

**DOCTRINAL
STATEMENT
& CHURCH
DISTINCTIVES**
WITH CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

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DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

The Holy Scriptures

We believe and teach that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus the 66 books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God (1 Cor. 2:7-14; 2 Pet. 1:20-21).

We believe and teach that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Cor. 2:13), verbally inspired in every word (2 Tim. 3:16), absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed.

We believe and teach that the Bible constitutes the only necessary and infallible rule of faith and practice and is sufficient for all things pertaining to life and godliness (Matt. 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 1:3, 20-21).

We believe and teach that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Pet. 1:20-21) without error in the whole or in the part (Matt. 5:18; 2 Tim. 3:16).

We believe and teach that, whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation - the author's originally intended meaning, which is binding on all generations. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal, grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17; 16:12-15; 1 Cor. 2:7-15; 1 John 2:20). The literal, grammatical-historical method of interpretation insists on following the normal rules for interpreting all literature, including the priority of context, the normal meaning of words and figures of speech, the rules of grammar and syntax, and the historical context in which the book or passage was

written. Although some things in Scripture are hard to understand (2 Pet. 3:16), it is sufficiently clear so that when we diligently apply these principles, we are able to discover its meaning (Ps. 19:7; 119:130; Matt. 12:3, 5; 19:14; 21:42; 22:31)—especially in those matters that pertain to salvation (2 Tim. 3:15; James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23).

God

We believe and teach that there is but one living and true God (Deut. 6:4; Isa. 45:5-7; 1 Cor. 8:4, 6), an infinite, all-knowing, self-existent Spirit (John 4:24), perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14)—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

God the Father

We believe and teach that God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, orders and executes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Ps. 145:8-9; 1 Cor. 8:6). He initiated the creation of all things in six literal days (Gen. 1:1-31; Ex. 31:17; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:9), including the special creation of man and woman (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:5-25). As the only absolute and omnipotent Ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Ps. 103:19; Rom. 11:36). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Eph. 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chron. 29:11). In His sovereignty He is neither the author nor approver of sin (Hab. 1:13; John 8:38-47), nor does He diminish or destroy the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Pet. 1:17).

We believe and teach His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men (Acts 17:28-29; Eph. 4:6), but He is spiritual Father only to believers (Rom. 8:14; 2 Cor. 6:18). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Eph. 1:4-6); He saves from sin and adopts all who come to Him through Jesus Christ; He becomes, upon their adoption, their spiritual Father (John 1:12; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5; Heb. 12:5-9).

God the Son

We believe and teach that Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial (of one and the same essence), and coeternal with the Father (John 10:30; 14:9).

We believe and teach that God the Father created all things according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by Whom all things continue in existence and in operation (John 1:3; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:2).

We believe and teach that, in the incarnation (God becoming man), the second Person of the Trinity laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes (Phil. 2:5-8).

We believe and teach that in the incarnation Christ surrendered only His preincarnate glory (John 17:5) and the independent exercise of the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. In His incarnation, the eternally existing second Person of the Trinity accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God-Man (Phil. 2:5-8; Col. 2:9), yet without sin (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26).

We believe and teach that Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness (Mic. 5:2; John 5:23; 14:9-10; Col. 2:9).

We believe and teach that our Lord Jesus Christ was virgin born (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23, 25; Luke 1:26-35); that He was God incarnate, very God and very man (John 1:1, 14); and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, and rule over God's kingdom (Ps. 2:7-9; Isa. 9:6; John 1:29; Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 7:25-26; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

We believe and teach that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His perfect obedience (Rom. 5:19) and through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross. His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive (John 10:15; Rom. 3:24-25; 5:8; 1 Pet. 2:24).

We believe and teach that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (Rom. 3:25; 5:8-9; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18).

We believe and teach that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He has ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest (Matt. 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Rom. 4:25; 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1).

We believe and teach that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross (Rom. 1:4). Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (John 5:26-29; 14:19; Rom. 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Cor. 15:20, 23).

We believe and teach that Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, which is His Body, unto Himself at the rapture, and returning with His church in glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20).

We believe and teach that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind (John 5:22-23):

- He will evaluate the faithfulness of believers at the judgment seat of Christ (1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:10).
- He will judge those who survive the Tribulation at the Second Coming (Matt. 25:31-46).
- He will judge the unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne on the basis of their works and condemn them to the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15).

He alone is the Mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5), the Head of His Body the church (Eph. 1:22; 5:23; Col. 1:18), and the coming universal

King, who will reign on the throne of David (Isa. 9:6; Luke 1:31-33), He is the final Judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior (Matt. 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-31).

God the Holy Spirit

We believe and teach that the Holy Spirit, the third Member of the Trinity, is a divine Person, eternal, underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity, including intellect (1 Cor. 2:10-13), emotions (Eph. 4:30), will (1 Cor. 12:11), eternality (Heb. 9:14), omnipresence (Ps. 139:7-10), omniscience (Isa. 40:13-14), omnipotence (Rom. 15:13), and truthfulness (John 16:13). In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial (of one and the same essence) with the Father and the Son (Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 28:25-26; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 2 Cor. 13:14; Jer. 31:31-34 with Heb. 10:15-17).

We believe and teach that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognize His sovereign activity in creation (Gen. 1:2), the incarnation (Matt. 1:18), the written revelation (2 Pet. 1:20-21), and the work of salvation (John 3:5-7). The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ, regenerating the elect, persuading and enabling them to embrace Jesus Christ by faith, and transforming believers into the image of Christ (John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5; 2:4; Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 2:22).

We believe and teach that the Holy Spirit came from the Father as promised by Christ (John 14:16-17; 15:26) at Pentecost to initiate and complete the building of the Body of Christ, which is His church (1 Cor. 12:13). The Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign Agent in regeneration (John 3:5-6; Titus 3:5), baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption (Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13).

We believe and teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher, who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible (2 Pet. 1:19-21; John 16:13). Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation

(Rom. 8:9), and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit through His Word (Rom. 8:9; Eph. 5:18; Col. 3:16; 1 John 2:20, 27).

We believe and teach that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 2 Cor. 3:18).

We believe and teach, in this respect, that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today, and that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of all believers or normative in the church age (1 Cor. 12:4-11; 13:8-10; 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:7-12; Heb. 2:1-4). All the biblical miraculous sign gifts have ceased.

Man

We believe and teach that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Gen. 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9). God created man as a two-part being: a material body and an immaterial soul or spirit (Matt. 6:25; 10:28; Rom. 8:10).

We believe and teach that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world (Isa. 43:7; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11).

We believe and teach that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence, incurred the penalty of spiritual, physical and eternal 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. With no

recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:1-19; John 3:36; Rom. 3:23; 6:23; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Tim. 2:13-14; 1 John 1:8).

We believe and teach that, because all men were in Adam as their legal representative, the real guilt for Adam's sin and a corrupt nature have been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration (Ps. 14:1-3; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:9-18, 23; 5:10-12).

Salvation

We believe and teach that salvation is wholly of God's grace, on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ and the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of any human merit or works (John 1:12; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

Regeneration

We believe and teach that regeneration is a supernatural work by which the Holy Spirit imparts new spiritual life (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the Spirit's power through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24; Jam. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23). As a result, the Holy Spirit enables the sinner to respond in faith and repentance to the divine provision of salvation (Acts 16:14). Righteous attitudes and conduct along with good works are the proper evidence and fruit of genuine regeneration (Matt. 3:8; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Eph. 2:10) and will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit in his life through faithful obedience to the Word of God (Eph. 5:17-21; Phil. 2:12b; Col. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:4-10). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3:18).

