership at First Baptist Church, Clearwater, Kansas.

It is the position of the Board of deacons of the first Baptist Church that the following procedure is to be followed in profession of faith, baptism, and church membership.

1. Any person wishing to accept Christ as savior, be baptized, or become a member of First Baptist Church, shall come forward during the invitation. The pastor or a deacon will meet and pray with the person and their decision shall be made known publicly to the congregation.
2. Membership will be extended by a vote of the members at the next quarterly business meeting providing the following criteria are met.
 - A. Candidate has made a public profession of faith.
 - B. Candidate has been baptized by immersion.
 - C. Candidate has made known to the congregation their desire to join the church.
 - D. By transfer of letter of membership from another church, according to the by-laws, which still must be made known to the congregation.
 - E. A meeting with members of the diaconate.

Section 2: Duties of Members

- a. It shall be the duty of the members of the church to study the practice and teaching of the Bible, and to be faithful to The Baptist Faith and Message, and to adhere to the "Covenant" adopted by the Church.
- b. Members in good standing are hereby defined as those resident or non-resident members who are faithful to Article V Section 2 a.
- c. An inactive member shall be one who of his own accord has withdrawn himself by his failure in attendance and financial support for the period of one (1) year. An inactive member has no voting privilege. This section does not apply to those members who shall be put on an inactive list and kept for record only. The church clerk and the Deacon Board shall annually revise the church membership on this basis.
- d. Any inactive member may be restored to active membership upon his or her evidence to follow the second paragraph of the Church covenant. The determination of this shall be made by the Board of Deacons. If at any time an inactive member shall have his or her letter called for by another church, this shall be evidence of his or her desire for restoration and shall be granted a letter to that church.

Section 3: Dismissal of Members

- a. Any member shall be entitled to a letter of recommendation and dismissal to any Church of like faith and order, or if the Church deems it wise, a letter of recommendation to a Church of another Christian denomination.
- b. Members may be excluded from the membership only according to the New Testament teaching and their names may be erased only upon the vote of the Church.
- c. Upon instruction from the Board of Deacons, the clerk shall erase from the roll the names of those united with another denomination.
- d. All disorderly members may be dealt with according to the New Testament teaching, and the covenant of the Church.

ARTICLE VI: THE PASTOR AND OFFICERS

Section 1: The Pastor

- a. The pastor shall be a believer in, and a preacher of the Gospel and the basic doctrines of faith as outlined in The Baptist Faith and Message.
- b. He may cooperate with the local organized work of the denomination and with the Southern Baptist Convention.
- c. He shall preach the Gospel, administer the ordinances, watch over the membership, promote the spiritual interest of the Church, organize and develop its strength for the best

possible service. He shall preside at the reception of candidates for membership and be responsible for their instruction.

- d. He shall be a member (Ex-officio) of all boards and committees of the Church and its auxiliary organizations.
- e. The pastor shall cooperate with the other pastors and churches of the community insofar as is consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church.
- f. To those interested in memorial fund donations, the pastor shall make available an up-to-date list of specific physical needs of the Church as determined by the Trustees. (see Article IX, Section 12).

Section 2: The Church Moderator

The Church shall elect annually a moderator. The Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall annually appoint an assistant Moderator to function in the absence of the moderator. The moderator or assistant moderator shall preside impartially at all business meetings of the Church. He shall vote only in case of a tie and shall appoint committees only upon recommendation of the Church.

Section 3: Church Clerk

The Church shall elect annually a Church Clerk and assistant, whose duties shall be to record the proceedings of each business meeting of the Church, to keep a careful record of the names of all members received to or dismissed from the Church membership, and to record all baptisms and deaths.

The Clerk shall write letters of dismissal and recommendations for members leaving the Church and report such letters at the next business meeting.

The Clerk, in conjunction with the trustees, shall preserve in safe keeping the Church records and documents.

Section 4: The Church Treasurer

The Church shall elect annually a Church treasurer whose duty shall be to keep a strict account of all monies received by him from the Financial Secretary, and all monies checked out of the treasury, and make a report to the Church as they may direct.

