



The Bylaws of
Foster Creek Baptist Church

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The Bylaws of Foster Creek Baptist Church

Article 1 - Name and Purpose

Section 1.01 - Name

This congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be known as the Foster Creek Baptist Church. It is incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of South Carolina.

Section 1.02 - Legal Purpose

As stated in the Articles of Incorporation, this church is organized as a corporation exclusively for religious, educational, and charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, establishing and maintaining Christian worship; proclaiming the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; teaching the Scriptures to believers of all ages; maintaining missionary activities in the United States and in any foreign country; and engaging in any other activity not prohibited to corporations under the South Carolina Nonprofit Corporation Act of 1994 that is in furtherance of Section 501(c)(3) purposes.

These purposes may be carried out by the building of churches, parsonages, schools, chapels, radio stations, television stations, rescue missions, print shops, daycare centers, and camps.

Section 1.03 - Mission and Ministry Purpose

The overarching mission of Foster Creek Baptist Church is to glorify God as revealed in Holy Scripture; that is, its aim is to accurately reflect and represent God's nature so others come to acknowledge His pre-eminence, reputation, splendor and dignity; the end result being the delivery of praise and worship for all that He is, for all that He thinks, for all that He does. This congregation seeks to worship, honor, and serve the triune God through obedience to His Word. In keeping with this mission to glorify God and with dependence upon the power of the Holy Spirit, this congregation of believers seeks to obediently make, edify, and equip disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in our community and throughout the world to learn, love, and live the truth found in God's Word, the Bible. This church shall endeavor to maintain a thorough balance between the instruction, defense, and propagation of the faith of fundamental Protestantism. It shall be separatist (that is, anti-ecumenical) in its stand and evangelistic in its outreach.

Article 2 - Organization and Association

Section 2.01 - Organization

Foster Creek Baptist Church shall not hold organized affiliation with any convention, denomination, or council of churches but shall be an independent, fundamental, local Baptist assembly of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. It recognizes no obligation to any religious hierarchy and as such is to be an autonomous organization. It retains the right and assumes the responsibility to act for itself according to the teachings of the Holy Scriptures under the counsel of the Holy Spirit. Its officers and the church as an entity are not to engage in any official practices or have its facilities or property used for any purposes that directly contradict or violate its Statement of Faith and Church Covenant.

Section 2.02 - Association

This church welcomes the fellowship of born-again believers everywhere who give evidence of true conversion by the orthodoxy of their doctrine and conduct, and by their separation from apostasy. While a self-governing body, this congregation may associate with and cooperate with other like-minded ministries in the furtherance of the cause of Christ. There shall be no association with the modern Ecumenical or Charismatic movements, nor will it enter into ecclesiastical cooperation with any church which has departed from the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God.

Article 3 - Statement of Faith and Church Covenant

Section 3.01 - Preamble

The teaching and preaching of Foster Creek Baptist Church is based upon God's Word, the sixty-six books that comprise the Old and New Testaments. This Statement of Faith reflects those doctrines that the leadership and membership embrace and affirm to be God's revealed truth and consider essential to the understanding, teaching, and practicing of those truths. These doctrines are based upon an interpretation of the Bible that is...

- A. *Normal* - understanding the words of Scripture in their common usage unless otherwise indicated by the context.
- B. *Literal* - understanding the meaning of Scripture in its ordinary sense unless the context requires a figurative interpretation.
- C. *Grammatical* - using the recognized rules of grammar to interpret the text.
- D. *Historical* - understanding the words of Scripture in the context of the times in which they were written.
- E. *Systematic* - categorizing and comparing the teaching of any portion of God's Word with the whole of Scripture. God cannot and does not contradict Himself.

Section 3.02 - Statement of Faith

In the very first description of the New Testament church, the Bible says that they *continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine...* (Acts 2:42). Therefore, doctrine is of paramount importance in the very existence of the church. Since many people claim to believe the Bible and yet believe different things, it is important for churches to clarify what they hold to be true from Scripture. The following comprise the important Scriptural beliefs of this church, its membership and leadership:

A. The Holy Scriptures

We believe that every word of the Holy Scriptures, both the Old Testament and the New Testament (in their original languages before translation), is equally and fully inspired of God. The Holy Scriptures have been kept pure by God's particular care. The Scriptures, being God-breathed, are inerrant and infallible and are therefore the supreme and final authority in every matter they touch upon, as well as the standard for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the complete, divine, and final revelation of God to man. While guests are welcome to bring a translation of the Bible that they may have, we use the Authorized Version of the Bible (KJV) for our public worship, preaching, teaching, and Scripture memory. We recognize the unique place of the autographs of Scripture and refuse to elevate a translation to the authority of the original manuscripts. We recognize that though other translations might faithfully reflect the original text, there are many that are untrustworthy. Attempting to avoid the confusion that we see in other churches where people frequently find it difficult to follow a preacher using another translation, we uniformly employ the Authorized Version as the standard version for our worship and service. (2 Pet. 1:20-21; Rom. 3:2; Matt. 5:18; Jn. 10:35; Ps. 12:6; 19:7-11; 33:4; 119:128; 2 Tim. 3:15-17)