We believe and teach that the believer's pursuit of Christlikeness climaxes in the believer's glorification at Christ's coming (Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3).

Election

We believe and teach that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies (Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:4-11; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Pet. 1:1-2).

We believe and teach that sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Ezek. 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Rom. 9:22-23; 2 Thess. 2:10-12; Rev. 22:17). Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines. All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith, and all who come in faith the Father will receive (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48).

We believe and teach that the unmerited favor God grants to totally depraved sinners in election is unconditional (Rom. 9:10-18; Eph. 1:4). That is, it is not conditioned on or related to any human initiative or to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will (Matt. 11:21) but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy (Eph. 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Pet. 1:2).

We believe and teach that election is not based merely on sovereignty in an abstract sense, as if God chooses in isolation from all that He is. God is truly sovereign, but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love (Rom. 9:11-16). A proper understanding of divine sovereignty in election will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character, as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 11:25-28; 2 Tim. 1:9).

Justification

We believe and teach that justification before God is a gracious act of God (Rom. 8:33) by which He instantaneously forgives and declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Rom. 2:4; 4:1-8; 2 Cor. 7:10; Isa. 55:6-7) and confess Him

as sovereign Lord (Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 12:3; 2 Cor. 4:5; Phil. 2:11). This new status or standing of righteous before God is totally unearned and apart from any virtue or work of man (Rom. 3:20, 28; 4:5-6; Gal. 2:16). Justification consists of the imputation of our sins to Christ (Is. 53:4-6; Col. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (Rom. 5:18; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21). By this means God is enabled to "be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26).

Sanctification

We believe and teach that every believer is positionally or definitively sanctified (set apart) unto God at salvation and is therefore declared to be holy and identified as a saint. This sanctification is instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. Positional sanctification has to do with the believer's standing, not his present walk or condition (Acts 20:32; 1 Cor. 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Pet. 1:2).

We believe and teach that the believer is also, by the work of the Holy Spirit, progressively sanctified. Through this gradual process, the state of the believer increasingly draws closer to the standing he enjoys positionally through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:17, 19; Rom. 6:1-22; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Thess. 4:3-4; 5:23). Although Christians at times behave in a carnal or fleshly way (1 Cor. 3:1-4), we deny that the normative or permanent state of a true believer can be carnal or fleshly. All believers without exception are engaged in progressive sanctification by the power of the Holy Spirit (Heb. 12:14).

In this respect, we believe and teach that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new person he is in Christ doing battle against the flesh—that part of him that remains unredeemed with its beachhead in the body. But adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. However, although

eradication of sin is not possible, the Holy Spirit does provide for our victory over sin (Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Phil. 3:12; Col. 3:9-10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

Security

We believe and teach that all the redeemed, once saved, persevere in their faith because they are kept by God's power, and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 7:25; 13:5; 1 Pet. 1:5; Jude 24).

We believe and teach that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian security as an occasion for sinful living and carnality (Rom. 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13, 25-26; Titus 2:11-14).

Separation

We believe and teach that both the Old and New Testaments call for separation from sin, but that the Scriptures clearly indicate in the last days apostasy and worldliness will increase (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5).

We believe and teach that, out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us, and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our adoring love to God and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior. We also teach that God commands our separation from all religious apostasy and worldly and sinful practices (Rom. 12:1-2, 1 Cor. 5:9-13; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).

We believe and teach that believers should be separated unto our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:11-12; Heb. 12:1-2) and affirm that the Christian life is a life of obedient righteousness that reflects the teaching of the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:2-12), a continual pursuit of holiness (Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 7:1; Heb. 12:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:1-10), and the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-24).

The Church

We believe and teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the church (1 Cor. 12:12-13), the bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-32; Rev. 19:7-8), of which Christ is the Head (Eph. 1:22; 4:15; Col. 1:18).

We believe and teach that the formation of the church, the Body of Christ, began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).

We believe and teach that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age (Eph. 2:11-3:6). The church is distinct from Israel (1 Cor. 10:32), a mystery not revealed until this age (Eph. 3:1-6; 5:32).

We believe and teach that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Gal. 1:2; Phil. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1) and that the members of the one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (1 Cor. 11:18-20; Heb. 10:25).

We believe and teach that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18) 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; Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 5:1-2) and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9) and carry out their service in a godly manner (1 Pet. 5:1-5).

We believe and teach that these men lead or rule as servants of Christ (1 Tim. 5:17-22) and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Heb. 13:7, 17). At the same time, their leadership must be characterized by a servant's heart (Matt. 18:10-14; 1 Thess. 2:5-7; 1 Pet. 5:3). The Elder's primary role is to equip the saints for the work of service which results in the building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12).

We believe and teach the importance of discipleship (Matt. 28:19-20; 2 Tim. 2:2), mutual accountability of all believers to each other (Matt. 18:15-18), as well as the need for the discipline of sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture (Matt. 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16).

We believe and teach the autonomy of the local church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations (Titus 1:5). It is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. Each local church, however, through its elders and their interpretation and application of Scripture, should be the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. The elders of a local church are responsible to determine all other matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government as well (Acts 15:19-31; 20:28; 1 Cor. 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:14).

We believe and teach that the ultimate purpose of the church is to glorify God (Eph. 3:21), which is accomplished only as the church carries out its biblically assigned mission. The church's primary mission to God is to worship Him and to serve as the pillar and support of His truth (1 Tim. 3:14-15). Its mission to itself is to ensure the mutual care and edification of its members, by instruction in the Word (2 Tim. 2:2, 15; 3:16-17), by fellowship (Acts 2:42; 1 John 1:3), and by the regular practice of the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42). Its mission to the world is to make disciples of all the nations, by communicating the gospel, baptizing them, and by teaching them to observe all that Jesus commanded (Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:42).

We believe and teach the need of the church to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:7-12), and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the Body of Christ (Rom. 12:5-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-31; 1 Pet. 4:10-11), calling all saints to the work of service (1 Cor. 15:58; Eph. 4:12; Rev. 22:12).

We believe and teach that there were two kinds of gifts given to the early church: miraculous gifts of divine revelation and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message (Heb. 2:3-4; 2 Cor. 12:12); and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another. With the New Testament revelation now complete, confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary (1 Cor. 13:8-12).

We believe and teach that no one possesses the gift of healing today, but that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted (Luke 18:1-6; John 5:7-9; 2 Cor. 12:6-10; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15). In addition, we believe and teach that the gift of prophecy (in the sense of receiving new revelation directly from God), the gift of tongues, and the gift of the interpretation of tongues have all ceased. However, we acknowledge that miraculous gifts can be counterfeited by Satan so as to deceive even believers (1 Cor. 13:13-14:12; Rev. 13:13-14). The only gifts in operation today are the nonrevelatory, equipping gifts given for edification (Rom. 12:6-8).

We believe and teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38-42). Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Rom. 6:1-11). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42).

We believe and teach that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Cor. 11:28-32). We also teach that, whereas the elements of Communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, participation in the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ, who indwells every believer, and so is present, fellowshiping with His people (1 Cor. 10:16).

Angels

Holy Angels

We believe and teach that angels are invisible spiritual beings (Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:14; 13:2), who at times can assume bodily form. They were created by God and are therefore not to be worshipped (Rev. 22:8-9). Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:9-14; Heb. 1:6-7, 14; 2:6-7; Rev. 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:9) and they also serve the saints (Heb. 1:14).

Fallen Angels

We believe and teach that Satan was the greatest of the created angels and is the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Ezek. 28:11-19; Isa. 14:12-17), by taking numerous angels with him in his fall (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:1-14), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Gen. 3:1-15).

