
ARTICLE 1 – NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION 1.01—NAME

This congregation of Believers shall be known as GOOD TIDINGS GOSPEL CHAPEL

SECTION 1.02—PURPOSE¹

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

ARTICLE 2 – STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT

SECTION 2.01—STATEMENT OF FAITH²

The following comprise the Scriptural beliefs of this church and its members.

- (A) **The Holy Scriptures.** We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments of the Holy Bible to be the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God; that these Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed and, therefore, are the final authority for faith and life; that the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament, hereafter referred to as the Scriptures, are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man; that the Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal, grammatical-historical meaning. All issues of interpretation and meaning shall be determined by the Elders. The King James Version of the Bible and other reliable translations will be used by the church.
 - (B) **Dispensationalism.** We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these dispensations—the Law, Grace, and the Kingdom—are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture. (Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25, 27; Rev. 20:2-6)
 - (C) **The Godhead.** We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three divine Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, coequal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; John 14:10, 26; 2 Cor. 13:14)
 - (D) **The Person and Work of Christ.**
-

-
-
1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful mankind. (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-8)
 2. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and, that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:18-36; Rom. 3:24-25; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 Peter 1:3-5)
 3. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Mediator, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9-10; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2)

(E) The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and, that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8-11; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13-14)
2. We believe that He is the divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures, and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27)
3. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that as members can do the work of the ministry. (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 28; Eph. 4:7-12)
4. We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, mentioned in scripture such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary, that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit, and that ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. (1 Cor. 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22)

(F) The Total Depravity of Man. We believe that Man was created in the image and likeness of God; but that through Adam's sin, the human race fell, having inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God, that man is totally depraved and of himself, is utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19)

-
-
- (G) **Salvation.** We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to mankind by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. We believe that all sins, except blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, are forgivable. (Matt. 12:31-32; John 1:12; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 1 John 1:9)
- (H) **The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers.**
1. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1; 38-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; 1 Pet. 1:4-5)
 2. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation because of the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to sin. (Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15)
- (I) **The Church**
1. We believe that the local church, which is the body and the espoused Bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again redeemed persons. (1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27)
 2. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11)
 3. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4)
 4. We recognize water baptism and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the Church in this age. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 8:36-38; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)
- (J) **Separation.** We believe that all born-again persons are to live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord, that God commands His people to separate from all religious heresy, and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and to refrain from all immodest and immoderate appearance, body piercings, and markings. (Lev. 19:28; Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11)
- (K) **The Second Advent of Christ.** We believe in that *blessed hope*, the personal, imminent return of Christ, who will return for His Church prior to a seven-year period of Great Tribulation, that at the end of the Tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return with His church to reign to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom. (Ps. 89:3-4; Dan. 2:31-45; Zech. 14:4-11; 1 Thess. 1:10, 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Rev. 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6)

(L) The Eternal State.

1. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all mankind, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28, 29; 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13)
2. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6)
3. We believe that the souls of unredeemed remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15)

(M) The Personality of Satan. We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10)

(N) Creation. We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11)

(O) Civil Government. We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the Home, 2) the Church, and 3) the State. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word, that God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The Home, the Church, and the State are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. We believe that we must obey the State unless it requires us to act contrary to our faith, at which time we must obey God rather than the State. (Matt. 22:15-22; Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Titus 3:1-2; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)

(P) Human Sexuality.

1. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)
2. We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

(Q) Family Relationships

1. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the Home and the Church; that the husband is the leader of the Home, and that men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the local church. Accordingly, that only men are eligible for licensure and ordination in this church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)
2. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the Church, that the wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the Church submits to the headship of Christ, that children are a heritage from the Lord, and that parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values, and training them, through consistent lifestyle, example, and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

(R) Divorce and Remarriage. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Remarriage is permitted only in the event of a death of a spouse. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

(S) Abortion. We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being, that abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. And that abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

(T) Euthanasia. We believe that the direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. That Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus we believe that an act or omission, of an act which of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God. We believe however, that discontinuing medical procedures

that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected untoward outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment. (Ex. 20:13, 23:7; Matt. 5:21; Acts 17:28)

- (U) **Christian Love.** We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, even those who oppose us, or who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. We believe God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, and the use or threat of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. That although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for those who engage in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)
- (V) **Lawsuits between Believers.** We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or against the church in order to resolve personal disputes. We believe that the local church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between its members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)
- (W) **Missions.** We believe that God has given the Church, The Great Commission to proclaim the Gospel to all peoples so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ, we should use all available means to reach foreign nations, including missionary journeys, in order to reach them. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20)
- (X) **Giving.** We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to financially support his local church. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully for the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of his tithe or offering once given. (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

SECTION 2.02—AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

This Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our tenet of faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do affirm, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teachings of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members of this church. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

SECTION 2.03—COVENANT

Having been led, 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 Spirit, we the members of this local church, do now, in the presence of

God, and angels, most solemnly and joyfully enter into this covenant with one another, as one body of believers in Christ.

We agree, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and its spirituality; to maintain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to give it sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; and to contribute cheerfully and regularly in support of the ministry, to the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel to all nations.

We also covenant to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our family members, relatives, acquaintances, and others; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful to our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all gossiping, backbiting, and expressions of anger; to abstain from such worldly amusements as watching ungodly movies, gambling, rock music, dancing, and to be free from all oath-bound secret societies and partnerships with unbelievers; to abstain from the sale or use of tobacco in any form, narcotic drugs, or intoxicating drink; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We further covenant 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 of speech; to be slow to take offense, always ready for reconciliation, to be mindful of the commandments of our Savior, to love one another and to pursue reconciliation without delay when there is a breach in relationship.

We moreover agree that when we relocate, 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.