

Constitution and Bylaws
of
Bay Area Agape Fellowship

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A. Purpose:

1. Preamble

Bay Area Agape Fellowship Constitution and Bylaws have five purposes:

First, it is a public record clearly stating the name, core value, Articles of Faith, government, policies and the procedures of this church.

Second, it acts as the first line of defense against those who want to harm this sacred institution. This document systematically identifies what this church believes to be true according to its interpretation of the Word of God.

Third, it is a practical guide to aid the leadership of this church as they govern the church in a decent and orderly manner.

Fourth, it is a liberating policy that ensure the freedom and the structure that is needed in this church for each church member to exercise their spiritual gifts and God given talents for the glory of God.

Fifth, this constitution is a guide for members to fully understand the privileges of membership, as well as the responsibilities and commitments incurred upon being accepted as a participating member in this church. The act of applying for membership should not be taken lightly, but only after serious and prayerful reflection.

This Fellowship endeavors to be a church as described, established and mandated by the LORD Jesus Christ in the New Testament of the Bible. Therefore, this constitution is not meant to supersede the Word of God, it is simply a systematic review of the truths found in the Bible concerning the purpose, governance, and operation of the local church. When a conflict or ambiguity exists with regard to this document, deference is to be given to the Bible to resolve the conflict or ambiguity. With this document we shall, by God's grace, endeavor to properly practice New Testament Christianity.

2. Name

The name registered in the State of California for this organization is: Bay Area Agape Fellowship. For this document Bay Area Agape Fellowship will also be referred to as BAAF.

3. Core Values

At Bay Area Agape Fellowship, we value:

-Biblical living. We are committed to using God's written Word to show people what is true and how to do what is right.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip His people to do every good work." ([2 Timothy 3:16-17](#))

-Intentional Fellowship. We are committed to meeting together to motivate, encourage, and share each other's burdens.

"Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of His return is drawing near." ([Hebrews 10:24-25](#))

-Gifted Ministry. We are committed to using our God given gifts, talents, and resources to serve others for the glory of God.

"God has given each of you a gift from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself was speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ." ([1 Peter 4:10-11](#))

-Gospel Sharing. We are committed to sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with everyone because it brings salvation to everyone who believes.

“Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved. But how can they call on Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells them?” ([Romans 10:13-14](#))

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B. Articles of Faith

1. The Bible – The Word of God

The Bible, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, originally written, were given to men by inspiration from God's Holy Spirit.

[2 Timothy 3:16](#); [2 Peter 1:21](#)

The Scripture, the written Word of God, are divine revelations and, thus, infallibly true.

[John 17:17](#); [2 Timothy 2:15](#); [James 1:18](#); [Ephesians 1:13](#)

The Written Word of God, the Bible is the supreme, everlasting authority and guide for all doctrine and conduct, for all of life and living.

[Psalms 119:105](#); [1 Peter 1:23-25](#); [Romans 16:26](#); [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#); [John 12:48](#)

God's Word is powerful, piercing and discerning the souls and hearts of men

[Hebrews 4:12](#)

God's Word is the Word of Life

[Matthew 4:4](#); [Philippians 2:14-16](#)

The Bible is not to be handled deceitfully, not added nor taken away

[2 Corinthians 4:2](#); [Deuteronomy 4:2](#); [Deuteronomy 12:32](#); [Revelation 22:18-19](#)

2. God

We believe in the One True God, eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – co-identical in essence, co-equal in power and glory.

[Jeremiah 10:10](#); [Ephesians 4:6](#); [Genesis 21:33](#); [Job 36:26](#); [Revelation 1:4](#); [Genesis 1:26](#); [Isaiah 6:3](#); [Matthew 28:19](#)

3. The Trinity

We believe there is one living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the Maker and Supreme ruler of heaven and earth. He is expressively glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love. We believe that in the unity of the Godhead, there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in all the divine attribute and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of creation and redemption.

[Exodus 20:2-3](#); [1 Corinthians 8:6](#); [2 Corinthians 13:14](#); [Revelation 4:11](#); [Matthew 28:18-20](#); [1 John 5:7](#)

4. God the Father

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, eternal, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. The Maker and Supreme ruler of heaven and earth. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through His Son Jesus Christ

[Luke 10:21-22; 3:22; Matthew 23:9; John 3:16; 6:27; 5:19; 12:49-50;](#)
[Romans 1:7; 11:33; 1 Timothy 1:1-2, 17; 1 Peter 1:3; Revelation 1:6; 19:6;](#)
[Isaiah 46:9-10; Ephesians 4:6](#)

As the only absolute and Omnipotent ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption. In His sovereignty, He is neither author nor approver of sin, nor does He waive the accountability of His creature. He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own, not based on anything we have done, but according to His own good pleasure.

[Genesis 1:1-31; Revelation 4:11; Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36; 1 Timothy 6:13-16; John 8:38-47; Ephesians 1:4-6; 2:8-9](#)

5. God the Son – Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His Virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. He is the mediator between God and man, the prophet, priest and king, head and savior of the church, the heir of all things, and the judge of the world. We believe in His substitutionary, propitiatory death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal, visible bodily return to earth. We believe Jesus being equal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit is infinite, eternal, all powerful and all knowing. He also created the world and the universe, upholding and governing all things.

[Matthew 1:18-25; 20:28; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1, 14; 10:30; 14:9; 20:28;](#)
[20:30-31; Romans 8:34; 9:5; 5:6-8; 6:9-10; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:21-](#)
[23; Hebrews 1:8; 7:25; 9:28; 1 Timothy 3:16; Isaiah 9:6-7; Ephesians 1:4](#)

We believe that in the Incarnation – God becoming man, Christ surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind.

[Philippians 2:5-8](#); [Colossians 2:9](#)

We believe that Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness.

[Micah 5:2](#); [John 5:23](#); [14:9-10](#); [Colossians 2:9](#)

We believe that on the basis of the efficacy (effectiveness) of the death and resurrection of our LORD Jesus Christ, every genuine believer is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he/she is declared righteous (justification), given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God.

[Romans 3:25](#); [5:8-9](#); [2 Corinthians 5:14-15](#); [1 Peter 2:24](#); [3:18](#); [Hebrews 1:1-3](#); [Mark 1:11](#)

We believe that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, God the Father displayed to His creation the deity of His Son and gave proof that He accepted the propitiatory work of Christ on the cross.

[Isaiah 53:10-12](#); [2 Corinthians 5:18-19](#); [Mark 1:1](#)

6. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, who came forth from the Father and the Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. He is equal with God the Father and God the Son. He indwells every believer.

[John 14:16-17, 26](#); [15:26-27](#); [16:9-14](#)

We believe that the Holy Spirit is supernatural and sovereign. He is infinite, eternal, all powerful and all knowing. He was active in creation. He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled. The Holy Spirit is the agent in the New Birth who seals, endues, guides, teaches, comforts,

witnesses, sanctifies and help the believers conform to the image of Christ. The Holy spirit's primary ministry is to glorify the LORD Jesus Christ

[1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19](#); [John 16:14](#); [Galatians 5:22-26](#); [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#); [Acts 2:15-20](#); [Hebrews 10:15-16](#); [Ephesians 1:13](#); [Genesis 1:2](#)

“But the comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and brings all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” [John 14:26](#); [Romans 8:11](#)

The Work of the Holy Spirit is to:

- a. Convict men of the sin of unbelief ([John 16:9](#))
- b. Convict men that Jesus is the righteousness of God ([John 16:10](#); [Romans 10:3-4](#))
- c. Convict men that the power of Satan has been broken ([John 16:11](#))
- d. Regenerate the believer ([John 3:5](#); [Titus 3:5](#))
- e. Indwell the believer ([1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#))
- f. Seal the believer ([Ephesians 1:13-14](#))
- g. Baptize the believer ([Acts 1:5](#); [1 Corinthians 12:13](#))
- h. Infill the believer ([Ephesians 5:18](#))
- i. Empower the believer ([Acts 1:8](#))
- j. Lead the believer ([Galatians 5:16-18](#))
- k. Administer spiritual gifts to the believer ([1 Corinthians 12:1-11](#))

The Fruit of the Holy Spirit is Love

“Love is manifested in joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” ([Galatians 5:22](#))

- Joy is love's strength
- Peace is love's security
- Patience is love's endurance
- Kindness is love's conduct
- Goodness is love's character
- Faithfulness is love's confidence

- Gentleness is love's humility
- Self-control is love's victory

A Holy Spirit-controlled man needs no law to cause him to live a righteous life.

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7. Angels

We believe in the existence of angels who were created by God to serve Him and bring honor and glory to His name. Angels who have chosen to follow God are ministers for Him on behalf of those who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and LORD. Sadly, some angels (1/3 of them) chose to follow Satan when he rose up against God. They are now called demons and are presently functioning Satan's counterfeit system as rulers of darkness, to be resisted by the believer through the armor provided by God.

