

# THE BYLAWS OF FAITH BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

November 10, 2009

## PREAMBLE

We, the Elders of FAITH BIBLE FELLOWSHIP, in order to carry out more efficiently the commission given by Jesus Christ to His church (Matthew 28:19-20), do ordain and establish the following Bylaws to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

## ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be FAITH BIBLE FELLOWSHIP which may be referred to herein as FBF or THE CHURCH.

## ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of FBF is to bring glory to God by making mature disciples of Jesus Christ, from Lebanon, Ohio out to the nations, through the preaching, teaching and personal application of God's Word.

As a church, FBF will focus on teaching and training people to **Love God**, to **Love People**, and moving people toward becoming **Mature Disciples of Jesus Christ**. Therefore, all of our ministries, from our children's ministries to our small groups to our corporate worship, will focus on these objectives. FBF is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any further federal tax code.

## ARTICLE III – DOCTRINE

Every doctrinal statement is but a fallible human attempt to summarize and systematize the riches of an infallible divine revelation. Nevertheless, the Elders of Faith Bible Fellowship believe that it is essential to set forth a Doctrinal Statement which expresses the position of the church with regard to major Biblical doctrines and which specifies our theological distinctives.

The FBF Doctrinal Statement provides the theological foundation for all of the ministries of FBF. The FBF Essentials of the Christian Faith are those doctrines that we hold as non-negotiable. Those who are called to ministries of teaching, leadership or leading public worship at FBF will be expected to uphold the Doctrinal Statement and will subscribe to the Essentials of the Christian Faith.

The Elders acknowledge that not all who wish to join the FBF family will personally hold to every tenant of our Doctrinal Statement. The Elders do require that all who are members of the FBF family be in substantial agreement with our Doctrinal Statement and in full agreement with the Essentials of the Christian Faith.

### Section I: Doctrinal Statement

#### The Scriptures

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God. We believe that all 66 books of the Old Testament and New Testament Scripture are inspired by God, through the work of the Holy Spirit, and are inerrant in their original writings. We believe the Bible is God's infallible, complete and sufficient revelation, centering around the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. As such, it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct and is sufficient for life and godliness. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3, 19-21; Mark 13:31; John 8:31,32; 20:31; Acts 20:32; Mark 12:26, 13:11; Luke 24:27,44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16, 18:28, 28:23; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 2:13, 10:11).

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## **The Godhead**

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons--the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections, and are worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence and obedience. Although equal in nature and being, each person of the Godhead executes distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption. (Genesis 1:1, 26-27; John 1:1-3,14; 4:24; Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Ephesians 4:4-7; Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29; Acts 5:3-4; Hebrews 1; Revelation 1:4-6).

## **God the Father**

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He infallibly foreknows all that shall come to pass, that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ alone. (Luke 10:21-22; Mathew 23:9; John 3:16, 6:27; Romans 1:7,19-20; 1 Timothy 1:1-2; 1 Peter 1:3; Revelation 1:6)

## **Jesus Christ**

We believe in the full and eternal deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that he is God's only begotten Son; the manifestation of God in human flesh, fully God and fully man. We believe he was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary and that he lived a sinless life. We believe that the Bible faithfully and accurately records the events of his life: his miracles, teaching, death, resurrection and ascension into heaven. (Matthew 1:18-25; 20:28; Luke 1:26-38, 2:40; John 1:1-2,14,18; 3:16; 20:28,30-31; Romans 9:5; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:21-24; Acts 1:11; 1 Timothy 3:16; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 4:15).

## **The Holy Spirit**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead who, according to the will of the Father and the Son, convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment, and regenerates, sanctifies, and empowers all who believe in Jesus Christ to the honor and glory of the Father and the Son. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, starting at the moment of salvation, and that his ministry is to guide, instruct, fill, comfort and empower the believer for godly living. We believe the Holy Spirit provides spiritual gifts to every Christian by which they are enabled to perform the will of God in effective service for the common good and the building up of the Body of Christ. We also believe that Christians should prefer those gifts which edify the Body of Christ and promote harmony among believers. (John 3:6; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Romans 8:5-11; 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19, 12:1-13, 14:1-25; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 2:22; 4:30; 5:18).