The Treasurer shall pay all bills and send all contributions as directed by the Church and/or Trustees. The Treasurer may pay all contract bills without an order from the Church as directed by the Board of Trustees.

The Church shall annually elect an Assistant Church Treasurer.

Section 5: Financial Secretary

The Church shall elect annually a Financial Secretary whose duties shall be to receive all contributions and deposit the money to the account of the Church. He shall make a report as the Church may direct. The Church shall annually elect an Assistant Financial Secretary.

Section 6: Board of Trustees

The Church shall have a Board of Trustees consisting of five members. One member shall be elected each year for a five-year term. No member shall be elected to succeed himself, but may be elected to the office again after one year's rest or interim.

A trustee shall be elected chairman of the board annually and shall not succeed himself in the position.

The Board of Trustees shall have charge of all the physical property of the Church, and shall be legally qualified and empowered to do what legal business the Church may require. They shall approve all repair bills and insurance bills of the Church. All purchases shall be approved in advance by the Board of Trustees.

They shall see that all Church property is kept in good repair and properly protected by adequate insurance.

They shall determine the use of the Church facilities and shall determine suitable charges to be made for such use, after consulting the Church calendar for availability and in questionable situations the Board of Deacons. (Exceptions: funerals and weddings--see Deacons Article VI, Section 7.)

Section 7: Board of Deacons

The Church shall have a Board of Deacons consisting of a minimum of five members, but not fewer than one Deacon for every thirty active members. Deacons shall be elected at any regular or called business meeting of the Church for a four-year term as long as they are members in good standing. The terms of deacons shall begin and end at the annual meeting. No Deacon shall be elected to succeed himself, but may be elected to the office again after one year's rest or interim. The life term deacons now in office this date, December 16, 1953, may continue in office as elected.

All Deacons Shall Be Publicly Ordained

It shall be the duty of the Board of Deacons to act as a pulpit committee. (They may ask for assistance from the Church). They secure supplies for the pulpit when the Church is without a pastor, to assist the pastor in every way possible with the Church ordinances and to investigate cases requiring admonition and discipline.

It shall be the duty of the Board of Deacons to assist the pastor in developing the spiritual life and fellowship of the Church and to call on the sick of the congregation, or to see that they are ministered to as taught in the Scriptures.

A Simple Majority of the Deacon Board shall constitute a Quorum.

If a deacon wishes to retire from the active Board, he must give written notice to the Board. They in turn shall recommend to the Church one to fill the unexpired term. They shall also recommend to the Church candidates for all new terms.

A deacon shall be elected chairman of the board annually and shall not succeed himself in this position. The Chairman's term shall begin at the end of the annual meeting.

It is definitely a church ethical policy that anyone wishing to use the church building for a wedding or a funeral, shall first be required to contact the pastor, and that the pastor's and deacons' consent be obtained. The pastor shall also have a part in the service if he so wishes. This is rather a universal ethical practice among most churches.

The use of the Church facilities for any wedding shall be bound by the official Church "Guidelines for Weddings" which also govern the behavior of the participants.

Section 8: Board of Deaconesses

The church shall have a Board of Deaconesses consisting of six (6) members, two (2) members shall be elected each year to serve a three-year term. Only two (2) names shall be submitted in nomination for the vacancies filled each year on the Board of Deaconesses.

No Deaconess shall be elected to succeed herself, but may be elected to the office again after one year's rest or interim. The Board of Deaconesses shall assist the pastor in developing the spiritual life of the women and girls of the Church, for the best possible Christian service, cooperate with the pastor and Board of Deacons in visiting the members and care of the sick, needy, and distressed members of the Church and assist in the preparation of the observance of the Ordinances of the Church.

A Deaconess shall be elected chairman of the board annually and shall not succeed herself in this position.