We believe and teach that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Isa. 14:13-14; Matt. 4:1-11; John 8:44; Rev. 12:9-10); that he is the prince of this world, who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom. 16:20); and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Ezek. 28:11-19; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

Last Things

Death

We believe and teach that physical death resulted from sin and is a punishment for sin (Gen. 2:17; 3:19; Rom. 5:12, 17; 6:23). It is the last enemy to be destroyed (I Cor. 15:26). Death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness (Rev. 6:9-11). The soul of the lost enters conscious punishment (Luke 16:19-26), and the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Luke 23:43; Phil. 1:23; 2 Cor. 5:8). However, at death there is a separation of soul and body (Phil.

1:21-24). For the redeemed, that separation will continue until the rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-17), which initiates the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6), when our soul and body will be reunited to be glorified forever with our Lord (Phil. 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:35-44, 50-54). Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:8).

We believe and teach the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life (Matt. 25:46; John 6:39; Rom. 8:10-11, 19-23; 2 Cor. 4:14), and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Dan. 12:2; John 5:29; Rev. 20:13-15).

We believe and teach that the souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment until the second resurrection (Luke 16:19-26; Rev. 20:13-15), when the soul and a resurrection body will be united (John 5:28-29). They shall then appear at the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15) and shall be cast into hell, the lake of fire (Matt. 25:41-46), cut off from the life of God forever (Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:41-46; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).

The Rapture of the Church

We believe and teach the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ before the seven-year tribulation (1 Thess. 4:16; Titus 2:13) to translate His church from this earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thess. 4:15-5:11) and, between this event and His glorious second coming with His saints, to reward believers according to their works (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10).

The Tribulation Period

We believe and teach that immediately following the removal of the church from the earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18) the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world (Jer. 30:7; Dan. 9:27; 12:1; 2 Thess. 2:7-12; Rev. 16), and that these judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth (Matt. 24:27-31; 25:31-46; 2 Thess. 2:7-12). At that time the Old Testament and tribulation saints will be raised, and the living will be judged (Dan. 12:2-3; Rev. 20:4-6). This period includes the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27; Matt. 24:15-31; 25:31-46).

The Second Coming and the Millennial Reign

We believe and teach that, after the tribulation period, Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David (Matt. 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:1011; 2:29-30) and establish His messianic kingdom for 1,000 years on the earth (Rev. 20:1-7). During this time the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth (Ezek. 37:21-28; Dan. 7:17-

22; Rev. 19:11-16). This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and by the removal of Satan from the world (Dan. 7:17-27; Rev. 20:1-7).

We believe and teach that the kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel (Isa. 65:17-25; Ezek. 37:21-28; Zech. 8:1-17) to restore them to the land that they forfeited through their disobedience (Deut. 28:15-68). The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside (Matt. 21:43; Rom. 11:1-26) but will again be awakened through repentance and will enter into the land of blessing (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:22-32; Rom. 11:25-29).

We believe and teach that this time of our Lord's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life (Isa. 11; 65:17-25; Ezek. 36:33-38), and will be brought to an end with the release of Satan (Rev. 20:7).

The Judgment of the Lost

We believe and teach that following the release of Satan after the 1,000-year reign of Christ (Rev. 20:7), Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city, at which time Satan and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven (Rev. 20:9).

Following his final defeat, Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10). Then Christ, who is the Judge of all men (John 5:22), will resurrect and judge the unsaved dead, both the great and small, at the Great White Throne Judgment.

We believe and teach that this resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection and having received their judgment

(John 5:28-29), they will be committed to eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:11-15).

Eternity

We believe and teach that after the completion of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers (2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 20:7-15), the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God. The elements of this earth will be dissolved (2 Pet. 3:10) and replaced with a new earth, wherein only righteousness dwells (Eph. 5:5; Rev. 20:15; 21:1-27; 22:1-21) and the heavenly city will come down out of heaven (Rev. 21:2). This new earth will be the eternal dwelling place of the saints, where they will forever enjoy fellowship with God and one another (John 17:3; Rev. 21-22). Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Cor. 15:24-28), that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (1 Cor. 15:28).

Doctrinal Statement updated Feb 2019

DISTINCTIVES

Every church has its distinctives. They may be carefully thought out and articulated or simply assumed, but there will always be non-negotiable principles that guide the choices and decisions made throughout that church's ministry. At Northlake Bible Church there are two nonnegotiable distinctives that support and shape all we do:

- 1) A High View of God and
- 2) A High View of Scripture.

A High View of God

A Summary

Although God is immanent—accessible to us as Abba Father—Scripture also teaches He is transcendent—exalted far above us as our Sovereign King. Therefore, He must be treated with profound reverence and respect and never taken lightly.¹

God's transcendence is captured in the attribute we call His holiness. God is holy or transcendent in two related, but ultimately distinct ways: He is transcendent in His moral purity and also transcendent in His majesty. He is separate or distinct from and exalted above everything else in the universe.²

Our greatest prayer³ must always be that God's transcendence is seen and known in the worship of this church and that He therefore is both loved and feared.⁴ It is our profound desire and chief concern that in our worship we treat God as separate, distinct, set apart, majestic, and transcendent. It is only in understanding His transcendence that we can truly see the beauty

¹ Eccles. 5:1-2; 1 Tim. 1:17; 3:15; 5:21; 6:13-16; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 1:17

² Ex. 15:11; 1 Sam. 2:2; Isa. 8:13; Hos. 11:9

³ Matt. 6:9

⁴ Cor. 14:24-25

of the gospel of Jesus Christ through which we are reconciled and brought near to such a great and awesome God.

The Chief Implications

A high view of God compels us to emphasize several necessary implications.

God is sovereign in all things.

Contrary to theological perspectives in which man or even Satan is functionally in control, we believe God is absolutely sovereign over everything that happens in His universe. Psalm 103:19 says, “The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all.” God has supreme and unfettered freedom and power to act.

Sovereign is what God is—by virtue of being God, He rules.⁵ Providence is what He does—He carries out His rule by actually administrating every detail in His creation.⁶⁷

God is sovereign in salvation.

A high view of God compels us to believe and teach that God alone acts to effect man’s spiritual rescue.⁷ Salvation is accomplished by a sovereign act of God alone. At the moment of salvation, God initiates and accomplishes a miracle of new spiritual life called regeneration. It is a divine act of God by His Spirit⁸ through the instrument of His Word.⁹ Scripture describes God’s sovereign work of regeneration as resurrection from spiritual death,¹⁰¹¹ a new creation,¹¹ and spiritual birth.¹²¹³

Worshiping God is the chief focus of corporate worship.

⁵ Ps. 103:19

⁶ Ps. 115:3; Is. 46:10-11; Dan. 4:35; Rom. 8:28

⁷ Tim. 1:12-16; 2 Tim. 1:9; 3:10; Titus 3:3-7

⁸ John 1:13

⁹ James 1:18-19; 1 Pet. 1:23

¹⁰ Eph. 2:1-6; Col. 2:13; cf. Rom. 4:17

¹¹ Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10; 4:24

¹² John 3:1ff

¹³ Cor. 14:26; Heb. 10:23-25

Although God intends that we benefit greatly from corporate worship,¹³ people are not the primary audience. When the church gathers to worship, our¹⁴ primary focus should be on Him. Therefore, our worship services are designed to be God-centered.

A High View of Scripture

A Summary

Since we have such profound respect for God, we also have a profound respect for His Word. The Scripture is in part the reason for the existence of the church. In 1 Timothy 3:15 Paul identifies the church as “the pillar and support of the truth”! That truth is found in only one source—His eternal Word.¹⁴ As a pillar, the church exists to hold up the truth. And as a support, the church is the foundation on which the truth rests. The church holds up the truth by teaching it and supports the truth by defending it and passing it on to the next generation. In our desire to be a genuinely biblical church, we hold to an exalted view of Scripture. God has exalted above all things His Name and His Word.¹⁵

A high view of Scripture means we believe and teach several crucial attributes of Scripture.