## **Angels, Fallen and Unfallen**

We believe that God created an innumerable company of sinless, spiritual beings, known as angels; that Satan, the highest in rank, sinned in pride and was cast out of heaven, along with a great company of angels who joined him in his rebellion; that he currently exercises limited influence over the earth as the "Prince of Lies"; and that he will be cast into the Lake of Fire for eternal punishment. We believe that an even greater number of angels were confirmed in their holy estate and are presently before the throne of God, from where they are sent forth as ministering spirits to those who are heirs of salvation through faith in Christ. (Ezekiel 28:11-19; 1 Timothy 3:6; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Luke 2:13, 4:1-13, 22:31; Genesis 3:4-5; John 8:44; Hebrews 1:4-14; Isaiah 6:2-3,6; Revelation 5:11-12, 20:10).

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## **Creation**

We believe God created the universe and all that is in it in six twenty-four hour days and that before he created the universe, nothing except God existed. We believe that God created and sustains the universe and all that is in it according to His good pleasure in order to reveal His glory, divine nature, eternal power, infinite wisdom and supreme authority. (Genesis 1; Exodus 31:17; Psalm 19:1-2, 33:6-9; Jeremiah 10:12; Acts 17:24; Colossians 1:16; Isaiah 43:7; Romans 1:20; Revelation 4:11).

## **Man**

We believe that man (mankind) was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, but through his willful disobedience, fell from his sinless and happy state, thus incurring physical, spiritual and eternal death, which is separation from God. We believe that as a consequence of Adam's original sin, all human beings are born with a sinful nature and are essentially and unchangeably wicked apart from divine grace. All people are sinners not only by inheritance, but also by their own choice and therefore are under just condemnation without defense or excuse. Being spiritually dead in trespasses and sin, man is absolutely incapable of saving himself by his own works. (Gen 1:26-31, 2:15-25, 3:1-24; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Jeremiah 17:9; James 1:14-15; Romans 1:18-32, 3:10-20,23, 5:19, 8:1-2,6-8; Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:9, 3:8; John 1:12-13, 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:1-3,8-9; Psalm 14:1-3, 51:5-7).

## **The Sanctity of Life**

We believe that all human life is created and sustained by God and is therefore of inestimable worth and significance in all its dimensions, including the unborn, the aged, the widowed, the mentally handicapped, the unattractive, the physically challenged and every other condition in which humanness is expressed from conception to the grave. We believe that every human being bears the image of God, marred by sin as it is, and therefore, the sacredness of our lives, and the dignity it demands, is based on something beyond our characteristics or abilities — it is rooted in the essence of God Himself. (Genesis 1:26-27, 5:1-2, 9:6; Psalm 8:4-5, 22:9-10, 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; James 3:9).

## **Human Sexuality**

We believe that God commands that intimate sexual activity only be engaged in within the confines of marriage; that as a physical expression of marital love, sex is a good and gracious gift of God; and that any form of fornication, adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Genesis 2:24; 19:5,13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 5:1, 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4).

## **The Ministry of Christ**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice. We believe that he was buried and on the third day rose from the dead. We believe his resurrection is a historical fact that was witnessed and attested to by hundreds of people before he ascended into heaven to begin his present ministry of intercession as Great High Priest and Advocate. (John 1:29, 20:1-39; Romans 3:24-26; 6:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:2-4; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Acts 1:9; Hebrews 7:25, 9:11-28, 10:5-14; 1 Peter 3:18).

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## Salvation

We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one can enter into the kingdom of God unless born again; that spiritual regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential to salvation; that only those who repent and forsake sin and trust Jesus Christ as Savior are justified; that salvation is by God's grace alone, through personal faith in Jesus Christ alone; and that only those thus saved are children of God. We believe, also, that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin and a curse for us, dying in our place; and that no feeling, no good resolution, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any religion can result in salvation. (John 3:6-7,16, 14:6; Luke 24:46-47; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:5; Romans 5:1-2, 8:30; Matthew 28:19; Ephesians 2:1-10; Colossians 2:12-15).