Section 9: Board of Christian Education

There shall be a Board of Christian education which shall consist of the Sunday School Coordinator, a representative from Wednesday night ministries, two Sunday School Teachers (Children and Adult Classes), a youth leader, and a children's church representative. The board shall elect its own Chairperson. The board of Christian Education shall develop, direct and supervise, as authorized by the Church, the educational tasks of the Church as carried on by the Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Library, Children and young people organizations, and other educational groups. It shall select all teachers and workers other than those in the adult department. Vacation Bible teachers are to be approved by the Board of Christian Education.

Section 10: Sunday School Coordinator

The Church shall elect annually a Sunday School Coordinator, who shall be responsible to the Church for the activities of the Sunday School.

Section 11: The Church Organist

The Church shall elect annually a Church organist and assistant organist.

Section 12: Choir Director

The Church shall elect annually a Choir Director, whose duties shall be to work with the Music Committee and direct the activities of the Choir.

Section 13: Officer's Failure to Function

Any officer of the Church whether elected or appointed who shall fail to function in his or her respective capacity for six (6) months, except for illness (such illness to be reported to the proper official), or by agreement with those officially involved, shall, by virtue of failure to function, automatically forfeit such official capacity.

ARTICLE VII: STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1: Music Committee

The Church shall elect annually a Music Committee consisting of four (4) members who shall be responsible for:

1. Special Music at all regularly scheduled church services
2. Music and accompaniment for Ninnescah Manor services
3. Special Music for community events and Singspirations

Section 2: Church Ushers

The Church shall elect annually ushers, whose duties shall be to welcome people at the door, assist them in finding seats and receive the offerings. The ushers shall elect annually from their number a Head Usher who shall supervise the work of the group.

Section 3: Nominating Committee

- a. The Church, at its Annual Business Meeting, shall elect a Nominating Committee consisting of three (3) persons, who with the pastor shall nominate persons to fill all vacancies, except in the office of pastor, deacon, trustee, and deaconess.
- b. Following each Annual Business Meeting election, the Nominating Committee shall provide a copy of Article VII, Section 7 to all persons designated therein, thereby notifying them of their responsibility to serve and/ or appoint others to serve on the Church's All Board Committee.

Section 4: Hostess Committee

The Church shall have a hostess committee consisting of six members. Two members will be elected each year for a three year term. One shall be elected Chairperson and shall not succeed herself. No member shall be elected to succeed herself, but may be elected again after one year's rest. The Hostess committee shall be in charge of Church fellowships and receptions, except where specified otherwise.

Section 5: Funeral Committee

The committee shall consist of three members who have the responsibility of organizing and preparing a meal for funerals.

Section 6: Audit Committee

The Church shall elect annually an Audit Committee consisting of three (3) members, nominated by the Nominating Committee, for the purpose of auditing the Church books. The Auditing Committee shall consist of church members in good standing.

Section 7: All Board Committee

The All Church Board is an advisory board with the following members: Pastor, Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, 2 Deacons (chairperson or appointee and one other), 2 Trustees (chairperson or appointee and one other), Deaconesses (chairperson or appointee), C.E. Board (chairperson or appointee), Fellowship Committee (chairperson or appointee), Music Committee (chairperson or appointee), Two at large members from the Church body.

The chairman or representative of each board should attend a quarterly meeting, to be held before the regularly scheduled quarterly church meeting (01/16/05)

This Board shall meet quarterly.

ARTICLE VIII: THE PASTORATE

Section 1: Calling a Pastor

As often as it may be necessary to call a Pastor, the pulpit committee will, without unnecessary delay, invite to the Church a qualified minister, and allow him to preach to the Church as a candidate for Pastor.

The Church Clerk shall give a minimum of two days advance written notice to each resident member family of the date that the prospective Pastor will be preaching, so that each member may have an opportunity to vote.

After the Pastor has spoken, the church shall break for lunch, and return at 1:30 p.m. of the same day to vote on the calling of the candidate.

If, at this election, three-fourths of the members present vote to call the candidate and he accepts the call, he shall become the Pastor.

Section 2: Time of Call and Termination of Pastor

The Pastor may be called for a definite or indefinite time. If the call is for an indefinite time, and either the Church or the Pastor desires to sever relations, no less than thirty (30) days written notice shall be given before relations are severed.