Inspiration

In 2 Tim. 3:16, Paul asserts that “all Scripture is inspired by God,” or is of divine origin. Scripture—all of it, down to the very words—is the product of the breath of God.¹⁶

Relevancy

¹⁴ Sam. 7:28; Ps. 12:6; 119:151; John 17:17

¹⁵ Ps. 138:2

¹⁶ Ps. 12:6; 119:89; Prov. 30:5; Matt. 4:4; John 17:17; 2 Pet. 1:21

In 2 Tim. 3:16, Paul also insists that all Scripture is profitable, useful, or beneficial. We don't make the Bible relevant—it simply is relevant! If God has breathed out His words to us, how could anything be more relevant?¹⁷

Sufficiency

In 2 Tim. 3:15, Paul describes Scripture as “able to lead you to salvation.”¹⁸ In verse 17, he adds that the Scripture is sufficient to make us adequate, which means “capable, proficient, able to meet all demands.” And Scripture fully equips us for every good work—it completely outfits us for spiritual service. It is a sufficient resource for the Spirit to use for both our salvation and sanctification.¹⁹

Authority

In 2 Tim. 4:1-2, Paul demands that pastors and elders “preach the Word.” He uses the primary New Testament word for preaching that means “to proclaim after the manner of a king’s herald.” It carries the connotation of formality, dignity, and gravity. And it explicitly means to speak with authority. Biblical preaching is not a conversation but a proclamation from God Himself that must be heard and obeyed.²⁰

The Chief Implications

Scripture is central in the services of our church.

In 1 Tim. 4:13-16, Paul instructs Timothy and all church leaders that their chief assignment when the church gathers is to 1) read the Scripture, 2) explain the Scripture, and 3) apply the Scripture. Every other element of corporate worship originates with us and is addressed to God. But when we read and hear the Word of God taught, we are hearing and witnessing a divine work. God speaks to us through His Word. That is why the reformers taught that “the greatest and principal purpose of every church

¹⁷ Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11; 2 Tim. 4:1-5

¹⁸ Cf. James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23

¹⁹ John 15:3; 17:17; Acts 20:32

²⁰ Titus 2:15

service is to preach and teach God's Word"^{21,22} and why the central focus in our corporate worship is on preaching the Bible.²²

Scripture alone directs and informs the elements of our worship.

The only acceptable worship of God is what Scripture actually prescribes.

This principle—sometimes called the Regulative Principle—grows out of Sola Scriptura: the fact that the Bible is the ultimate and only inspired authority of faith and practice. The Second Commandment explicitly warns how unprescribed forms of worship become idolatry. The regulative principle asks: "Where does Scripture command or sanction this practice?" If Scripture does not, then the practice is not permitted in corporate worship.

Therefore, our worship includes only these biblically mandated elements:

1) We sing the Scripture—we choose music rooted in the truth of God's Word.²³ 2) We pray the Scripture—our prayers grow out of our response to the Scripture.²⁴ 3) We read the Scripture.²⁵ 4) We teach the Scripture.²⁶ 5) We give our freewill offerings to see true scriptural worship supported and extended.²⁷ We see the Scripture acted out in the signs or ceremonies of 6) baptism²⁸ and 7) the Lord's Table.²⁹ The fact that these are divine directives adds solemnity to what we do on Sunday, but also great joy because as we do these things with the right heart, we can be confident it honors our God.

Consecutive expository preaching is our normal and consistent approach to teaching the Scripture.

In Old Testament corporate worship, there was a consistent pattern of the consecutive reading of the law and the prophets, followed by an exposition or explanation of its meaning.³⁰ When you examine the ministry of Jesus, you find that a central focus of His ministry was participation in corporate worship in the weekly synagogue services,³¹ which centered on the

²¹ Martin Luther

²² Tim. 4:1-2

consecutive reading and exposition of the Word of God. Timothy's chief assignment when the church gathered publicly was to 1) read the Scripture, 2) teach or explain the Scripture, and 3) apply the Scripture. This was true not only of the Old Testament, but of Paul's letters as well.³² Ordinarily, following the Old Testament and synagogue pattern, the reading would have been consecutive with accompanying exposition. The Word has always been central and the key element of worship. And the ministry of the Word has normally been the systematic, consecutive reading and explaining of God's Word.³³

²³ 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16

²⁴ 1 Tim. 2:1-8

²⁵ 1 Tim. 4:13

²⁶ 1 Tim. 4:13; 6:13-16; 2 Tim. 4:1-5; Titus 2:15

²⁷ 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9; Phil. 4:10-14

²⁸ Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:38, 42; 16:31-33; 18:8

²⁹ 1 Cor. 11:23-32

³⁰ E.g., Deut. 1:1, 5; Neh. 8:1-8

We interpret Scripture using a literal, grammatical, historical hermeneutic. Every biblical text has only one unchangeable meaning determined solely by the intent of the human author and ultimately the Holy Spirit. That meaning is expressed in letters, words, and grammar. However, Scripture's meaning can be difficult at times to understand and therefore misunderstood,³⁴ so it requires careful exegesis.³⁵ We seek to determine the meaning of every passage in Scripture by interpreting it literally, which simply means we follow the normal rules of interpreting any literature. We examine the language, grammar, words, culture, geography, and history in a process called the grammatical-historical method. There are figures of speech, allegories, symbols, and word pictures in the Bible just as exist in other literature. But as with other literature, we interpret the Bible in its simplest, most literal sense, unless there is authorial and contextual evidence not to do so.

³¹ Matt. 4:23; Luke 4:14-16, 20, 31, 44; 6:6; 13:10; John 18:20.

³² 1 Thess. 5:27; cf. Col. 4:16

³³ For a detailed biblical defense, refer to the sermon [Expository Preaching Is the Biblical Pattern](http://countrysidebible.org/media-archives), available at countrysidebible.org/media-archives.

³⁴ 2 Pet. 3:15-16

³⁵ 2 Tim. 2:15

Contemporary Applications

A high view of Scripture compels us to believe and teach the straightforward statements of Scripture about controversial contemporary issues—even when a literal reading of Scripture disagrees with prevailing views, whether secular or Christian. The following is not a complete catalog of such issues but rather merely representative of how a high view of Scripture must inform our thinking.

The Sufficiency of Scripture²³

We believe that God has provided us in the Scripture with everything necessary to nurture and sustain spiritual life.³⁷ That means we are committed to teaching and counseling directly and exclusively from the Word of God.²⁴ We do not believe that secular psychology has any legitimate role in the sanctification of the believer.

Creation³⁹

We believe Genesis is a straightforward, literal presentation of the historical events it describes. We teach, therefore, that God created everything in six literal days.²⁵ We reject every form of theistic evolution.²⁶

²³ For a detailed biblical defense, refer to the sermon [The Sufficiency of Scripture](http://countrysidebible.org/media-archives), available at countrysidebible.org/media-archives. ³⁷ Ps. 19:7-11; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3

²⁴ Ps. 19:7; 119:9,11; John 15:3; 17:17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 5:14; 2 Tim. 4:2; James 1:21 ³⁹

For a detailed biblical defense, refer to the sermon [Creation in Six Days](http://countrysidebible.org/media-archives), available at countrysidebible.org/media-archives.