## Completion in Christ

We believe that when a person is saved, he passes immediately out of condemnation and receives eternal life, being freely justified and accepted by the Father, linked to Christ and one with him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ. (John 5:24; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23; Ephesians 1:3-14; Colossians 2:10; 1 John 4:17, 5:11-12)

## Eternal Security

We believe that, because of the eternal purposes of God, because salvation is by God's grace alone, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, those once saved shall be kept saved forever. (John 5:24, 10:28, 17:11; Romans 8:28-39; Ephesians 1:11-14; Philippians 1:6; 1 John 5:13; Jude 24)

## The Church

We believe there is one church universal, composed of all those throughout the world who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, gathered together and devoted to worship, prayer, teaching of the Word, observance of the ordinances (baptism and communion), fellowship, service to the body, and outreach to the world in fulfillment of the command of Christ to make disciples of all nations. Under the oversight of Elders, those believers in the local church are to work together in love and unity, intent on the ultimate purpose of glorifying Christ. (Acts 1:8, 2:42-47, 10:47-48, 13:1, 16:32-33, 18:7-8; Ephesians 1:20-23, 2:19-22, 4:1-6, 11-16, 5:25-32; Hebrews 10:23-25; Matthew 16:16-18, 28:18-20; Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 11:23-26, 12:12-27; Luke 22:19-20)

## Missions

We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to the nations, starting with our own, to preach the Gospel, baptize, and make disciples of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 24:46-48; John 17:18, 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

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## **The Last Things**

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His eternal kingdom in a new Heaven and Earth. We believe that at death the spirits of those who have trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and remain there in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for his own. At that time those souls and bodies will be reunited and associated with Him forever in glory. The spirits of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment when soul and body shall be reunited and ultimately cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. (1 Corinthians 4:5, 15:51-57; Revelation 20:11-15; Mark 14:62; John 5:29, 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:11-14; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Luke 16:19-26, 23:42-43; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10).

## **Section 2: Essentials of the Christian Faith**

### **The Scripture**

The Bible is inspired by God, through the work of the Holy Spirit. It is inerrant in its original writings and is the final authority for God's people today.

### **Salvation**

Salvation is by God's grace alone through personal faith in Jesus Christ alone.

### **The Trinity**

God is One, but exists as three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These three are eternally distinct yet inseparable. God is one in nature and essence, and three in personality and identity.

### **The Incarnation**

Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, fully human and fully divine--the very God in human flesh. He was not a human-divine hybrid, but is one person with two natures.

### **The Sinfulness of Man**

All human beings are born with a sinful nature and are essentially and unchangeably wicked apart from the divine grace of God. As such, men are utterly unable to save themselves.

### **Christ's Substitutionary Atonement**

Jesus Christ was crucified, enduring punishment and death on the cross, as an acceptable substitutionary sacrifice for sin. Christ's righteousness is credited to the believer because the punishment for the believer's sin was executed on Christ.

### **The Resurrection**

Jesus Christ rose physically on the third day after his death, ministered bodily on earth for a period of 40 days, ascended into heaven and now lives with the Father, granting life to all who believe in him through the work of the Holy Spirit.

### **God's Redemptive Plan**

From the creation of the world and all that is in it, to the end of this age when Christ returns to earth bodily and visibly to establish his eternal kingdom, God has been actively and sovereignly working to accomplish his eternal purposes of redeeming people unto himself.

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## ARTICLE IV – PROPERTY

FBF shall have the power to receive, either by gift or purchase, and to hold such real, personal, or mixed property as is authorized by the laws of the State of Ohio and as is deemed necessary for the business of the church, and shall have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage, deed or otherwise. All such property shall be in the name of the church.

In the case of dissolution of Faith Bible Fellowship, the property shall be disposed of at the discretion of the Elders and in accordance with these Bylaws.

## ARTICLE V - FINANCES

The work of the church is dependent upon the prayers, personal services and voluntary gifts of the flock.

The fiscal year of the church shall begin January 1 and end December 31.