[Isaiah 14:12-15](#); [Matthew 17:18](#); [Ephesians 2:2](#); [6:11-13](#); [Colossians 1:16](#); [1 Timothy 4:1-2](#); [1 Peter 1:12](#); [5:8-9](#); [Jude 6](#); [Revelation 19:16-20](#); [20:10](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:9-10](#); [Hebrews 1:14](#)

Satan and his Demons

We believe that angels were created by God to worship, serve and honor Him. But Lucifer, a high-ranking angel, chose to rebel against God. With great pride he desired to be equal and even above almighty God and was thrown from heaven with a great host of other angels that followed him. Lucifer is now referred to as Satan and the fallen angels are now referred to as demons.

[Isaiah 14:12-15](#); [Psalm 34:7](#); [Ephesians 2:2](#); [Hebrews 2:14](#); [1 Peter 5:8](#); [2 Peter 2:4](#); [Revelation 12:9](#); [Job 38:7](#)

We believe Satan, the “god of this age” and “the prince of the power of the air” is currently the power of all darkness and evil. We hold him to be man’s great tempter, the enemy of God, the accuser of the saints, the author of all false religions and the chief power behind the present apostasy in our world. He is the lord of the antichrist and the author of all the followers of darkness who are destined for final defeat at the hand of God’s Son, and for the judgment of the eternal Lake of Fire, a place prepared for Satan and his angels.

[Matthew 4:1-11](#); [Revelation 12:7-9; 19:16-20; 20:10](#); [Zechariah 3:1-2](#);
[Hebrews 1:14](#)

Satan is – the god of the world ([2 Corinthians 4:4](#))

- the prince of this world ([John 14:30](#))
- the prince of the devils ([Matthew 12:24](#))
- the prince of the power of the air ([Ephesians 2:2](#))
- the power of darkness ([Luke 22:53](#))
- we wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high place. ([Ephesians 6:12](#))

Satan is – the power of death ([Hebrews 2:14](#))

- the power of grave and death ([Hosea 13:14](#))
- the tempter ([Matthew 4:1,3](#))
- the wicked one ([Matthew 13:28](#))
- the first of all liars ([John 8:44](#))
- the devil, and Satan, which deceived the whole world, he was cast out into the earth, and his angels cast out with him ([Revelation 12:9](#))
- a murderer from the beginning ([John 8:44](#))
- perverter of the Word of God ([Genesis 2:16-17; 3:2-5](#))
- under God’s check and government ([Job 1:7-9](#))
- inevitable judgment and destruction ([Genesis 3:14-15](#))

- the devil was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone forever and ever ([Revelation 20:10](#))

Satan's Demons

- Demons believe in God but hate and reject Him ([James 2:19](#))
- Demons believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God ([Luke 4:41](#))
- Evil spirits instigate treachery ([Judges 9:23](#); [Matthew 8:29](#))
- When the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him ([1 Samuel 16:14-15](#); [18:11](#); [19:9-10](#))
- A lying spirit can influence the mouth of all the prophet ([1 Kings 22:21-23](#))
- Demons can be cast out by divine power and authority ([Matthew 4:24](#))
- Jesus gave His disciples power against unclean spirits ([Matthew 10:1](#))
- In Jesus name, the believers shall cast out devils ([Mark 16:17](#))

8. Mankind or Humanity

Creation – We believe in the Genesis account of creation. We believe that account is to be accepted literally, not allegorically or figuratively. Also, we believe mankind was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness. Mankind's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through periods of time from lower to higher form. In addition, we believe that all animal and vegetable life was also created by God, for His established law was that they should bring forth only "after their own kind".

[Genesis 1](#); [John 1:3](#); [Hebrews 11:3](#); [Revelation 10:6](#)

Humanity – We believe that humanity was directly and immediately created by God in His own image and likeness, free from sin, with a rational nature, intelligence, and volition, yet with a moral responsibility to the God that (who) created him.

[Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7, 15-25; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9](#)

We believe that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God by enjoying Him forever. Fear God, and keep His commandments.

[Isaiah 43:7; Ecclesiastes 12:13; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11](#)

- So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them ([Genesis 1:27](#))
- For Adam was first formed, then live ([1 Timothy 2:13](#))
- And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman ([Genesis 2:20-23](#))
- A living soul ([Genesis 2:7](#))
- Made in the image of God ([Genesis 1:24-27](#))

Fallen into depravity

We believe that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, humanity lost its innocence, incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death, became subject to the wrath of God, and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. Thus, every human being is utterly depraved and, having no recuperative power to enable him to rescue himself, is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is, therefore, wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our LORD Jesus Christ.

[Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-19; John 3:36; Romans 3:10-11, 23; 5:12; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3, 8-9; 1 John 1:8](#)

We believe that because all humanity descended from Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all the humanity (Jesus

Christ, having no human father, being the only exception). All of humanity is thus sinful by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration, spiritually dead in their trespasses and sins, and by nature, children of God's wrath, desperately in need of divine salvation.

[Psalm 14:1-3](#); [Jeremiah 17:9](#); [Romans 3:9-18, 23; 5:10-12](#); [Ephesians 2:1-3](#); [John 3:17-18](#)

9. The Atonement for Sin

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of God's Grace. Jesus, God's own Son, submitted to the Father, and freely took upon human nature, yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death on the cross made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins. Jesus' atonement consisted not in setting up 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". "Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the cross, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed." Jesus is in every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate, and all sufficient Savior.

[2 Corinthians 5:21](#); [Ephesians 2:8-9](#); [Philippians 2:8](#); [Hebrews 7:25; 12:2](#); [1 Peter 2:24; 3:18](#); [1 John 2:2](#)

10. Salvation

We believe the Scriptures teach that Jesus died for the whole world and that salvation of sinners is divinely initiated, wholly of grace of God, and accomplished only through the work of Christ. We believe that nothing prevents the salvation of the meanest sinner on earth but his own inherent wickedness and voluntary rejection of the Gospel.

[Acts 4:12; 13:39; 15:11; 16:13; John 3:16; 10:28-29; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 1:6; 2:7](#)

All religions do not lead to God and salvation. There is only one way, and that is God's way; and God's way is a person, and that person is His Son, the LORD Jesus Christ. [John 14:6](#)

We believe that repentance and faith are solemn obligations and inseparable graces, brought about in our souls by the Spirit of God. Being deeply convicted of our guilt, helplessness, and the judgment to come, and realizing the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with genuine repentance, confessing our sin and receiving the LORD Jesus as our personal Savior. When a person receives Christ as his personal LORD and Savior, he is born again, regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit and becomes the recipient of a new nature.

We believe God's salvation is three-folds:

First, Christ came down from heaven to this earth to save us from the penalty of our sin, by putting away our sin by the sacrifice of Himself on the cross. ([Hebrews 9:26](#))

Second, Jesus appeared in heaven, in the presence of God, after His resurrection, to save us from the power of sin. ([Hebrews 9:24; 1 John 2:1-2](#))

Third, Jesus will appear again on this earth, the second time, as "LORD of Lords and King of kings" to save us from the very presence of sin ([Hebrews 9:28](#))

We believe the seven facts of salvation, with an open mind and a receptive heart, that God may bring salvation to our soul:

- (1) It is a fact that God loves us. ([John 3:16](#))
- (2) It is a fact that we are sinners. ([Romans 3:23](#))
- (3) It is a fact that we are now dead in sin. ([Romans 6:23](#))
- (4) It is a fact that Christ died for us. ([Romans 5:6-8](#))

(5) It is a fact that you can be saved by faith in the LORD Jesus Christ.

([Acts 16:30-31](#); [Galatians 2:16](#); [Ephesians 2:8](#))

(6) It is a fact that you can be saved and know it. ([1 John 5:10-13](#))

(7) It is a fact that we are now a child of God and we are to obey Him.

([Acts 5:29](#))

We believe that Christ secures salvation to all who put their trust in Him.

[Romans 3:24](#) states, “being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Our justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of Christ’s righteousness. It is not given to us for any works of righteousness, which we have done, but solely through faith in our Redeemer. Jesus Christ’s righteousness is given to us. [2 Corinthians 5:21](#) states “For God made Jesus who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

[Ephesians 2:8](#); [Acts 13:39](#); [15:11](#); [16:31](#); [John 3:16](#); [10:28-29](#); [Matthew 18:11](#); [Philippians 1:6](#); [2:7](#); [Hebrews 2:14](#); [Isaiah 53:4-7,11](#); [1 John 4:18](#); [1 Corinthians 15:3,22](#); [Zechariah 13:1](#); [Romans 3:24-25](#); [5:1,9](#); [8:1,35-39](#); [5:12,19](#); [6:6,16](#); [Jude 1](#)

11. Repentance

We believe God desires “truth in the innermost being” ([Psalm 51:6](#)), and commands all men everywhere to repent ([Acts 17:30](#)). The sinner must repent before he can become the recipient of salvation by grace through faith ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)). The saved must practice repentance if he is to enjoy unbroken fellowship with God. ([Job 42:1-6](#))

Repentance is granted by God. ([Acts 5:31](#); [11:18](#)) The kindness of God leads you to repentance ([Romans 2:4](#)). The kindness of God is not merited; therefore, the results of His kindness which is repentance is a gift. This gift of repentance is an inward change produced by the convicting power of the Holy Spirit as the Word of God is proclaimed ([Acts 2:27, 38](#); [John 16:7,11](#)).