²⁵ Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; Ex. 31:17

²⁶ Isa. 44:24; 45:18; John 1:3; Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16

The Role of Women²⁷

We believe that both men and women bear the image of God and that those in Christ enjoy equal spiritual standing before God.⁴³ But Scripture teaches that God has assigned different roles and responsibilities to men and women. In the home, the husband is to be the gracious, loving head and the wife is to submit to her husband's leadership.²⁸²⁹ God has provided equally clear roles in the church. While there are many ways women can and should serve, we believe that Scripture forbids women from teaching and leading men, or in any way exercising authority over men in the context of the church.⁴⁵

The Gift of Tongues³⁰

We believe that the gift of tongues was the miraculous, God-given capacity to communicate the truth of God's Word in human languages the speaker had never learned or studied.⁴⁷ It was a manifestation of God's power and blessing to validate the gospel message the Apostles taught and to establish the early church.³¹ We believe that ecstatic outbursts and private prayer languages share nothing in common with the New Testament gift of tongues, and that they are patently unbiblical.³²

A Changed Life³³

We believe that all those whom God has genuinely saved by grace through faith alone are new creatures in Christ⁵¹ and will demonstrate that new life by submission to Christ and obedience to God's Word.³⁴ All Christians still

²⁷ For a detailed biblical defense, refer to the sermon [The Role of Women in the Church](http://countrysidebible.org/media-archives), available at countrysidebible.org/media-archives. ⁴³ Gen. 1:27; 5:1-2; Gal. 3:28

²⁸ Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 3:18-19; Titus 2:5; 1 Pet. 3:1-7

²⁹ Cor. 14:34-35; 1 Tim. 2:9-12; 3:1-2, 5

³⁰ For a detailed biblical defense of the cessation of all the miraculous gifts, including the gift of tongues, refer to the sermons [A Case for Cessationism \(Part 1\)\(Part 2\)](http://countrysidebible.org/media-archives), available at countrysidebible.org/media-archives. ⁴⁷ Acts 2:4-12; 8:15-17; 10:44-46; 19:1-7

³¹ Acts 14:3; 1 Cor. 14:22; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3-4

³² Acts 2:4-12; 1 Cor. 14:5, 13, 27

³³ For a detailed biblical defense, refer to the sermon [The Reality of a Changed Life](http://countrysidebible.org/media-archives), available at countrysidebible.org/media-archives. ⁵¹ John 3:3; Rom. 6:4; 2 Cor. 5:17

³⁴ Matt. 7:21; Luke 6:46-49; Rom. 10:9-10

sin³⁵, sometimes horribly, and sometimes for extended periods without repentance.³⁶ But a decreasing pattern of sin and an increasing pattern of holiness will characterize every Christian's life.³⁷

Human Sexuality

We believe that God created mankind in His own image.³⁸ In two separate acts, He created only two distinct genders: male and female.³⁹ The genders of Adam and Eve were established by God and defined by their physiological sex at creation.⁴⁰ Subsequent to creation, God determines the gender of all other humans by their physiological sex at the time of birth.⁴¹ Thus, all attempts to redefine human sexuality beyond the physiological male-female distinction (whether framed biologically or culturally) and all attempts to change one's birth gender are sinful rebellion against our Creator. As our Creator, God stipulates in His Word that the only legitimate and acceptable sexual desires and sexual acts are those between a man and a woman within the context of marriage.⁴²

Marriage

We believe marriage is a gift of God's common grace to all mankind as a fundamental building block of society.⁴³ As the architect of marriage, God alone retains the right to define its constructs and guidelines, and He has done so in His Word.⁴⁴ In accordance with Scripture, we teach that God's design for marriage is a public, formal, and official covenant between one

³⁵ James 3:2; 1 John 1:8-10

³⁶ Sam. 11:26-12:15

³⁷ John 15:1-11; Gal. 5:19-25; Eph. 2:10; Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; 1 John 1:6-7; 3:4-10

³⁸ Gen. 1:27; 5:1; 9:6; James 3:9

³⁹ Gen. 1:27; 5:1-2; Matt. 19:4; Mark 10:6

⁴⁰ Gen. 1:27; 2:7, 22

⁴¹ Gen. 18:10; Lev. 12:2, 5, 7

⁴² Gen. 2:24; Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Matt. 5:28; 19:4-6; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 7:1-5; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Th. 4:3-8; 1 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 13:4

⁴³ Gen. 1:28; 2:18, 24; Ps. 127:3; Prov. 18:22; 31:10-11; Heb. 13:4

⁴⁴ Gen. 2:18-24

male and one female.⁴⁵ God designed the marriage covenant to be a lifelong bond, with divorce permitted only in the case of unrepentant⁴⁶ sexual sin or of desertion by an unbeliever.⁴⁷ Although sexual sins of thought are not justification for divorce, all sexual immorality, both thoughts and behavior, must be taken seriously as a transgression against God.⁴⁸ God intends that the union between two believers be a loving illustration of the relationship between Christ and His church, when carried out in obedience to the Bible and through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Gen. 2:24; Prov. 2:17; Ezek. 16:8-14; Mal. 2:14

⁴⁶ In keeping with the spirit of Scripture in both the Old and New Testaments, we urge reconciliation in most cases in the event of an unfaithful spouse who demonstrates sincere biblical repentance (cf. Hos. 1-3; 11; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13).

⁴⁷ Mal. 2:16; Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; 1 Cor. 7:12-16, 24

⁴⁸ Job 31:1; Matt. 5:28; 15:19; James 1:14-15

⁴⁹ Eph. 5:18-33; 2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Pet. 3:7

CONSTITUTION

Article I - Incorporation

Northlake Bible Church became incorporated under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act as a non-profit organization for religious purposes on August 23, 2019.

Article II - Purposes of the Church

1. Worship - To provide opportunity for teaching of God's Word, fellowship, communion, and prayer (Acts 2:42).
2. Service - To ensure that all have opportunity to serve Christ (Ephesians 4:11).
3. Discipleship - To encourage the growth of each believer toward maturity in the faith and Christ-likeness (Colossians 1:9-12).
4. Evangelism - To share the gospel both at home and abroad (Acts 1:8).

Article III - Government

The Board of Elders shall be responsible for the governing of the church and shall submit to the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit in such governing (Titus 1:9). The Elders will be responsible for the final decisions (I Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 5:1-3).

Article IV - Leadership

The Officers of the church shall consist of a Senior Pastor, a Chairman, a Secretary, and Deacons. The Board of Elders shall appoint such other officers as deemed necessary.

Article V - Responsibilities of Pastoral Staff, Elders and Deacons

Section 1 - Elders

The Elders shall be responsible to:

- 1) Care for the spiritual needs of the church family
- 2) Guard the purity of doctrine and life of the church
- 3) Direct the administration of the church ordinances
- 4) Discipline in accordance with the Word of God
- 5) Share the ministry of pastoral care
- 6) Approve all leadership positions

The Elders are responsible for the total operation of the church, including various organizations, physical properties, finances, and other temporal matters. The Board of Elders shall function only under the headship of Christ and the authority of the Word of God. Their decision-making process shall always be guided by clearly discerned Scriptural principles (I Peter 5:2-6). All decisions will be made in a manner which preserves the principle of unity (Acts 15:25; Philippians 2:1-5). Disregarding the opinion of an Elder who is in the process of church discipline (I Timothy 5:19, 20) does not violate this principle.

Section 2 - Senior Pastor and Pastoral Staff

The pastoral staff is accountable to the Board of Elders. The Senior Pastor shall oversee the preaching of the Word and give pastoral care. He shall be responsible for the oversight of the church staff. By virtue of his position he shall serve as an Elder.

Section 3 - Deacons

The Deacon's role is one of administration and serving the flock (Acts 6:16). The Deacons shall have responsibilities as delegated by the Elders in order to share with the Elders in their ministries and will meet with the Elders at periodic intervals.