Before the beginning of each fiscal year, an estimate of the needs of the several departments of the church shall be obtained and a detailed budget of the proposed expenditures for the coming year shall be prepared.

The budget shall be approved at a business meeting by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of all Elders. When this budget is approved it shall be considered the basis for the current liabilities. No department or person is authorized to make changes in its provisions or to make disbursements in excess of the budgeted amount, without the written consent of the Elders.

No funds of the church shall be distributed to any members, Elders, officers, or other persons, except for payment of reasonable compensation for services rendered as approved by the Elders.

## ARTICLE VI – CHURCH GOVERNMENT

This church acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ as our head; the Holy Scriptures as the infallible guide in matters of faith, church order and discipline; the Holy Spirit as our teacher; and is neither accountable to, nor under the jurisdiction or supervision of, any ecclesiastical body.

The governing body of the church will be referred to herein as ELDERS or THE ELDERS.

The Elders, as a group, constitute the Board of Directors for the church, are the governing body of the church and hold final responsibility and authority of all actions of the church. The Elders are responsible to the Lord for overseeing the affairs of the church and shepherding the flock. The church is governed by a plurality of Elders who are co-equals in terms of voice and authority.

The officers of the church shall be President, Secretary, Treasurer and such other officers as deemed necessary by the Elders. Church officers shall serve a term, the length of which shall be determined by the Elders except as noted otherwise in these Bylaws.

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## ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

### Section 1: Corporate Worship Services

Worship services, Sunday school services and other Gospel services shall be conducted at such times as is decided by the Elders.

### Section 2: Annual Fellowship Meeting

An annual meeting of the church shall be held within the first quarter of the year for the purpose of assessing the previous year and discussing issues and opportunities that lie before the church. Additional meetings of the fellowship may be called at the discretion of the Elders

### Section 3: Business Meetings

Business meetings of the church shall be held each quarter, unless otherwise decided by the Elders. However, a minimum of one business meeting shall be held each calendar year. All Elders must be notified of all business meetings at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting. Notification may be in person, postal mail or electronic mail in time to reach all Elders at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

### Section 4: Business Meeting Moderation and Order

The Elders shall appoint their own officers. As a minimum they shall appoint a Chairman who will preside at all business meetings of the church. They shall conduct the business meeting(s) of the church as outlined in these Bylaws. Additionally the Elders shall meet at the request of a majority of the Elders.

The rules of order contained in Roberts Rules of Order (revised) shall govern the business meetings of the church.

### Section 5: Quorum

Three-quarters of all Elders shall constitute the required quorum for the transaction of corporate business unless otherwise indicated in these Bylaws.

## ARTICLE VIII – MEMBERSHIP

The Elders of FBF believe that all true Christians are members of Christ's family through adoption as God's sons and daughters. The New Testament consistently depicts the local church as a body or a household. Our membership list is a formal list of individual believers who desire to be shepherded by and participate in the local assembly of the body of Christ at Faith Bible Fellowship. (Galatians 4:1-7, I Corinthians 12:12-27 Galatians 6:10 I Peter 4:17)

### Section 1: Responsibilities

Members shall actively participate in the life of the church through consistent attendance at corporate worship and by using ones spiritual gifts to serve and minister to one another in the body of Christ.

Members shall actively support the purposes and ministries of Faith Bible Fellowship through the sacrificial giving of their time and personal finances.

Members shall submit to the spiritual authority of the FBF Elders, including church discipline if warranted.

Members are expected to pray for one another, for the Elders and other ministry leaders, and for the ministries of FBF.

Members are expected to lead a life of integrity so as to bring honor to Jesus Christ and positive repute to Faith Bible Fellowship.

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## Section 2: Qualifications

Prospective members must have been in regular attendance at FBF for no less than 3 months prior to applying for membership.

Prospective members must demonstrate through word and deed a genuine personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Prospective members must be in full agreement with the Essentials of the Christian Faith and be in substantial agreement with FBF's stated purposes, Doctrinal Statement, and these Bylaws.