The results: repentance toward God and faith in our LORD Jesus Christ ([Acts 20:21](#)), faith that Christ died for our sins; and that He was buried and that He rose from the dead. ([1 Corinthians 15:1-4](#))

We believe repentance qualifies a man for salvation, but it takes faith in Christ to acquire it. True repentance is always coupled with faith. It is impossible to have saving faith and not repent. “Repentance toward God and faith in our LORD Jesus Christ” are essential and inseparable in salvation.

Faith without repentance is the ultimate hypocrisy, and repentance without faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ is sheer folly.

- Repentance defined in [2 Peter 3:9](#) “The LORD is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”
- Repentance preached in [Mark 1:1-4](#)
- Repentance from dead works ([Hebrews 6:1](#))
- Repentance and God ([Hebrews 7:21](#))
- Repentance, impossible to renew ([Hebrews 6:4-6](#))
- Repentance, the importance of repentance ([Acts 17:30](#)) “Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent.”
- Repentance, the evidence of repentance ([Acts 26:19-20](#))

12. The New Birth

We believe it is of the utmost importance that we have a clear understanding of what Jesus meant when, speaking with Nicodemus. He said, “You must be born again.” The new birth is a spiritual birth. It is as much a birth as the natural birth; it is not a figure of speech. The first birth is of the seed of man. The second birth is of the seed of God. ([1 Peter 1:23](#)) Therefore you cannot become a child of God by joining the church. The only way to become a child of God is to be “born again” ([John 3:3](#)); “not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding Word of God”.

What is the New Birth?

- The new birth is a new creation ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#))
- The new birth is a spiritual resurrection ([Ephesians 2:1-9](#))
- The new birth is regeneration ([Titus 3:5](#))
- The new birth is partaking of the divine nature of God ([2 Peter 1:4](#))
- The new birth is receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and LORD, by faith ([John 1:12](#))
- The new birth is being made the righteousness of God ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#))
- The new birth is compulsory if you are to become a child of God: “You must be born again.”
- Jesus and the two births ([John 3:1-8](#))
- The New birth issues a new sinless nature ([1 John 3:9](#))
- The New birth is imperishable ([1 Peter 1:23](#))
- The new birth – its means ([John 3:14-18](#))
- The new birth – its threefold proof ([1 John 5:1-2](#))

13. Eternal Security

We believe all people who have exercised personal faith in the LORD Jesus Christ are completely pardoned (of all sins) and justified (declared righteous) and in possession of eternal life, which is eternally secure. We believe that all people who are truly born again are regenerated by the Holy Spirit and are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ.

The new birth is a one-time event just as physical birth is a one-time event. Eternal life is the result of being born into the eternal family of God. Eternal security is not based on how a person acts or feels towards God, but the doctrine of eternal security is founded on justification. When a person trust

in the LORD Jesus Christ to save him, he is justified by the blood of Christ, and saved from the wrath of God through Christ. ([Romans 1:4; 4:25; 5:8-10](#))

We are saved by God's grace, not by our works, therefore, we cannot possibly keep our salvation by our works.

[2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:6; 8:35-39; 16:25; Philippians 1:6; Jude 24; John 3:16, 36; 5:24; 6:40; 10:28-29; 11:25-26; 12:46; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14, 21-23; 1 Peter 1:5, 18-23; 2:24; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 5:11-13](#)

14. The Eternal State of the Saved and Unserved

We believe there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous (saved) and the wicked (unsaved). People who trust in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior are justified (declared righteous) in the name of the LORD Jesus Christ; sanctified by the Spirit of our God and are truly righteous in His esteem. But everyone who continues in sin and unbelief are in God's sight wicked and remain under the curse of sin.

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men. The souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the LORD where they consciously await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul and new body are reunited forever glorified with the LORD in heaven. The souls of the unbelievers after death remain in conscious misery until the second resurrection, when with spirit, soul, and body reunited, they shall appear before the Great White Throne Judgment. After the Great White Throne judgment, all unbelievers will be cast in the lake of fire, not to be annihilated but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment for their sins. The chief sin being rejecting Jesus as their personal Savior.

[Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Matthew 25:34-41, 46; Luke 6:25; 16:19-26; John 5:28-29; 8:21; 2 Corinthians 5:8-10; Philippians 1:23; 1 John 5:19; Romans 6:23](#)

15. The Church – The Local Church

We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Jesus Christ is the head and all regenerated, baptized believers are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, ministry and fellowship. We believe that the overflow of the worship of this glorious God will lead the members of the local church to declare the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

[Ephesians 2:19-22; 5:19-21; Acts 1:8; 2:42; Hebrews 10:23-25](#)

We believe that every child of God is baptized and sealed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the bride of Christ, of which Christ is the Head. We also believe that the bride of Christ includes Old Testament saints.

[Isaiah 54:5-6; 62:4-5; Hosea 2:19-20; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18; Revelation 19:7-8](#)

We believe that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures and that the members of the one spiritual, universal body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies.

[1 Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25; Acts 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 20:17,28; Romans 16:1-5; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1](#)

We believe that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders also called bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers. ([Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11](#))

The local congregation is to submit to their leadership ([Hebrews 13:7,17](#)). The biblically designated officers serving the assembly under the direction of the elders are deacons ([1 Timothy 3:8-13](#)). Both elders and deacons must meet biblical qualifications.

[1 Timothy 3:1-13](#); [Titus 1:5-9](#); [1 Peter 5:1-5](#); [Ephesians 1:22; 5:23](#); [Colossians 1:18](#)

We believe that these leaders who lead or rule biblically are worthy of honor before the church, but likewise, those who continue to sin in a manner contradictory to the biblical qualifications while holding the office and responsibility of an elder must be publicly rebuked before the congregation for the purpose of making the church fearful of sinning. ([1 Timothy 5:17-22](#))

We believe in the importance of discipleship ([Matthew 28:19-20](#); [2 Timothy 2:2](#)) and mutual accountability of all believer to each other ([Matthew 18:5-14](#)), as well as the need for discipline of unrepentant members of the congregation in accordance with the standards of Scripture.

[Matthew 18:15-22](#); [Acts 5:1-11](#); [1 Corinthians 5:1-13](#); [2 Thessalonians 3:6-12](#); [1 Timothy 1:19-20](#); [Titus 1:10-16](#)

The ultimate mission of the church is to fulfill the Great Commission as given by our LORD in [Matthew 28:18-20](#). “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth”. “Go therefore and make disciple of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from interference of any hierarchy, of any individuals or organizations, and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit. We do believe it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel. But each local church has the right to judge the measure and method of its cooperation

with other churches. On all matters of membership, policy, government, discipline and benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

[Acts 2:41-42; 20:17-28; 1 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:11; 5:23-24; Colossians 1:18](#)

16. The Ordinances – Baptism and the LORD’s Supper

We believe that the LORD Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the LORD’s supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, done in the name of the Father, and the son, and the Holy Spirit. We hold that baptism is one of the two ordinances that Christ gave to the local church. Thus, it should be performed under the authority of the local church. Likewise, baptism should only be performed on a person who has given a clear testimony of faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior Jesus Christ. As Christ died, was buried and rose again, Christian baptism pictures the believer’s death, burial and resurrection to a new life in Christ.

We believe the LORD’s supper is the second ordinance given to the church by our LORD Jesus Christ. The Holy Communion is the commemoration of Christ’s death and a celebration of His risen life. The bread represents His body that was broken for us, and the grape juice represents His blood that was shed for us. Believers, before partaking of these elements, are called upon to examine themselves, “for he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the LORD’s body.” ([1 Corinthians 11:29](#))

We believe the ordinances of Baptism and the LORD’s Supper were given by the LORD Jesus to the local church and are to be observed only under its authority. We are commanded to do these ordinances till our LORD returns.

[Acts 8:36-39; John 3:23; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 3:16; 28:19-20; Colossians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28](#)

17. Mission

We believe that the command from our LORD Jesus to give and bring the Gospel to the world is clear and unmistakable and the Great Commission was given to every Christian and local church. We believe this church (BAAF) shall be missionary in spirit and practice, contributing to the support of missions, home and abroad. Support for missionaries or mission projects shall be upon recommendation of the Mission Committee and upon approval by the Elder Board after careful research and scrutiny.