Article VI - Selection of Pastoral Staff, Elders and Deacons

Section 1 - Elders

Elders shall be added to the Board based upon the Spirit-led recognition of a man's fulfillment of the Scriptural qualifications (I Timothy 3; Titus 1; I Peter 5) and his awareness of the call of the Holy Spirit to serve. Any man who candidates for the Office of Elder shall be recommended to the membership for their consideration. The Board of Elders shall establish and maintain a written procedure for identifying, qualifying, and approving new Elders. Such procedures shall be available for inspection by any member of Northlake Bible Church upon request. Upon approval of an Elder candidate by the Board of Elders, that man shall be presented to the church body as an Elder.

Section 2 - Senior Pastor and Pastoral Staff

Any man who is a candidate for a senior pastoral position shall be recommended by the Board of Elders to the church at a business meeting called for this purpose. Approval at a business meeting of at least two thirds of the attending members and a final approval by the Elders after consideration of any concerns expressed are necessary for this selection.

Section 3 - Deacons

Deacons shall be added based upon the Spirit-led recognition of a man's fulfillment of the Scriptural qualifications (I Timothy 3; Titus 1; I Peter 5) and his awareness of the call of the Holy Spirit to serve. Any man who candidates for the office of Deacon shall be recommended to the membership for their consideration. The Board of Elders shall establish and maintain a written procedure for identifying, qualifying, and approving new Deacons. Such procedures shall be available for inspection by any member of Northlake Bible Church upon request. Upon approval of a Deacon candidate by the Board of Elders, that man shall be presented to the church body as a Deacon.

Section 4 - Miscellaneous

All Leadership shall be adult members of the church and be in submission to the Constitution and Doctrinal Statement.

Article VII - Terms of Service of Elders and Deacons

Each Elder and Deacon, staff and non-staff, shall serve in perpetuity, qualified beforehand as, and responsible to, shepherd the members in regular attendance at Northlake Bible Church, as set forth in Article V, Sections 1, 2, and 3. The terms of service for an Elder or Deacon may be terminated by resignation or disqualification as set forth in Article VIII. The term—and all responsibilities, authorities, or privileges granted to the Elder or Deacon—shall cease on the date of resignation or knowledge of disqualification. Any Elder or Deacon who has resigned must re-submit to the application/ qualification process if they desire to resume said office.

Any Elder or Deacon may take a voluntary bi-annual sabbatical of not more than ninety (90) consecutive days. If the sabbatical extends beyond ninety (90) days, he must re-candidate before resuming his former office.

Article VIII - Removal of Pastoral Staff, Elders and Deacons

Resignation from any position must be submitted in writing to the Elder Board and may be accepted at any time. Vacancy in the Office of Senior Pastor will be filled in the above-described procedures as expeditiously as possible.

Any Elder, Deacon, or Pastoral Staff Member may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Elders if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scripture, including I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-8), after a thorough corroborating investigation by the Elders (or a duly appointed Committee of the Board), in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18 and I Timothy 5:19. When an Elder, Deacon, or Pastoral Staff Member is removed because of

sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from his office, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal shall be accompanied by a public rebuke, and notice shall be made before the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly-scheduled worship service as prescribed in I Timothy 5:20.

Article IX - Business Meetings

Notice shall be given from the pulpit in at least two consecutive Sunday morning services prior to a business meeting. Business meetings shall be called for member input. Approval of the congregation by a vote of at least 2/3 of adult members voting shall be required for the following:

- 1) Purchase or sale of real estate.
- 2) Filling of permanent full-time senior pastor position.
- 3) Amendment of the Constitution or Doctrinal Statement.
- 4) Any other matters provided herein, or any matters presented by the Elders for church vote.

A business meeting shall be called by the Elders for any specified purpose.

Section 1 - Business Meeting

A Business Meeting shall be any meeting called to review any item designated in Article IX requiring congregational approval.

Section 2 - Voting

The privilege to vote is restricted to adult members of this church. The Board of Elders shall determine the method of voting. Unless stated otherwise in this Constitution, a simple majority is required for the adoption of any resolution or motion.

Article X - Membership

Section 1 - Qualifications for Membership

Persons desiring to unite with this church by profession of a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior shall be examined as to their Christian faith and experience. Membership requirements are:

- 1) Belief in the finished atoning work of Christ for sin (John 3:16; Acts 4:12; Romans 5:8; I Timothy 1:7).
- 2) Belief in the Bible as the only inspired, inerrant, sufficient, authoritative guide for life (II Timothy 3:16).
- 3) Submission to the NBC Doctrinal Statement and Constitution.
- 4) Believer's baptism.

Section 2 - Obligations of Membership

The members of the church shall be responsible for faithful support to the body of Christ, the church (II Corinthians 9:6-15; Hebrews 10:24-25), for submission to the leadership (Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 5:5), and for a ministry of support and encouragement to one another (Galatians 6:2; Colossians 3:12-17). Members are encouraged to contact any Elder if they wish to meet with the Board of Elders to discuss any matter of concern.

Section 3 - Types of Memberships

Two types of memberships are available:

- 1) Adult members are those of the age of eighteen (18) years and over in good standing, who attend faithfully, unless there is satisfactory explanation for extended absence. Only adult members shall have the privilege to vote and hold church office.
- 2) Youth members are those in good standing, who attend faithfully, unless there is satisfactory explanation for extended absence, who are below eighteen (18) years of age. Membership will automatically be changed to an adult membership at the age of eighteen (18).

Section 4 - Membership Rolls

Two types of membership rolls approved by the Board of Elders shall be maintained in the official church records at all times.

- 1) Adult members
- 2) Youth members

Section 5 - Termination

Membership may be terminated for any of the following reasons:

- 1) Voluntary termination at the request of any member in good standing.
- 2) Involuntary termination as a result of failing to regularly attend services of this church for at least six (6) months and not giving satisfactory explanation of such absence, as a result of discipline under Article XII, or renunciation of the faith.

Article XI - Teachers

Teachers must consent in writing to submit to and be bound by the Constitution, Doctrinal Statement, Doctrinal Distinctives, and leadership of NBC. All teachers must be approved by the Elder Board or its designee.

Article XII - Church Discipline

Section 1. Church Discipline

- 1) The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin (1 Timothy 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by

calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6:1).

- 2) Members of this church and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the Board of Elders, shall be subject to church discipline, including dismissal according to Matthew 18:15-18.

Before such dismissal, however,

(a) it shall be the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of the erring individual's heresy or misconduct to warn and correct such

erring individual in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the erring individual does not heed this warning, then

(b) the warning member shall again go to the erring individual, seeking his or her repentance, but accompanied by one or two individuals who shall confirm that the sin has occurred or is continuing to occur, and/or that the erring individual has been appropriately confronted and has refused to repent. The first and second warnings may occur with no specified time interval. If the erring individual still refuses to heed this warning, then

(c) it shall be brought to the attention of the Board of Elders. If the Board of Elders determines— after thorough investigation in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18, 1 Timothy 5:19—that there is corroborating evidence that the erring individual has sinned or is continuing to sin, that he or she has been appropriately confronted, and that he or she has refused to repent, then the Elders shall inform the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service or other appropriate church gathering at the elder's discretion in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance. If the erring individual demonstrates repentance,

then notice to that effect may be given at a regularly scheduled worship service or other appropriate church gathering at the elder's discretion. If, however, the erring individual does not repent in response to the church in its collective call to repentance, then

(d) he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the fellowship and/or membership of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service or other appropriate church gathering at the elder's discretion; in the case of non-members, the elders may choose, at their discretion, to follow the steps of Matthew 18 privately). If the erring individual, after such dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement before the board of Elders (or duly appointed Committee of the Board, per the Bylaws, at the sole discretion of the Board), then he or she shall be publicly restored to all the rights, duties, privileges, and responsibilities of fellowship and/or membership.