Believer's Baptism is not required for membership at Faith Bible Fellowship. However, it is the conviction of this church that every believer should obey and yield to the Lord in this area. The Elders shall encourage all believers to follow in Believer's Baptism.

## Section 3: Admission

Prospective members will indicate their interest in becoming a member of the FBF Family by filling out an Application for Membership and returning it to an elder.

Prospective members will be provided a copy of the FBF Church Handbook, and these Bylaws.

Prospective members will meet with one or more Elder(s) to discuss membership in the FBF family. During this meeting prospective members will:

1. Share a personal testimony including how they came to faith in Christ, and how God has been working in their lives recently.
2. Be asked if they support the ministries and purposes of FBF, and how they plan to use their time, treasures and talents to further the work of Christ's Kingdom through FBF.
3. Be asked if they are in full agreement with the Essentials of Faith, are in agreement with the Doctrinal Statement and are willing to submit to the authority of the Elders.

Based on this meeting, the elder(s) who met with the prospective member will make a recommendation to the Elders at business meeting regarding granting membership to the prospective member.

Candidates may be approved by the Elders at any business meeting for admission into the church family. They shall be elected to membership by receiving an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Elders in attendance at a business meeting.

Those who are granted membership by the Elders will be publicly welcomed into the FBF family during a subsequent Sunday morning Worship Service. Those who are denied membership will be counseled by one or more Elder(s) as to why their membership was denied and appropriate follow-up measures will be taken.

Membership will be granted on an individual basis. Married couples will be encouraged to become members of the FBF family together.

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## Section 4: Conduct

All members and regular attendees are encouraged to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to be courteous in speech and slow to anger. (Ephesians 4:29-32, 6:18, James 5:15-16, and Colossians 4:6)

All members and regular attendees are encouraged to support the church through tithes and offerings according to the principles laid down in I Corinthians 16:2, Malachi 3:10 and II Corinthians 8 and 9.

All members and regular attendees are called upon to heed the scriptural admonition: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God", be an "example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity", and to abstain from any act or practice which may be harmful in its influence or a stumbling block to the weak. (Romans 12:1, 14:13-21, and I Timothy 4:12)

## Section 5: Resignation

A member may resign at any time, with no advance notice required. Resignations must be submitted to the Elders in writing.

## Section 6: Termination

Membership may be terminated if a person conducts themselves in a manner which in the studied opinion of the Elders is not in harmony with scriptural principles and for which they do not show repentance. The said individual shall be interviewed and counseled by the Elders as indicated in the Church Discipline section of these Bylaws.

Membership may be terminated if a person is absent for more than a year and from whom communication has been requested by the Elders and not received.

Membership may be terminated by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Elders in attendance at a business meeting.

## Section 7: Property Rights

The private property of the individual members of this church shall be exempt from corporate debt.

Members shall have no claim upon any part of the church properties.

## ARTICLE IX – CHURCH DISCIPLINE

God charges all believers to hold one another accountable in order to promote godliness. Accountability is a necessary part of the Christian life, since all believers are capable of sin. The purpose of Church Discipline is to restore a redeemed individual to fellowship with God (Gal. 6:1) and if needed, purify the Church of ungodly behavior (ICor. 5:12-13).

The Elders are servants in the Body of Christ charged with shepherding the flock which may include exercising their duties in Church Discipline. The Elders and congregation shall follow Scriptural principles found in Matthew 18:15-20; Matthew 7:5, I Timothy 5:19-20; I Corinthians 5:1-3; Galatians 6:1; and II Thessalonians 3:14-15.

The steps of Church Discipline are as follows;

1. If a believer sees un-repentant sin in another brother or sister, he should first prayerfully examine himself/herself. Then he/she should go in a spirit of gentleness, love and humility, in private to that person for the purpose of calling him or her to repentance.