[Matthew 28:18-20](#); [Mark 16:15](#); [John 20:21](#); [Romans 10:13-15](#)

18. Marriage

Marriage is deemed a primary, early institution ([Genesis 2:24](#)) preceded only by the Sabbath, sanctified by God on the seventh day of creation. Marriage is a sacred relationship between one man and one woman for life. Scripture teaches that Christians should only marry Christians. We believe that God hates divorce and intends marriage to last until one spouse dies.

[Genesis 2:18-24](#); [Mark 10:9](#); [Malachi 2:14-16](#); [Romans 7:1-3](#); [1 Corinthians 7:2](#); [Ephesians 5:22-23](#); [Matthew 19:1-9](#)

19. Human Sexuality

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and woman. We also believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex.

[Genesis 2:24; 19:13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-32; 1 Corinthians 5:1, 6, 9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4](#)

20. Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that all human life is sacred from fertilization throughout the entire natural human life; that human beings are created in God's image and, as such are to be protected; that the weak, vulnerable, infirm, handicapped, pre-born, and needy deserve our respect, our care and our protection.

[Genesis 1:26; 9:6; Psalm 51:5; 82:3-4; 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:41](#)

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21. The Christian Life and Conduct

We believe that the Christian lives by grace through faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit indwelling the individual: "All things become new."

"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our LORD Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." ([Romans 5:1-2](#))

A Christian is a New Creature and a new man with a nature with a new heart, mind and purpose.

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#))

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." ([Romans 6:6](#))

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came man also the

resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. ([1 Corinthians 15:20-22](#))

“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. ([Philippians 2:3-5](#))

Christians are “God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works.” ([Ephesians 2:10](#)). Christians are called to live lives that are “holy and pleasing to God.” ([Romans 12:1](#)) and exemplary Christian behavior that allows us to fully commit ourselves to serving the LORD is made possible as we are empowered by the Holy Spirit who enables us to do the Father’s will ([Romans 8:9](#)). Indeed, “the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.” ([2 Chronicles 16:9](#))

Christians are a chosen people, belonging to God so that we may declare His praises ([1 Peter 2:9](#)). To declare His praises, it is essential that we spend time in His Word not just so we can learn how to behave in Christian fashion, but also so we can battle against the scheme of Satan. Knowledge alone is not enough; we are called to do more than to know and believe, Christians are to be “doers of the Word.” ([James 1:22](#))

The “actions” that glorify our Father in heaven are those that bear much fruit ([John 15:8](#)). This is, in fact, how we show we are His disciples. Indeed, the fruit of the Holy Spirit – Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)) – should be the hallmark of Christian behavior, all are manifestations of Love.

“The fruit of the Spirit is love.” Only as we live in love can we fulfill the will of God in our lives. The believer must become love-inspired, love-mastered, and love-driven. Without the fruit of the Spirit – love – we are just a religious noise.

God sent the Holy Spirit to indwell the believers.

[Ezekiel 11:19](#) “I shall give them one heart, and shall put a new spirit within them. And I shall take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh.”

[Joel 2:28](#) “And it will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. [29](#) Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out My Spirit.”

[John 16:7](#) “But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. [8](#) And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness and judgment.”

[John 16:13](#) “But when He, the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth, for He will not speak of His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak, and He will disclose to you what is to come. [14](#) He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you. [15](#) All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said, that He takes of Mine, and will disclose it to you.”

Christian behavior includes heeding Jesus’ call for us to be His witness to “the ends of the earth.” ([Acts 1:8](#))

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” ([Matthew 28:18-20](#))

We are to share the Gospel, which Paul defined as the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ ([1 Corinthians 15:1-4](#)). The validity of our witness is in how we live our lives. In chapters 4-6 of the Book of Ephesians, Paul summed up Christian behavior in a few words “Be imitators

of God”, “live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and willingly gave Himself up for us.” ([Ephesians 5:1-2](#))

Paul urged us in [Romans 12:1](#) “offer your bodies as living sacrifices.” This, ultimately, is the essence of true Christian behavior, surrendering our hearts and yielding our bodies to Christ, so He might continue God’s work through us. We are to be beacons of light in a dark world, using our spiritual gifts to advance His kingdom. It is living here on earth the way Jesus lived when He was here. It also means living to please one and only Almighty God. We do this when we abide in His Word and then live it out as we are enabled by His Holy Spirit, just as our Savior did until He took His last breath. As He was dying on the cross, Christ look out at His executioners and asked His Heavenly Father to forgive them ([Luke 23:24](#)). Jesus was doing more than fulfilling prophecy and making “intercession for the sinners” ([Isaiah 53:12](#)). He was practicing what He preached ([Luke 6:27-28](#)). So shall we!

God’s Promises about our Hope and Future Glory

[Romans 8:31](#) “If God is for us, who is against us? [32](#) He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?”

[Romans 8:35](#) “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or peril, or sword?”

[Romans 8:38](#) “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, [39](#) nor height, nor depth, nor any other created things, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our LORD.”

[1 Corinthians 15:51](#) “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, [52](#) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. [53](#) For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. [54](#) But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable and this mortal will have put on

immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, ‘Death is swallowed up in victory. [55](#) O Death, where is your victory? O Death, where is your sting? [56](#) The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; [57](#) but thanks be to God, who give us the victory through our LORD Jesus Christ. [58](#) Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the LORD. Hallelujah! Maranatha!”

22. Future Events. The End Times

We believe Christ will remove all born-again believers from the earth in an event known as the rapture at the end time.

[1 Thessalonians 4:16](#) For the LORD Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. [17](#) Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the LORD in the air, and so we will always be with the LORD. [18](#) Therefore encourage one another with these words. ([1 Corinthians 15:51-54](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#))

We believe at the judgment seat of Christ, every born-again Christian will be rewarded for good works and faithful service during their time on earth Or will lose rewards, but not eternal life, for lack of service and obedience. ([1 Corinthians 3:11-15](#); [2 Corinthians 5:10](#))

The Antichrist (the beast) will come into power and will sign a covenant with Israel for seven years ([Daniel 9:27](#)). This seven-year period of time is known as the “Tribulation”. During the tribulation, there will be terrible wars, famines, plagues, and natural disasters. God will be pouring out His wrath against sin, evil, and wickedness. The tribulation will include the appearance of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, and the seven seal,

trumpet, and bowl judgments. ([Revelation chapters 6, 8, 9, 11, 15, 16, 17 and 18](#))

About halfway through the seven years, the Antichrist will break the peace covenant with Israel and make war against it. The Antichrist will commit “the abomination of desolation” and set up an image of himself to be worshiped in the Jerusalem temple ([Daniel 9:27](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:3-10](#)), which will have been rebuilt. The second half of the tribulation is known as “the great tribulation” ([Revelations 9:14](#) and “the time of Jacob’s trouble” ([Jeremiah 30:7](#)).

At the end of the seven-year tribulation, the Antichrist will launch a final attack on Jerusalem, culminating in “the battle of Armageddon”. Jesus Christ will return, destroy the Antichrist and his armies, and cast them into the Lake of fire ([Revelation 19:11-21](#)). Christ will then bind Satan in the Abyss for 1,000 years and Christ will rule His earthly kingdom for this thousand-year period ([Revelation 20:1-6](#)).

At the end of the thousand years, Satan will be released, defeated again, and then cast into the lake of fire ([Revelations 20:7-10](#)) for eternity. Christ then judges all unbelievers at the great white throne judgment, casting them all into the lake of fire ([Revelation 20:10-15](#)) which is the second death.

Christ will then usher in a new heaven and new earth and the new Jerusalem – the eternal dwelling place of believers. There will be no more sin, sorrow, or death. ([Revelation chapters 21-22](#); [Matthew 22:8-14; 24](#); [John 14](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#); [1 Corinthians 15:20-53](#); [Philippians 3: 20-21](#); [2 Corinthians 5:10](#); [Ezekiel 14-21](#); [Daniel 7-12](#); [Revelation 6](#); [Zechariah 14](#); [Acts 1:11](#); [2:29-36](#); [2 Thessalonians 1:6-12](#); [Mark 13](#); [Isaiah 11](#); [Isaiah 9:6-7](#); [Luke 1:32-33; 21](#))

In the meantime, during these “end times” this world will hate and reject Christ and His followers. Nevertheless, He, the Son of God, prevails and His Word thrives, for belief on Him shall expand and take root throughout the earth, generation by generation, as a testimony of Christ’s eternal glory and power. ([John 15:18-19](#); [Matthew 24:9](#))

Christ instructed His followers to be true to His Gospel: “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you.”