The Deacons shall be charged with making any arrangements they deem necessary to make the severance peaceful.

Section 3: Pastoral Administrative Assistant

A Pastoral Administrative Assistant shall be hired by the Pastor, upon approval by the Board of Deacons, at a salary set by the Board of Trustees. In the absence of a Pastor, the hiring shall be done by the Board of Deacons. Duties shall be prescribed by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.

ARTICLE IX

Section 1: Sunday Bible School

The Church shall maintain a Sunday Bible School for the purpose of Christian Education, Spiritual Growth and Soul Winning.

Section 2: Sunday School Officers

All necessary officers of the Sunday School shall be elected at the Annual Church Meeting or as the Church may direct.

Section 3: Worship Services

Public services shall be held each Lord's Day. The fellowship groups and the Sunday Church School shall hold weekly meetings at a time to be fixed and approved by the Church.

Section 4: Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper shall be observed during the morning worship service at least every other month.

Section 5: Time for Business Meetings

The Church shall meet for its regular business meeting on the fourth Sunday in April, July and October at 1:30 p.m., following a potluck dinner. The Moderator may change the date of any regular meeting upon the approval of the Board of Deacons.

The Church shall meet for its annual business meeting on the third Sunday of every January, with an all-church dinner following the morning worship service, and the business meeting to convene afterwards at 1:30 p.m.

Section 6: Quorum

Fifteen (15) voting members shall constitute a quorum at any business meeting of the Church.

Section 7: Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings shall be called by the Moderator, or by the Clerk upon request of a quorum of members of the Church, or by the Moderator upon a request by the Board of Deacons or the Board of Trustees. A notice stating the time, place and purpose of said special meeting shall be mailed to each active resident member, said notice being placed in the Post Office at Clearwater, Kansas, not later than 4:30 p.m. of the 2nd day prior to the day of the meeting. No business shall be conducted at said special meeting except the Specific Business for which the special meeting was called. Notice of this meeting shall be signed by the Church Clerk.

Section 8: Eligible to Vote

In the reception and dismissal of members, and in all ordinary matters, each member shall be entitled to vote; but,

In the call or dismissal of a Pastor,

In the purchase or sale of property,

In all cases of discipline,

In all matters involving the expenditure of large sums of money,

And in amending these articles, adult members only shall be eligible to vote. This provision may be interpreted liberally, however, so as to include the young people of the Church over 16 years of age who are actively engaged in its work.

Section 9: Three Fourths Majority Required

When voting on important issues specified in Section 8, a three-fourths majority shall be required for passage.

Section 10: Resignations

The Church shall at any regular business meeting accept written resignations without a vote.

Section 11: Robert's Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order shall be closely followed in all Church meetings.

Section 12: Memorials

When a memorial fund is set up, the family and trustees shall confer as to choice of memorial. The family's choice must have the approval of the trustees. If, after one year, the family has not made a decision, the trustees shall use their judgment as to the use of the fund.

It is the policy of the Church that when a memorial is given, the donators shall receive a list of specific needs of the Church, which will be in the keeping of the Pastor (supplied to him by the Board of Trustees).

The donators may select a specific item from the list, or give money to be used at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

The Church shall obtain and maintain a book for listing all memorial gifts. This book shall be used in the place of plaques on all future memorials.

Section 13: Bible Camps

It is the policy of the Church to pay for one-half of the camp fee for the youth of our Church to a Bible camp. The camp must be approved by the Board of Deacons and the funds by the Board of Trustees.

Section 14: Love Gifts

It is the policy of the Church that whenever a Love Gift is collected by the Church, that the person receiving the Love Gift signs a receipt book so that the Church Treasurer will have a permanent record of Love Gift Offerings.

ARTICLE X: CHURCH YEAR

Section 1: Time

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on the first day of January and close on the last day of December.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS

Section 1: Amendments Made

These bylaws may be added to or amended at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church. They may also be added to or amended at any regular business meeting of the Church, if notice is given from the pulpit one week before the meeting.