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2. If no repentance is demonstrated, a second visit in the same spirit is in order, this time with one or two witnesses, so that "every fact can be confirmed." The sinning believer will be called to repentance if sin is confirmed.
3. If no repentance is demonstrated, the situation will be brought before the Elders. The Elders will investigate and if it is determined that sin has occurred and repentance has not been demonstrated the Elders will seek to work with the individual to lead them to repentance. After an appropriate period of time, if the individual has not repented of their sin(s), the Elders may present that person's name and conduct to the congregation. The purpose for doing so is that the congregation collectively can plead with the individual to repent.
4. If no repentance is demonstrated, after an appropriate period of time, exclusion from Church Fellowship may be in order. The Elders shall again present the sinning believer's name to the congregation and state that the person is no longer welcome to attend any meetings of the fellowship or receive communion until they have repented of the sin(s). The Elders may determine that the sin is so egregious that the congregation could be instructed not to have any association with the individual.

The Elders reserve the God-given responsibility to deal with un-repented sin including but not limited to that discovered in confidentiality. Repentance is defined as: "a genuine, not superficial, change of mind about something which is followed by some change." This means a change of mind about the confronted action (sin) that results in confession to God, the person(s) offended and a corresponding change to holiness.

The time period for each of the steps will vary according to circumstances. These steps will be followed both for Members and for Regular Attendees who profess faith in Christ.

## ARTICLE X – ELDERS

The Elders are responsible for the spiritual welfare of the church and carry out the responsibilities as prescribed in scripture and in these Bylaws. They shall set goals and strategies to better accomplish the mission of the church.

The Elders will primarily give themselves to two things: overseeing the affairs of the church and shepherding the flock. (I Thessalonians 5:12, I Timothy 3:4-5, I Corinthians 9:7, Acts 20:28-30, I Peter 5:1-4)

Overseeing and shepherding primarily involve the ministries of teaching Biblical truth, modeling Christ-like behavior, maintaining doctrinal purity, disciplining unruly believers, overseeing financial matters, equipping the saints to do the work of ministry and praying for the flock.

The Elders have authority to implement policies beyond these Bylaws to further the objectives of the church.

### **Section 1: Qualifications**

To serve as an elder at FBF a man must meet the Biblical qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

To serve as an Elder a man must be a member of FBF.

No man shall be preferred in their consideration simply due to economic or educational achievement. Only Biblically qualified men shall serve as Elders at FBF.

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## Section 2: Nomination and Appointment

The Elders will notify the congregation that one or more men are needed to serve as Elders. The congregation will be given two weeks to submit their recommendations, in writing, to the Elders

The Elders will also consider their own list of names of men who they believe are qualified.

Once recommendations have been received from the congregation, the Elders will make a final list of men whom they believe are good candidates to serve as Elders at FBF.

The Elders will invite the candidate to complete the following process to establish their desire and qualification to serve as an elder at FBF.

1. The candidate will complete a written questionnaire which asks detailed questions about the candidate's spiritual and moral qualifications to serve as an elder, as well as their agreement with the Doctrine, Bylaws and overall purposes of the church.
2. One or more Elders will conduct a preliminary interview with the candidate and his wife (if married).
3. A formal interview with the Elders will be conducted where the candidate is questioned on matters of doctrine and lifestyle.

If the Elders believe the candidate is qualified and desires to serve as an elder at FBF, their name will be brought to the congregation in order to solicit opinions from the church family. Recommendations of the Elders shall be placed in the church bulletin for at least two consecutive Sunday's prior to the meeting of the Elders.

If any member of the church has a valid reason for objecting to the appointment of the candidate as an elder, an Elder shall be notified immediately and be provided with scriptural reasons to support the objections.

All satisfactory candidates shall be appointed by the Elders at any business meeting for approval and admission. At a business meeting, an Elder may be approved by an affirmative vote of three-quarters of all Elders.

Those who are appointed as Elders will be publicly installed during a subsequent Sunday morning Worship Service. Those who are denied eldership will be counseled by an Elder as to why their candidacy was denied and appropriate follow-up measures will be taken.

## Section 3: Term of Office

Elders do not serve for a specified term. Elders may continue to serve as long as they remain qualified and desire to serve.

## Section 4: Resignation

An elder may resign his position at any time, with no advance notice required. Resignations must be submitted to the Elders in writing.