Christ instructed His followers to be true to His Gospel: to be “light” and “salt” as they are led and guided by the indwelling Holy Spirit, before a dark and corrupt world, to show the world they are His disciples by their love for Him and one another. They shall do unto others as they would have other do unto them; that they overcome evil with good, that they go forth and be busy about the business of the Gospel, teaching all nations whatever He taught them. ([Luke 6:22, 27](#); [Luke 2:49](#); [Luke 19:13](#); [Romans 5:20](#))

“And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, “All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” ([Matthew 28:18-20](#))

Jesus Christs, God incarnate, submitted to a timetable, which speaks of a beginning and an end to the men and events of this world, on earth, His promised return marks an end to the history of this present world.

“I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the LORD, which is and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” ([Revelation 1:8](#))

“In My Father’s house are many rooms (mansions). If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also.” ([John 14:2-3](#))

“I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” ([John 14:6](#))

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C. Government

In the New Testament, pastor, bishop, overseer, and elder are generally used interchangeably to describe the same functional office of church leadership. They represent different aspects of one role: elder (maturity/character), overseer (Bishop) (function/authority), and pastor (shepherding/care).

Deacons represent a distinct, separate office focused on service.

Key Aspects of Interchangeable Terms:

- Elder/presbyter (presbyteros) (Greek): Emphasizes the spiritual maturity of the leader.

- Bishop/Overseer (episkopos) (Greek): Emphasizes the oversight, management, or guardianship of the church.

- Pastor/Shepherd (poimen) (Greek): Emphasizes the duty of feed, protect, and care for the congregation.

- Interchangeability in Scriptures: In [Acts 20:17-18](#), Paul calls the elders of Ephesus “elders”, then instructs them to “shepherd” (pastor) the church and calls them “overseer” interchangeably to describe the same role.

Deacons (diakonos – serving ministry): This office is distinct from the elder/pastor/overseer office. While elders focus on teaching, ruling, and spiritual care, deacons are traditionally tasked with serving the practical, physical, or administrative needs of the church.

The New Testament typically presents a plurality of elders/pastors/overseers in each church, rather than a single “pastor”.

In summary, elders lead and deacons serve. These categories are not mutually exclusive. Elders serve their people by leading, teaching, praying, counseling, etc.; and deacons may lead others in service. In fact, deacons might be the leaders of service teams within the church. Still, there is the basic distinction between those responsible for spiritual leadership of the church and those responsible for service.

There may be local variation of church leadership because this is only a basic pattern; every detail is not prescribed in Scripture. The basic pattern found in the New Testament is that every church should have a plurality of godly male elders who are responsible for leading and teaching the church and godly deacons who are responsible for facilitating the more physical aspects of church ministry.

The buck stops with the elders/pastors/overseers, who answer to our great supreme leader, Jesus Christ. ([Acts 14:23](#); [15:6](#); [16:4](#); [20:17](#); [1 Timothy 5:17](#); [Titus 1:5](#); [James 5:14](#); [1 Peter 5:1-2](#); [Philippians 1:1](#); [Acts 20:28](#))

1. Assignment of the Elders

Assignment of the Elders falls into four major categories:

First. These men are given both the responsibility and authority to skillfully and lovingly lead the church ([Acts 20:28](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:12](#); [Hebrews 13:17](#)). Elders are God's stewards ([Titus 1:7](#)). A steward is officially responsible to oversee his master's servants, property, and his finances. Elders are responsible to God for the local church. They are to lead in practical matters ([Acts 6:1-6](#); [11:29-30](#)). They are to lead in matters of doctrine ([Acts 15](#); [16:4](#)). They are also to guide in matters of discipline and character ([Hebrews 13:17](#)).

Second. They are to feed the church ([1 Timothy 3:2; 5:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; Titus 1:9](#)), offering accurate and insightful teaching of the Scripture.

Third. They are to care for the church ([James 5:14-15; Acts 20:35; Hebrews 13:17](#)). This care is shown in the love, concern, prayers, ministry, and adept management of church resources.

Finally, they are to protect the church. A major part of the elders' work is to protect the local church from false teachings, from harmful influences and wrong beliefs. ([1 Peter 5:2-3; Acts 15:6; 20:17-31; Titus 1:5-9](#))

Elders do not form a separate “clergy class” of Christians. They are brothers with the people, always seeking God’s best for the members of the church. ([Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5; 2 Corinthians 8:19](#)) Men who choose to be an elder must meet specific moral and spiritual qualifications ([1 Timothy 3:1-7](#)). They must be publicly installed into office ([1 Timothy 5:22; Acts 14:23](#)). They must be motivated and empowered by the Holy Spirit to do their work ([Acts 20:28](#))

2. Qualifications for Elders

The man must:

- Be a participating member of Bay Area Agape Fellowship
- Understand and be committed to BAAF’s core values and Articles of Faith

-Earnestly desire the office of elder and exhibit the character qualities in [1 Timothy 3:2-7](#) and [Titus 1:6-9](#).

These qualities are:

-Above reproach: Elders must lead by example and demonstrate a lifestyle free from patterns of sin

-The husband of one wife; Elders, if married, must be devoted husband

-Temperate: Elders must be self-controlled, enslaved to nothing, free from excesses

-Prudent: Elders must be sober, sensible, wise, balanced in judgment, not given to quick, superficial decision based on immature thinking

-Responsible: Elders must demonstrate a well-ordered life and honorable behavior

-Hospitable: Elders must be unselfish with their personal resources. They must be willing to share blessings with others.

-Able to teach: Elders must be able to communicate truth and sound doctrine in a non-argumentative way

-Not addicted to wine: Elders must be free(d) from addictions and willing to limit their liberty for the sake of others

-Not quick to temper: Elders must be gentle, patient, and able to exercise self-control in difficult situations

-Not contentious: Elders must not be given to quarreling or selfish argumentation

-Free from the love of money: Elders must not be stingy, greedy, out of sordid gain, or preoccupied with amassing material things

-Manage own household: Elders must have a well-ordered household and a healthy family life

-Not a new convert: Elders must be mature believers. They must have been Christians for long enough to demonstrate the reality of their conversion and depth of their spirituality

-Good reputation: Elders must be well-respected by unbelievers and free from hypocrisy

-Not self-willed: Elders must not be stubborn, prone to false opinions of others, or abuse authority. They must be servant-leaders

-Loving what is good: Elders must desire the will of God in every decision

-Just: Elders must desire to be fair and impartial. Their judgment must be based on Scripture principle.

-Devout: Elders must be devoted Christ followers seeking to be conformed to His image. They must be committed to prayer, worship, the study of Scripture, and the guarding of their own walk

-Holding fast the Word: Elders must be stable in the faith, obedient to the Word of God, and continually seek to be controlled by the Holy Spirit

3. Duties of Elders

The Elder Board oversees all the spiritual and administrative activities of the church, unless otherwise reserved to the church body elsewhere in this constitution. The Elder Board is ultimately responsible for the ministries of the church, visiting members, caring, and praying for the sick, preparing the ordinances, and equipping the saints for the work of the ministry.

- Elders model Christ-like behavior. They must live a life worthy of imitation. ([1 Peter 5:3](#); [Hebrews 13:7](#); [1 Timothy 3](#); [Titus 1](#); [1 Thessalonians 2:10-12](#))
- Elders maintain and guard doctrinal purity. They ensure that the church remains on a true course Biblically. ([Acts 15:2-11](#); [20:29-31](#); [Titus 1:9-16](#))
- Elders discipline unruly church members. They maintain the peace and purity of the church. They guard the body against harmful influences, confronting those who are contradicting Biblical truth or who are continuing in patterns of sinful behavior. They defend the church's core values, Articles of Faith, and its staff.
- Elder ensure the body is being fed through insightful and accurate Biblical teachings. ([1 Timothy 3:2](#); [4:13](#); [Titus 1:9](#); [Hebrews 13:7](#); [Galatians 6:6](#))
- Elder review and propose amendments to the constitution as needed to the membership

-Elders supervise all the legal and fiscal affairs of the church. The exceptions being:

- a) The Elder Board shall not encumber the church with loan, transfer, sale or purchase of real estate without the membership's approval
- b) The Elder Board shall not enjoin the church to any organization without the membership's approval
- c) The Elder Board shall not take advantage of the church's tax-exempt status to benefit themselves or others (individual or organization)

-Elders keep accurate financial records for the church

-Elders create the annual budget for the church and submit it to the membership for their approval at the annual meeting

-Elders approve the expenditures of the budget

-Elders maintain the membership rolls

-Elders hire, oversee, and terminate all paid staff

-Elders approve all potential elders, deacons, and church staff

-Elders appoint special committees to carry out activities of BAAF

-Elders establish qualifications for staff and volunteer positions, set staff policies and other church policies as necessary

- Elders appoint a Chairman, Vice chairman, Secretary and Treasurer
(Neither the senior pastor nor a staff pastor can hold any of these positions)
- Elders call, advertise and oversee all church meetings

4. Selection of Elders

The steps for selecting an elder are:

- 1.A man should express his desire to become an elder to the Elder Board ([1 Timothy 3:1](#))
- 2.The candidate must complete and submit an Elder Questionnaire to the Elder Board
- 3.The Elder Board should examine the potential elder's calling and qualifications. The appointment of a man to serve as an elder is a solemn and serious matter ([1 Timothy 5:21-22](#)). Therefore, the Elder Board shall earnestly, without any haste, bias or partiality, seek God's will with regard to the potential elder's appointment to the Elder Board.
- 4.If the Elder Board agrees with the potential elder that he is truly called and he meets the biblical qualifications, then the Elder Board shall recommend him to the church body to be affirmed as an elder
- 5.If the affirmation vote is favorable then the new elder is brought before the congregation where the elders lay hands on him, and pray for his new ministry of overseeing the flock of God ([1 Timothy 5:17-25](#))

5. Term for Elders

Each elder, upon appointment, shall be asked for a three-year commitment, subject to review, recommitment, and reaffirmation by the Elder Board. The only exception is the Lead Pastor whose term is indefinite.