- 3) Notwithstanding the foregoing, the elders in the exercise of their discretion may proceed directly to the third stage of church discipline, (i.e. the informing of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service or other appropriated church gathering at the elder's discretion in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance) or to the fourth stage of church discipline, (i.e. the dismissal from the fellowship and/or membership of the church) when one or more of the following have occurred;
 - a. Where the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public, i.e. openly and to the offense of the whole Church (I Corinthians 5:1-5);
 - b. Where the disciplined party has taught or otherwise disseminated doctrine deemed false or erroneous by the elders, then chosen to disregard the direction and reproof of the elders (Romans 16:17); or

- c. Where the disciplined party has been warned twice to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning (Titus 3:10-11).
- 4) Since Scripture clearly prohibits lawsuits in secular courts against fellow Christians (I Corinthians 6:1-8), the members of this church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church, agree that there shall be no appeal to any secular court because of the process of church discipline, including dismissal or because of public statements at the third or fourth stages of church discipline, when discipline is carried out in keeping with Matthew 18 and this article. A request to withdraw membership will not discontinue or alter the biblical process of church discipline once it has begun. Any request to withdraw membership under discipline will be pending until the steps our Lord commanded in Matthew 18 are complete.
- 5) Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the elders (or a duly constituted subcommittee thereof), a member, non-member, regular attender, or other individual may be notified that he or she is not to be present upon church premises for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others on church premises. Such required absence may, but need not, be concurrent with church discipline of that person.

Section 2 - Consideration Concerning Ministry Responsibilities

Protection of the flock as well as each individual will always be carefully considered by the Elders. Removal of the believer subject to church discipline from ministry responsibilities will be by the decision of the Elders and will always be necessary whenever a public confrontation is required. After restoration of fellowship for this believer, time to restore trust and credibility (I Timothy 3:7) with opportunities to serve and to be

proven (I Timothy 5:22-25) will be provided before resumption of ministry responsibilities.

Updated February 14, 2021

BYLAWS

Article I - Offices

Principal Office

- 1.01. The principal office of the corporation in the State of Texas shall be located in Argyle, Texas. The corporation may have such other offices, either within or without the State of Texas, as the Board of Directors or Elders may determine or as the affairs of the corporation may require from time to time.

Registered Office and Registered Agent

- 1.02. The corporation shall have and continuously maintain in the State of Texas a registered office, and a registered agent whose office is identical with such registered office, as required by the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act. The registered office may be, but need not be, identical with the principal office of the corporation in the State of Texas, and the address of the registered office may be changed from time to time by the Board of Directors or Elders.

Article II - Members

Classes of Members

- 2.01. The corporation shall have no members as that term is used in the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act.

Article III - Board of Directors (Elders)

General Powers

- 3.01. The affairs of the corporation shall be managed by its Board of Directors which shall be identical with The Board of Elders of Northlake Bible Church and shall be referred to as the Board of Elders hereinafter. Elders need not be residents of Texas.

Number, Tenure and Qualifications

- 3.02. The number of Elders shall be no less than three (3). In the event the Elder Board membership falls below the number of

three (3) the remaining Elders are authorized to appoint such men from the active Deacons to temporarily serve with the Elders until qualified men are approved to serve as Elders. The duration of the terms of service on the Board of Elders shall be as set forth in Article VII of the Constitution of Northlake Bible Church.

- 3.03. In addition to qualifications for an elder as outlined in the constitution of Northlake Bible Church, each Elder (a) must be an active participant in the services and ministries of the Church and have demonstrated the highest moral and spiritual character, the heart of a servant and shepherd, and soundness in wisdom and judgment, (b) must be in complete and wholehearted agreement with the Doctrinal Statement and Distinctives, (c) must sign an Affirmation Statement before taking office and annually thereafter so long as he remains in office, and (d) must be in complete and whole-hearted agreement with these Bylaws, and (e) must possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

Elder Meetings

- 3.04. Meetings of the Board of Elders shall be at regular intervals as set by the board but may be called by or at the request of the Chairman of the Board of Elders (“Chairman”), the Senior Pastor, or a majority of the Board of Elders. The place and time of the meeting shall be specified in the notice of such meeting.
- Elder meetings shall consist of an open and a closed portion. The open portion of the meeting may be attended by any member of the church in good standing. All business of the church, church policy and items discussed at elder meetings shall be in the open portion of the meeting except as noted below:

- Matters pertaining to specific shepherding of an individual, such as counseling or discipline.
- Matters of benevolence to specific individuals.
- Compensation of church staff.
- Matters of litigation.
- Qualifications of individuals to serve in a ministry capacity.
- Other sensitive and confidential matters rising to the level of those listed above.

Following the open portion of the meeting, non-elders will be excused, and elders only will remain for the closed portion, but elders reserve the right to include any guests in the closed portion whose participation they deem appropriate and beneficial.

If a matter to be discussed will result in financial compensation or other gain to any elder or a family member of an elder, that elder, after providing any necessary or requested input, must be excused from both the discussion and the vote on the matter, but the rules of a quorum (as set forth in Section 3.06 of these Bylaws) are not relaxed.

Staff elders shall not participate in voting on matters pertaining to staff compensation and benefits. They may be present to provide input on such matters but may not be present for further discussion or voting. Exception shall be that elders providing supervision of staff may be present for discussion of that staff compensation and benefits. The requirements of a quorum for such discussion of compensation and benefits for church staff are set forth in section 3.06 of these Bylaws.

Notice

- 3.05. Notice of any emergency meeting of the Board of Elders shall be given at least one day prior thereto by oral, electronic or

written notice to each Elder. Schedules for regular meetings shall be tentatively set on an annual basis, but confirmed at each preceding elder meeting, and such confirmation shall be deemed as Notice.

Manner of Acting

3.06. It is desirable and the intention that all acts of the Elder Board be by unanimous approval of the Elders present at a meeting in which a quorum is participating by either personal presence or electronic medium shall be the act of the Board of Elders, unless the act of a greater number is required by law or by these bylaws. Two-thirds of the members of the Board of Directors (Elders) shall constitute a quorum. Should an action not receive a unanimous vote, the decision-making process as outlined in Section 9.03 of these Bylaws shall be followed. On any of the following matters, however, any elders not present must be contacted for a unanimous decision:

- Any step moving forward with the selection or installation of a candidate elder or deacon.
- Approval of a candidate to fill a pastoral position.
- Decisions pertaining to matters of church discipline.
- Purchase or sale of real estate.
- Borrowing of monies.
- Proposed changes to the church's constitution, bylaws, or doctrinal statement.

For matters pertaining to compensation of staff elders only, a quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the non-staff members of the Board of Elders.

Vacancies

3.07. Any vacancy occurring in the Board of Elders and any

Eldership to be filled by reason of an increase in the number of Elders, shall be filled according to the provisions of Article VI of the Constitution.

Compensation

- 3.08. Non-Pastoral Staff Elders shall not receive any stated salaries for their services.

Article IV - Officers

Officers

- 4.01. The officers of the corporation shall be a President, who shall serve as Chairman, an Assistant or Vice Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and such other officers as may be elected in accordance with the provisions of this Article. The Board of Elders may elect or appoint such other officers, including one or more Assistant Secretaries and one or more Assistant Treasurers, as it shall deem desirable, such officers to have the authority and perform the duties described, from time to time, by the Board of Elders. The Secretary and the Treasurer are not required to be Elders.