## Section 5: Discipline and Termination

Discipline of an Elder shall be considered by the Elders on the testimony of two or three witnesses (I Timothy 5:19). If he teaches anything contrary to the Scriptures, lives an unrighteous life unbecoming to the Gospel or does not perform his duties, then he shall be admonished by the Elders.

There may, in the life of the church, be a time when the qualifications or continued ability of an elder to serve the flock comes into question. In this situation the following steps will be followed:

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1. One or more Elders will speak privately with the elder in question regarding the situation.
2. Following this conversation, these elder(s) shall report to the larger group of Elders and provide information and a recommendation to the Elders whether this man should continue to serve as an Elder.
3. Based on the recommendations, the Elders have three courses of action available to them:
  - A. No action deemed necessary. There is no reason the Elder in question may (or should) not continue to serve.
  - B. If the situation does not warrant asking the Elder in question to step down, there may be some degree of counseling or assistance required by the Elders.
  - C. If the situation warrants asking the Elder to step down (temporarily or permanently), the following process will be followed:
    - 1) An appropriate period of time will be allowed in which to ask further questions, get more information about the situation and pray. If the Elder in question voluntarily steps down during this time, no further action is needed.
    - 2) A business meeting will be scheduled with an agenda item to discuss the concerns, qualifications and continued ability to serve of the Elder in question.
    - 3) After further discussion and prayer, if one or more Elders still believe that the Elder in question is not qualified or can no longer serve effectively as an Elder, the Elders may, at a business meeting dismiss the Elder from service by an affirmative vote of three-quarters of all Elders
    - 4) If the vote passes, the Elder in question will be immediately removed from service as an Elder, and the congregation will be notified that he is no longer serving as an elder at FBF.

A man who has been removed from service as an elder at FBF may at a later time, depending on the situation and at the discretion of the Elders, be invited to serve again as an Elder if he becomes qualified and capable of serving.

## Section 6: Annual Evaluation

Elders who are mature men of faith can still be blinded to their own shortcomings and sin (Romans 7:14-25). In order to ensure that actively serving Elders remain spiritually qualified and are serving as Elders according to God's call and not just their own desires, the Elders will undergo an annual evaluation near the beginning of each calendar year.

A date for the evaluation will be chosen by the Elders.

The congregation will be notified by placing a notice in the church bulletin for at least two consecutive weeks before the evaluation, and will be given an opportunity to express to the Elders in writing any questions or concerns about the service of any individual Elder or the overall leadership of the Elders as a whole. The congregation should be reminded of the seriousness of bringing an unfounded charge or an accusation against an elder (I Timothy 5:19).

Each elder will be asked to prayerfully evaluate his own continued Biblical qualification and desire to serve as an elder.

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At a business meeting the Elders will evaluate their service over the past year, considering any response from the congregation, and will discuss any concerns or issues that arise relating to the ongoing service of individual Elders.

## ARTICLE XI – DEACONS

Deacons are responsible for carrying out the task and duties assigned by the Elders. There is no requirement for a minimum number of deacons.

### **Section 1: Qualifications**

To serve as a deacon the Biblical qualifications in 1 Timothy 3 must be met.

### **Section 2: Nomination and Appointment**

Deacons shall be nominated and appointed by the Elders. A deacon may be approved by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Elders in attendance at a business meeting.

### **Section 3: Term of Office**

Deacons do not serve for a specified term. Deacons shall serve at the discretion of the Elders, for as long as needed, or until they are no longer willing or are unable to serve.

### **Section 4: Resignation**

A deacon may resign his position at any time, with no advance notice required. Resignations must be submitted to the Elders in writing.

## ARTICLE XII – PRESIDENT

The President shall be the principal executive officer of the church and shall in general supervise the control of the business affairs of the church.

He may sign, with the Secretary or any other proper officer of the church authorized by the Elders any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments which the Elders has authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Elders or by these Bylaws or by statute to some other officer or agent of the church. And in general, perform all duties incident to the office of President and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Elders.

### **Section 1: Qualifications**

To serve as President the person must be a member of FBF.