An Elder's service may be discontinued by:

1. His own decision
 2. By the unanimous decision of the other elders. An elder can be removed from office if he becomes incapacitated or spiritually unqualified
 3. By a no confidence vote by participating members who are qualified to vote at a special church meeting called for that particular purpose
- Church members have the right to rebuke an elder due to a continuing sin in his life, based upon the procedure established in [1 Timothy 5:19-20](#) and [Matthew 18:15-17](#). Church members also have the right to remove an elder from office at a special church meeting.

6. Number of Elders

Although the Bible does not direct the church to have a certain number of elders. BAAF, due to our current small number, desires to have a minimum of three Elders to oversee the church.

7. The Role of Deacons

While Scripture indicates that Elders bear the ultimate responsibility for the spiritual watch-care of the church, Deacons generally function in area of service. The role of a deacon, as [Acts 6:1-7](#), clearly states, was that of waiting on tables and the distribution of food to the widows in the Jerusalem church. The root word “diako” from which “diakonos” is derived means “to run errands” – clearly is a service ministry.

[Acts 6:2](#) And the twelve (apostles) summoned the congregation of the disciples and said “It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. [3](#) But select from among you brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. [4](#) But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.”

The seven men of good character were elected, not by the apostles, but by the congregation to look after the church. This was to free the pastors from hands-on tasks so they could better attend to their responsibilities of studying, preaching, teaching and overseeing the flock of God ([Acts 4:4; 20:28](#)).

The ministry of a Deacon is a leadership position that is available to both men and women. Deacons are to give their primary attention toward caring for the congregation’s physical welfare. Deacons have the honor of modeling, for the local church and the lost world, God’s compassion, kindness, mercy, and love. As the church compassionately cares for people’s needs, the world sees a visible display of Christ’s love, which

will draw people to the Savior. Deacons are to be an example of commitment, unity and harmony in their service.

8. Qualifications for Deacons

The man or woman must:

- Be a participating active member of BAAF
- Understand and be committed to BAAF's core values and Articles of Faith
- Earnestly desire the office of deacon and exhibit the character qualities in [1 Timothy 3:8-13](#). These qualities are:
 - Worthy of respect: Deacons must demonstrate a well-ordered life and honorable behavior
 - Sincere: Deacons must be genuine and transparent
 - Not indulging in much wine: Deacons must be free from addictions and willing to limit their liberty for the sake of others (alcohol and drugs)
 - Not pursuing sordid gain: Deacons must not be stingy, greedy, out for dishonest gain, or preoccupied with amassing material things
 - Keep hold of deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience: Deacons must be stable in the faith and obedient to the Word of God, continuously seeking to be controlled by the Spirit

-First to be tested: Deacons must not be new believers. They must have been Christians long enough to demonstrate the reality of their conversion and depth of their spirituality

-Not malicious talkers: Deacons must be able to maintain confidentiality and not be guilty of gossip or slander

-Temperate: Deacons must be self-controlled, enslaved to nothing, free from excesses

-Faithful spouses: Deacons must be faithful in their marriage

-Manage their children and household well: Deacons must have a well-ordered household and a healthy family life. If there are children, they must respect and love their parents

9. Duties of Deacons

The Deacons are to effectively and carefully administer the church's charitable activities. They are the collectors of funds, the distributors of relief, and agents of mercy and service. They help the poor, the jobless, the sick, the widowed, the elderly, the homeless, the shut-in, and the disabled. They comfort, protect, and encourage people. They do in many ways meet spiritual needs of those whom they serve, their primary service is related to physical needs

-Deacons serve the physical needs of the membership exhibiting the love, grace and compassion of Christ

- Deacons give specific attention to widows, widowers, the needy and the aged
- Deacons collect and administrate the church's benevolence fund
- Deacons assist the Elder Board in the preparation and serving of the LORD's Supper and aid people during Baptism
- Deacons help and assist the Elder Board when and where needed

10. Selection of Deacons

As the need for additional Deacons arises the Elder Board will accept nomination from the congregation and the Deacon Board. The Elder Board will review qualifications, interview the nominees, and determine if they meet the qualifications listed in [Acts 6](#) and [1 Timothy 3](#).

Candidates meeting the qualification will be appointed to serve by the Elder Board.

11. Term for Deacons

Each Deacon, upon appointment, will serve for two years. A Deacon can serve a second term upon approval by the elders. After two terms, a deacon must stand down for at least one year before joining the deacon board.

An individual's service as a deacon may be discontinued by:

- a. Their own decision
- b. The decision of the elders: A deacon can be removed from office if he or she becomes physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified

12. Number of Deacons

BAAF desires to have a minimum of three deacons to oversee care for the church body, although the Bible does not direct the church to have a certain number of deacons. The Elder Board will add deacons as needed.

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D. Staff

Salaried Staff

Lead Pastor

Servant leadership should be the hallmark of the lead pastor's role. It is to mature believers through insightful and accurate presentation of biblical truth, equipping the congregation to be the true "ministers" in the body. He teaches and leads by word and example, and stresses both the understanding and the application of God's truth. (coined by Robert Greenleaf in 1970)

Core Principles and Characteristics of a servant Leader

- Listening and Empathy: intently understanding and accepting others
- Healing and Awareness: supporting other's emotional health and fostering self-awareness
- Persuasion: Using influence rather than authority
- Conceptualization and Foresight: Balancing daily tasks with long-term, strategic vision
- Stewardship and commitment to growth: Acting as caretaker of the church and investing in its devotional development
- Building community of Christians: Creating a supportive and encouraging environment

Specifically:

- The Lead Pastor provides strategic leadership and vision to the congregation

-The Lead Pastor serves on the Elder Board and mentors the other elders in the difficult task of equipping the saints to do the work of the ministry ([Ephesians 4:11](#))

-The Lead Pastor arranges the public and regular services of the church

-The Lead Pastor administers the two ordinances of the church

-The Lead Pastor daily oversees the paid and volunteer staff ministering at the church

-The Lead Pastor conducts weddings, funerals and visitation and counseling when needed

Any concept of servant leadership that is not a way of life, centered on the belief that “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom of many” ([Mark 10:45](#)) is ultimately nothing more than an abstraction. Servant Leaders imitate Christ and create spaces for compassion, kindness and justice to flourish

Qualifications for the Lead Pastor

In addition to the biblical qualifications listed for Elders in [1 Timothy 3:1-7](#), a man desiring the office of Lead Pastor must:

1.Be able to show a history of spiritual maturity and leadership from previous ministries ([2 Timothy 2:2](#); [James 3:13-18](#))

2.Demonstrate a servant attitude, a passion for ministry and a mind to work ([Philippians 2](#); [Galatians 5:22-23](#); [Nehemiah 4:6](#))

3. Preach and teach in biblical and applicable manner ([2 Timothy 3:16-17](#)).
He must seek to minimize any dependence on human wisdom, personality, and man-made methods for accomplishing the work of the LORD
4. Love God supremely and love others as himself ([Luke 10:27](#))
5. Feel a definite call to shepherd the flock of God
6. Seek in his entire ministry to exalt the LORD Jesus Christ and to promote loyalty to Him before seeking loyalty for church, denomination or self
([Colossians 1:18](#))
7. Subscribe to BAAF's constitution /Bylaws, core values and Articles of Faith

Term for the Lead Pastor

The Lead Pastor shall remain in office an indefinite period of time subject to the following conditions:

1. If a majority of the Elder Board (excluding the Lead Pastor) is in agreement to remove the Lead Pastor from his position, they have the authority to dismiss him with an affirmation vote from the participating church members who are qualified to vote at a special church meeting called for that purpose. The Elder Board is to give the Lead Pastor one month's notice of its intention to dismiss him, unless the dismissal is for immorality reasons. The Elder Board shall determine severance compensation for the Lead Pastor.
2. If the Lead Pastor chooses to resign for his own reasons, he must give one month's written notice to the Elder Board. If his resignation is accepted, the Elder Board shall notify the church of his resignation within two weeks. The time limit of a Lead Pastor's resignation or dismissal is subject to a

lesser time if both the Lead Pastor and the Elder Board by mutual agreement provide otherwise.