Election and Term of Office

- 4.02. The office of Chairman shall rotate on an annual basis among the non-staff elders in order of their installation onto the Board, provided the individual has served on the Board of Elders for at least 2 years. The office of Assistant or Vice Chairman shall be filled by the non-staff elder scheduled to serve as Chairman in the following year. These offices shall be confirmed annually by vote of the Board of Elders, and the other officers of the corporation shall be elected annually by the Board of Elders at a regular meeting of the Board of Elders. Provided, however, that all incumbent officers shall be deemed to have been re-elected to successive terms of similar duration

in the absence of an election appropriately held. New offices may be created and filled at any meeting of the Board of Elders.

Removal

- 4.03. Any officer elected or appointed by the Board of Elders may be removed by the Board of Elders whenever in its judgment the best interests of the corporation would be served thereby, but such removal shall be without prejudice to the contractual rights, if any, of the officer so removed.

Vacancies

- 4.04. A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, disqualification or otherwise, may be filled by the Elders for the unexpired portion of the term.

Chairman

- 4.05. The Chairman shall represent the Board of Elders in concert with and subject to the shared leadership responsibilities and collective oversight of the Board of Elders. He shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Elders and chair the meeting in accordance with Scriptural principles as set forth in Philippians 2:1-11. He may sign, with the Secretary or any other proper officer of the corporation authorized by the Board of Elders, any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments which the Board of Elders have authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board of Elders or by these bylaws or by statute to some other office or agent of the corporation; and in general he shall perform all duties incident to the office of Chairman and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Elders from time to time.

Vice Chairman

- 4.06. In the absence of the Chairman or in the event of his inability

to act, the Vice Chairman (or in the event there be more than one Vice Chairman, the Vice Chairmen in order of their election) shall perform the duties of the Chairman, and when so acting shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Chairman. Any Vice Chairman shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Chairman or Board of Elders.

Treasurer

- 4.07. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the custody and security of all funds and securities of the corporation, the receiving and giving of receipts for monies due and payable to the corporation from any source whatsoever, the depositing of all such monies in the name of the corporation in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected in accordance with the provisions of Article V of these bylaws, the distributing of all monies and payables as approved and directed by the Board of Elders, and in general performing all the duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Chairman or by the Board of Elders. The Treasurer shall be appointed and approved by the Board of Elders.

Secretary

- 4.08. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Elders, give all notices in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws or as required by law, be custodian of the corporate records, keep a register of the post office address of each Elder which shall be furnished to the Secretary by each Elder, and, in general, perform all duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Chairman or by the Board of Elders.

Article V - Contracts, Checks, Deposits and Funds

Contracts

- 5.01. The Board of Elders may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents of the corporation, in addition to the officers so authorized by these bylaws, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the corporation. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

Checks and Drafts

- 5.02. All checks, drafts, or orders for the payment of money, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the corporation shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents of the corporation and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by the Board of Elders. In the absence of such determination by the Board of Elders, such instruments shall be signed by the Treasurer.

Deposits

- 5.03. All funds of the corporation shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the corporation in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the Board of Elders may select.

Gifts

- 5.04. The Board of Elders may accept on behalf of the corporation any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise for the general purposes or for any special purpose of the corporation.

Article VI - Books and Records

- 6.01. The corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of its Board of Elders and committees having any of the authority of the Board of Elders and shall keep at the registered or principal office a record giving the names and addresses of the elders. All books and records of the

corporation may be inspected by any elder or his agent or attorney for any proper purpose at any reasonable time.

Article VII - Fiscal Year

- 7.01. The fiscal year of the corporation shall begin on the first day of October and end on the last day in September in each year.

Article VIII - Waiver of Notice

- 8.01. Whenever any notice is required to be given under the provisions of the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act or under the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or the bylaws of the corporation, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice.

Article IX - Policies

Same-sex Marriage

- 9.01 Northlake Bible Church affirms the biblical definition of marriage as being one man united with one woman (Gen. 2:23,24). Based upon this definition, no portion of the grounds or physical plant of Northlake Bible Church shall be utilized for the purpose of performing a marriage ceremony – civil, military, or otherwise – which purports to wed two individuals of the same sex. No portion of the grounds or physical plant of Northlake Bible Church shall be used for the celebration or acknowledgement of such a union by the means of a reception or any other gathering. Finally, no marriage ceremony between two individuals of the same sex shall be performed by any member of the staff, elder, deacon, or representative of Northlake Bible Church.

Use of Restroom Facilities

- 9.02 All lavatories, restrooms, bathrooms, or bathroom facilities of Northlake Bible Church shall be designated for use by specific gender. "Gender" shall be defined as the physiological sex – male or female – of an individual at the time of their birth. Violation of this policy (excluding young children or special-needs children accompanied by a parent) shall result in the immediate expulsion of the offending individual(s) from the grounds of Northlake Bible Church.

Decision Making Process

- 9.03. Since the Spirit has only one mind about any given decision, in the normal course of church ministry our goal is for all the elders to be of one mind in following the same Spirit (Phil. 2:2). Thus, we strive to be unanimous in all decisions. We endeavor to reach all decisions only after prayerful consideration and in a spirit of humility, with each elder regarding one another as more important than himself (Phil. 2:3-5).

However, we recognize that godly men sometimes differ (e.g., Acts 15:37-40). In the event we are unable to reach a unanimous decision with the first vote, we have unanimously agreed to use the following process.

VOTE 1:

1. If any matter receives a unanimous yes vote, then the elders' decision is yes, the matter is settled, and the motion should be carried out.
2. If a motion receives a greater than 25% no vote, the elders' decision is no, the motion should not be carried out, and the matter is settled (unless the elders agree to bring it up again at a later date for further consideration).

3. If any elder or elders vote no, but there are not enough no votes to settle the matter (that is, less than the required 25%) a second vote must be scheduled for a future meeting.
4. Before the second vote is taken, the dissenting elders (or elder) are responsible to gather additional information on the motion, engage in discussion with the key parties, and seek godly counsel. The board will grant these men as much time as reasonably necessary to review the matter. After sufficient time to consider the additional information, discussion, and counsel, the elders will then allow additional time for prayer for all. Again, the desire is that all decisions will be unanimous, and the elders will work in good faith toward that end.
5. Once the necessary time has been allowed, the elders will schedule a second vote on the matter.

VOTE 2:

1. If 75% of the elders vote yes, then the elders' decision is yes, and the matter is settled.
2. If less than 75% of the elders vote yes, then the decision is no, and the matter is settled.
3. The elders agree that a decision will be final after the second vote.

In the event that the elder board consists of only three (3) members and unanimity cannot be reached the process outlined above will be followed but a **no** or **yes** vote will require a vote of two (2).

Statement of Unity: Any decision finalized after following this process will be a unified yes or no decision by the entire board. All elders agree to be unified in the final decision, in public and in private, even though the final decision may not reflect their personal preference.

Dissolution Clause

In the event of the dissolution of Northlake Bible Church, all assets remaining after the payment of debts and liabilities shall be distributed exclusively for religious, charitable, or educational purposes. These assets shall be transferred to one or more organizations that are exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding provisions of any future U.S. tax code. The recipient organization(s) shall be determined by a majority vote of the church's governing body at the time of dissolution.

If no such decision is made, the assets shall be distributed by a court of competent jurisdiction in the country where the church is located, solely for the purposes consistent with the church's mission and beliefs.

Under no circumstances shall any church assets be distributed to any member, trustee, officer, or private individual except as reasonable compensation for service rendered in accordance with applicable law.

Doctrinal Statement: Feb 2019

Distinctives: Sept 2019

Constitution: Feb 2021

Bylaws: Aug 2022