### **Section 2: Nomination and Appointment**

The President shall be nominated and appointed by the Elders. The President may be approved by an affirmative vote of three-fourth of the Elders in attendance at a business meeting.

### **Section 3: Term of Office**

The President does not serve for a specified term. The President will continue to serve as long as he remains qualified and desires to serve or removed by the Elders.

### **Section 4: Resignation**

The President may resign his position at any time, with no advance notice required. Resignations must be submitted to the Elders in writing.

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## **Section 5: Termination**

The President may be removed from service by an affirmative vote of three-fourth of the Elders in attendance at a business meeting.

## ARTICLE XIII – SECRETARY

The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all business meetings of the church in one or more books provided for that purpose. Such records are to be approved at the next business meeting. The Secretary shall see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws or as required by law. He shall be custodian of the church records and see that they are preserved in a safe place. He shall perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Elders.

### **Section 1: Qualifications**

To serve as Secretary the person must be a member of FBF.

### **Section 2: Nomination and Appointment**

The Secretary shall be nominated and appointed by the Elders. The Secretary may be approved by an affirmative vote of three-fourth of the Elders in attendance at a business meeting.

### **Section 3: Term of Office**

The Secretary does not serve for a specified term. The Secretary will continue to serve as long as he remains qualified and desires to serve or removed by the Elders.

### **Section 4: Resignation**

The Secretary may resign his position at any time, with no advance notice required. Resignations must be submitted to the Elders in writing.

### **Section 5: Termination**

The Secretary may be removed from service by an affirmative vote of three-fourth of the Elders in attendance at a business meeting.

## ARTICLE XIV – TREASURER

The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the church. He shall receive and give receipts for moneys received and payable to the church from any source whatsoever. He shall deposit all such moneys in the name of the church in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as shall be selected by the Elders. He shall disburse all moneys of the church and make a financial report at the Annual Fellowship meeting and to the Elders at such times as requested by the Elders. The treasurer shall prepare and present the annual budget to the Elders. And in general, perform all duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Elders.

### **Section 1: Qualifications**

To serve as Treasurer the person must be a member of FBF.

### **Section 2: Nomination and Appointment**

The Treasurer shall be nominated and appointed by the Elders. The Treasurer may be approved by an affirmative vote of three-fourth of the Elders in attendance at a business meeting.

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## **Section 3: Term of Office**

The Treasurer does not serve for a specified term. The Treasurer will continue to serve as long as he remains qualified and desires to serve or removed by the Elders.

## **Section 4: Resignation**

The Treasurer may resign his position at any time, with no advance notice required. Resignations must be submitted to the Elders in writing.

## **Section 5: Termination**

The Treasurer may be removed from service by an affirmative vote of three-fourth of the Elders in attendance at a business meeting.

## ARTICLE XV – STAFF

The Elders may hire staff members as necessary to provide for the needs of the church.

Staff members may be required to subscribe to the Doctrinal Statement, the Essentials of Faith, and these Bylaws of the church and/or meet the qualifications of an Elder or Deacon.

Other staff members shall serve under the person(s) assigned by the Elders and shall perform the duties as specified in a job description mutually agreed upon by the of Elders and the staff member.

## ARTICLE XVI – COMMITTEES

Committees deemed necessary to fulfill the mission of the church shall be approved by the Elders. Committees may be authorized or terminated at a business meeting by an affirmative vote of three-fourth of the Elders in attendance at a business meeting.

## ARTICLE XVII – DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the church, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principle office of the church is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

The church shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the Elders of Faith Bible Fellowship, or when the church has not held a business meeting for three years.

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## **ARTICLE XVIII – AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these Bylaws must be submitted to the Elders in writing and adopted as a preliminary step at a business meeting. In order to solicit opinions from the church family, recommendations of the Elders shall be given to the fellowship in writing for four consecutive weeks in order to solicit their opinions. Having sought and considered the evaluation of the fellowship, they can be acted upon for final adoption, but must receive the affirmative vote of three-quarters of all Elders

These Bylaws were officially adopted by the Elders of the Faith Bible Fellowship of Lebanon, Ohio on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2009.