Selection of a Lead Pastor

In the event of vacancy in the office of Lead Pastor, the elders are responsible to:

- 1.Determine guidelines for the Lead Pastor search committee
- 2.Select a Lead Pastor search committee
- 3.To approve or disapprove a candidate recommended by the search committee
- 4.To present the candidate to participating church members for affirmation

The Lead Pastor's salary, benefits and moving expenses shall be set by the Elder Board at the time of his call and shall be annually reviewed by the Elder Board thereafter. Upon acceptance of a call, the Lead Pastor and his wife (if he is married) shall be added to the membership roll.

Staff Members

The Elders are responsible to appoint people to the church staff who have complimentary spiritual gifts, talents, and personalities, to oversee ministry areas that cannot be filled by volunteers. The elders determine the description, duties, selection, and qualifications of all staff personnel. They set staff member's salary, benefits and moving expenses at the time of their hire and review them annually thereafter. Upon acceptance of a position, all staff members shall be added to the membership roll.

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E. Membership

To be a member of the church is a commitment to actively function as a part of a local body of Christ ([Romans 12:3-21](#); [1 Corinthians 12](#)). The Bible describes the church as a family, a body, and a flock of sheep. It is a place where one finds unconditional love and support, protection, help and growth. The church is a family, a community that challenges us to love God with our heart, mind, soul and spirit, and to love others as we love ourselves. Church membership encourages spiritual growth ([Hebrews 10:24-25](#)), reconciliation ([Ephesians 4:25-32](#)), participation ([Acts 4:32-37](#)), and right living ([1 Corinthians 5](#))

The membership of this church shall consist of persons who confess faith on the LORD Jesus Christ as personal Savior, who give evidence of regeneration by living consistently with their profession and with the views of faith, doctrine and practice of this church, who have been baptized by immersion and who have been received into its membership according to the bylaws of the church.

Requirement for church membership:

- You must have received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior
- You must have been baptized by immersion after you received Christ as your LORD and Savior
- You must agree with BAAF's core values and Articles of Faith
- You must attend membership class
- Your request for membership must be approved by the Elder Board

Member Responsibilities:

BAAF members are expected to:

- Attend church services and congregational meetings
- Work in the church's ministries and participate for church growth
- Faithfully represent the LORD and the church in our community
- Regularly contribute according to their abilities
- Hold church leaders in esteem and pray for them
- Preserve the unity of the church
- Stay true to the core values and the Articles of Faith of BAAF
- Strive with God's help to abide by the membership commitment

Benefits of Church Membership:

- Members have the privilege of praising, worshiping and learning the Word of God
- Members have priority in facility usage, and in consulting with the elders, pastors, and staff member's time
- Members have priority in receiving information, benevolence money and personal support in ministry
- Members are eligible to hold leadership positions within the church
- Members have voting privilege

Membership Commitment:

I (name), being in agreement with the core values and the Articles of Faith of BAAF feel led by the Holy Spirit to become part of the BAAF family. In doing so, I am making a commitment to:

- Honor Christ with my life

- Submit to the leadership
- Protect the peace and purity and
- Support the work of this church through prayer, service and giving

Terminating of Membership:

The Elder Board shall terminate a person's membership and remove their names from the membership roll:

- when the member dies
- when the member requests to be removed from membership
- when the member joins another church
- when the member does not attend BAAF's worship service (in person or online), serve in a ministry, or give to the church for nine consecutive months

Church Discipline:

Our LORD Jesus Christ states that it is the church's duty to discipline its members who choose to live in sin. His command to exercise church discipline is as definite as His commands to baptize, observe the LORD's Supper and make disciples around the world ([Matthew 18:15-20](#)).

According to [Matthew 18:15-18](#) all church members are called to exercise church discipline for we are all members of the body. Church discipline should be looked at as a positive action with the goal of restoring a member

The Purpose of Church Discipline:

- To maintain purity in the church by encouraging members to be obedient to biblical standards and godly practices ([1 Corinthians 5:6-7](#))

- To restore the sinning member back into proper fellowship with his church and God ([Galatians 6:1](#); [1 John 1:9](#))
- To motivate other church members not to live in sin and experience its destructiveness ([1 Timothy 5:20](#); [James 1:15](#))
- To keep the members focused on the mission of the local church – to fulfill the Great Commission ([Matthew 28:18-20](#))
- To glorify God and receive His blessings ([1 Corinthians 10:31](#))

The Process of Church Discipline:

Step 1: It is the duty of every member of the church who has knowledge of a sinning church member to privately rebuke, warn and correct the sinning member, praying that he or she will repent and ask forgiveness for their sin ([Matthew 18:15](#))

Step 2: If the sinning member does not repent to their sin, the correcting member should confront the sinning member accompanied by one or two witnesses. Their purpose is again to rebuke, warn, and correct the sinning member, praying that he or she will repent and ask forgiveness for their sin ([Matthew 18:16](#))

Step 3: If the sinning member still refuses to repent of their sin, the matter should be brought before the Elder Board. The Elders will investigate the allegation brought by the witnesses against the sinning member, and if the allegations are found to be true, the Elder Board will confront the sinning member and seek their immediate repentance and restoration. If the sinning member still refuses to repent of their sin, the elders will notify the church members ([Matthew 18:17](#))

Step 4: After notifying the church members about the sinning member, the elders will remove the sinning member from the membership roll. They will instruct all church members not to fellowship with the person,

but to pray for his or her repentance and restoration ([1 Corinthians 5](#); [1 Timothy 1:20](#); [Titus 3:10](#); [2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15](#))

Step 5: A letter will be sent to the terminated member explaining to him or her why the Elder Board ended their church membership and why he or she is unwelcome at all church services and activities. In addition, the letter will lovingly explain how the sinning believer can be restored back into the fellowship.

Membership Restoration after Church Discipline:

If a terminated member heeds the Elders' warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement, he or she will be publicly restored into the membership.

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F. Meeting and Voting

Quorum 33% of the participating church members qualified to vote will constitute a quorum for the transaction of church business at an Elder Board approved meeting.

- members must be attending an in person or online worship service, serving in a ministry, and giving to the church to be considered a participating member qualified to vote. When in doubt, the Elder Board will determine who is participating member qualified to vote.
- members must be at least 18 years old to be included in the quorum and qualify to vote on church matters.

Voting

Each participating member qualified to vote is entitled to one vote on each motion submitted to the membership by the Elder Board.

Members can vote on the:

- Annual budget of the church
- Election or removal of an elder
- Disposition of all or substantially all of the assets of the church
- Merger or dissolution of the church
- Acquisition of property and related indebtedness
- Amending the Constitution/Bylaws of the church
- Calling or removing of the Lead Pastor

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G. Church Covenant

- A church covenant is a promise – a promise made to God, to a local church (BAAF), and to one's self.
- A church covenant is a summary of how we agree to live. While our statement of faith is a good summary of what we believe, our church covenant is a summary of how we agree to live – more importantly, it is a summary of how God would have us live. It does not include every explicit command regarding obedience, but it does give a general summary of what it means to live as a disciple of Christ.
- A church covenant is a sign of commitment – a commitment to God, to his church, and to personal holiness.
- A church covenant is an ethical statement – a series of written pledges based on the Bible which church members voluntarily make to God and to one another regarding their basic moral and spiritual commitment and the practice of their faith. Inherent in the purpose of a church covenant is the understanding that church membership

involves being held accountable to live in a manner consistent with a common understanding of Scripture.

- A church covenant is a biblical standard. A church covenant is helpful in a church that is practicing biblical church discipline. As members of a church, we exhort one another to live holy lives, and we challenge brothers and sisters persisting in sin.

Our Church (BAAF) Covenant:

The covenant is to be made by baptized Christians – those who “repent and believe” in Jesus Christ as their LORD and Savior, baptized upon their “profession of faith”.

[Mark 1:1-4](#); [Hebrews 10:23](#); [Romans 10:9](#); [1 Timothy 6:12](#)

The covenant can only be kept with the help of the Holy Spirit – “relying on His gracious aid”. Any ability we have to fulfill the promises of the BAAF covenant is attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit, not us! This means first that we can do all things through Christ Jesus our LORD, and second, that we should have no reason to be proud of spiritual success in our lives. God gets all the credit and all the glory.

[Philippians 4:13](#); [Matthew 19:26](#); [Isaiah 41:10](#); [2 Corinthians 12:9](#)

The Covenant – The Promises

1. We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We should pray that God’s peace would be present in the body as a whole. Whether we are gathering for a Sunday morning service, or thinking and planning through matters of church business at a

member's meeting, we are to pray that the Holy Spirit would move us together in the bond of love. Unity is fragile and needs tender loving care.

[Ephesians 4:2-3](#); [Colossians 3:14](#); [John 17:21](#); [1 Corinthians 1:10](#); [Romans 12:5](#)

2.Exercise an affectionate care and watchful over each other and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require.

- Are we bearing each other's burdens?
- Are we looking out for each other?
- Are we challenging each other when we sin?
- Are we entreating one another to a holy walk?
- Are we doing these things for people who are outside our demographic group?

It is insufficient if we are only caring for those who share our demographic profile. This idea is contrary to most church culture thinking. But it is biblical ([Ephesians 4:2-3](#); [Ephesians 5:1-2](#))

3.Do not forsake the assembling of ourselves together to worship and pray. Christians do not meet simply so they can be blessed; we meet so that the church can glorify God. As we learn God's word together, praise God together, pray together and serve together, Christ's bride is being made ready for his bridegroom. Attending regularly is vital because it is the first step toward being held accountable. Non-attendance is either a portal to sin or a reflection of sin. It is prevented by formative church discipline, and remedied by corrective church discipline.

[Hebrews 10:24-25](#); [Matthew 18:20](#); [Acts 2:42](#); [Psalms 122:1](#)

4. Do not neglect to pray for ourselves and others. In our own devotionals, we are to pray that God would grow us in Christ. We are to pray that he would strengthen us to do His work. We are to pray for His direction in our lives. We are also to pray for each other, that His Holy Spirit would be at work in all of us. That's why we encourage members to get our membership list and pray through it by names.

[James 5:16](#); [Galatians 6:2](#); [1 Timothy 2:1](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:25](#); [Job 42:10](#)

5. Discipleship or spiritual mentoring should be our daily goal. Discipleship in the Bible focuses on following Jesus, abiding in His word, bearing spiritual fruit, and making disciples of others.

[Matthew 28:19-20](#) (The Great Commission)

[Luke 9:23](#) (The Cost)

[John 8:31-32](#) (Abiding)

[John 13:34-35](#) (Love)

[2 Timothy 2:2](#) (Multiplication)

[Romans 12:1-2](#) (Offering one's body as a living sacrifice)

6. Seek the salvation of family and friends. The life we live during the week is to include sharing the Good News with family and friends. The proclamation of the Gospel to our families and friends is so important that we should covenant together in order to encourage each of us to share our faith.

“But if any provide not his own, and especially for those of his own

house (physically, financially, and spiritually), he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”

[Acts 16:31](#); [Acts 11:14](#); [2 Peter 3:9](#); [Ezekiel 33:11](#)

7. Rejoice at each other's happiness. In this world of envy, jealousy and greed, as Christians we are called to see others' success and happiness and praise God for it. This may be one of the most difficult promises in our covenant to keep. We truly are a selfish and proud people in need of God's grace.

[Romans 12:15](#); [1 Corinthians 12:26](#)

Celebrating success

Fostering community

Sharing in mutual joy

8. Bear each other's burdens and sorrows. God did not design us to go through difficulty alone. “Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” ([Galatians 6:2](#)) This is so important that Paul call it the law of Christ. Jesus taught that all the law and prophets depend on (1) loving God with all heart, soul, and mind, and (2) loving your neighbor as yourself. Jesus came to fulfill the law, meaning He lived it perfectly and completed its purpose, defining its true intent.

[Galatians 6:1, 2, 5](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:14](#); [Romans 12:5; 15:1](#);
[Ecclesiastes 4:9-10](#)

9. Preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all nations. One of the most obvious ways to evangelize is by us sharing the Gospel with unbelievers. Every Christian is called to do so. The other way to evangelize is God will show the world who he is through us, the church. We are a corporate witness, a display of God's holiness, by His grace. Therefore, how we serve together and love together is a mean

God uses to communicate the Good News to the lost world. John 13:34, Jesus shows His master plan for evangelism. “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” It is important to note, we are not just individuals assembling in the same building, God intends us to be one body of Christ working together and enjoying each other’s company. And that alone can be an important evangelistic tool.

[John 13:34](#); [Matthew 28:19-20](#); [Romans 1:16](#); [10:14](#); [1 Peter 3:15](#); [Acts 1:8](#)

10. Support the ministry of the church. Through prayer, commitment to biblical teaching, finance and other means, each individual member has an important role in supporting the church body.

[Malachi 3:10](#); [Galatians 6:6](#); [2 Corinthians 9:7-8](#); [Ephesians 4:11-12](#)

11. Live a godly life in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts. One of the reasons we covenant together is because we realize that we need each other with our own Christian-walk with God.

[Titus 2:11-12](#); [2 Timothy 2:22](#); [1 Peter 2:11](#); [Colossians 3:5](#); [Romans 13:14](#)

12. Comfort each other. The Bible commands believers to comfort, encourage, and build one another up ([1 Thessalonians 5:11](#)). This mutual support is rooted in sharing the comfort received from God. God comforts us in our troubles so that we can comfort others with the same comfort we have received.

[1 Thessalonians 5:11, 14](#); [4:18](#); [2 Corinthians 1:3-4](#); [Colossians 3:12](#)

Purpose: These verses encourage strengthening one another’s faith, especially when facing grief, trials, or uncertainty about the future, and facing terminal diagnosis.

Action: Comfort involves not just words, but building up (edifying) one another to foster peace and community.

Source: The comfort shared is meant to be an extension of the comfort God provides.

“Praise be to the God and Father of our LORD Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.” ([2 Corinthians 1:3-4](#))

The Covenant

Having been brought by God’s sovereign grace to repent and believe in the Good News of Jesus Christ and His saving work, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, we do now, relying on His grace, solemnly and joyfully affirm our covenant with each other.

We will pray and labor to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, devoted to the glory of God, resting in the Gospel of His Son, and dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit.

To that end,

We will not forsake assembling together, but will faithfully attend our corporate worship, treasuring our church’s weekly opportunity to sing, pray, and receive the whole council of God’s word. We will defend and maintain a Gospel-centered ministry by upholding and attending the biblical preaching, the administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of church discipline.

We will walk together in brotherly love, and becoming the members of a local church: we will pray for and serve one another, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other, and reject all opportunities to speak or hear gossip or slander. We will instead seek to encourage one another and build each other up in the faith. We will unite together in the bond of love.

We will rejoice with those who rejoice and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows in word and in action.

We will seek to proclaim and adorn the Gospel of Christ before our family, friends, and neighbors and faithfully transfer the Gospel to future generations.

We will contribute faithfully and cheerfully and regularly to the support of our local church (BAAF), to the care of our members, and to the spread of the Gospel locally and to all nations.

We will submit to the leadership of elders who have been entrusted by God to serve and care for the church by teaching the word of Christ to us and modeling the character of Christ before us, and we will affirm deacons as leading servants in the church.

May the love of God, the grace of our LORD Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen

Name: _____

Signature: _____

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H. Church Business

Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall be January 1st through December 31st.

Church Officers

The officers of the Church will be consistent with those of a California 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. These officers will be appointed by the Elder Board and will serve until removed by the Elder Board. The Elder Board has the authority to appoint additional officers to fulfill the business of the church.

President

The President shall be appointed by the Elder Board by the affirmative vote of at least three-fourths of the votes cast at a conference or meeting of the members, for a term of six years. The President may be suspended or removed by the Elder Board's recommendation, by a majority vote of the members.

Responsibilities:

- Be the chief executive officer of BAAF
- Be a member of the Elder Board
- Report and inform to each conference or meeting on the work and progress of BAAF

Accountability:

- The President shall be accountable to the Elder Board.

Secretary

Appointment:

- The Secretary shall be appointed by the Elder Board.

Responsibilities:

The Secretary shall:

- Prepare and publish the call of the Board meeting and the minutes of the meeting.
- Sign and keep legal documents and documents of the church on behalf of BAAF.
- Serve as secretary of the Elder Board and the Deacon Board.

Accountability:

- The Secretary shall be accountable to the Elder Board and the Deacon Board relating to the conduct of the meeting.

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Elder Board from among the board members.

Responsibilities:

- Keep and balance all bank accounts
- Report to the Board meeting quarterly and annual financial status of the church
- Assist and consult the Board on all investment decision and any purchase of property and equipment

Indemnification of Elders and Officers

The elders and officers of the church acting together should be indemnified and held harmless for actions consistent with the purpose of BAAF. BAAF shall be primarily responsibility for liability arising from such actions or inaction of the Elder Board and officers of the church. Reasonable expenses to litigate or otherwise solve issues arising from the Elder Board's and

officer's performance of its duties and responsibilities shall be paid by BAAF.

Dissolution

Upon dissolution of this church, The Board of Elders shall cause the assets herein to be distributed to another church or ministry with a similar core values and Articles of Faith.

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