B. The Godhead

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each is co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and has the same attributes and perfections. (Deut. 6:4; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Jn. 5:6-8; Ex. 3:14; Matt. 28:19; Jn. 1:14-18; 14:10-11; 15:26)

C. The Person and Work of Christ

1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He lived in sinless perfection in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (Jn. 1:1-2, 14; Lk. 1:35; Phil. 2:5-8; Isa. 7:14; 9:6; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5)
2. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, substitutionary sacrifice; that He alone was uniquely qualified to secure a successful atonement, and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical and witnessed resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:21-36; 1 Pt. 1:3-5; 2:21-25; Rom. 3:24-26; Eph. 1:7, 19-20; 1 Cor. 15:3-8)
3. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ bodily ascended to Heaven, is now exalted and reigns at the right hand of God the Father "above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion" where, also as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Jn. 18:36-37; Acts 1:9-11; 2:33-36; Eph. 1:20-23; Rev. 1:5; 3:21; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 9:24; 7:24-27; Rom. 8:34; 1 Jn. 2:1-2)

D. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Person Who convicts the world of sin in their lives, of the righteousness they lack but need, and of the judgment that is to come; and, that He is the Supernatural Agent in regenerating and baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of their redemption. (Jn. 16:8-11; 3:5; 6:63; Ezek. 36:26-27; Rev. 22:17; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 8:9; Eph. 1:13-14)
2. We believe that He is the divine Teacher Who guides believers into all truth, assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures, and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit, and empowered to walk in obedience to God's Word. (Jn. 16:13; Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; Gal. 5:16)

E. The Total Depravity of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Every man then is a sinner by nature, by birth and by choice. Because man's entire constitution (his intellect, emotion, and will) has been corrupted by sin, he is of himself utterly unable to remedy his lost condition or receive the things of the Spirit of God. (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:23; 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19; Jer. 17:9; 13:23; Rom. 5:6; 1 Cor. 2:14)

F. Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by divine grace alone and received by faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ alone. Turning away from sin and any reliance upon self for salvation is God's inflexible requirement without which a sinner is certain to perish. Christ's precious blood was shed on Calvary as the only sacrifice God would accept as payment for man's sin and on the sole basis of the merit of Christ's life and death, a sinner is declared righteous, forgiven of all sin, accepted in Christ as a son of God, and qualified for Heaven. Christ provided a

successful atonement that is free, full and final. In the salvation of man, the Father chose a people before time began according to the good pleasure of His will, the Son redeems them, and the Holy Spirit regenerates them. We believe that all sins, except blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, are forgivable. (Eph. 2:8-10; Lk. 13:3, 5; Jn. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 2 Pet. 1:1; Eph. 1:4-5, 7; Titus 2:14; 3:5; 1 Jn. 1:9; Matt. 12:31-32)

G. The Perseverance and Assurance of Believers

1. We believe that all the redeemed, those effectually called, justified, and sanctified by God in Christ, are eternally kept by God's power and can never fall from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere in that grace to the end and are secured in Christ forever. (Jn. 6:37-40, 44, 65; 10:26-30; Rom. 8:1; 29-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; Phil. 1:6; 1 Pet. 1:4-5; Jude 1:24)
2. We believe that all who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior and love Him in sincerity, endeavoring to conduct themselves in all good conscience according to His will, may in this life be certainly assured that they are in a state of grace. This assurance of faith is based upon the merit of Christ's earned righteousness imputed to them as revealed in the Gospel, the consequent union with Christ, the inward evidences of the graces of the Holy Spirit, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of adoption. We also believe it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation. This assurance is not a license to live as one pleases, but a proper understanding of one's acceptance before God places upon the believer the obligation to walk in the Spirit and be holy. The logical conclusion of free grace is godliness--the enjoyment of and imitation of Christ now as well as throughout eternity. (Titus 2:11-15; Rom. 13:13-14; 10:3-5; 3:25-28; 1 Jn. 2:3; 3:14, 18-19, 21, 24; 5:13; 1 Jn. 5:4-5; Rom. 5:1-5; 8:11-17)

H. Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience

1. We believe that Christ has purchased for all believers a liberty inherent in the Gospel. It includes freedom from the guilt of sin, from the condemnation that follows guilt, from the wrath of God, and from the severity and curse of God's law. It also includes free access to God and obedience to Him with a childlike love and readiness. (Gal. 5:1, 13; Rom. 8:1-4; Lk. 1:73-75; 1 Cor. 15:56-58; Gal. 3:13-14; Heb. 10:19-22)
2. We believe that God alone is Lord of the conscience. He has set it free from all obligations to receive or obey any such doctrines or demands of men as are in any respect in opposition to His Word or are not contained in it. (Acts 23:1; Rom. 14:4; Jas. 4:12; Matt. 15:9; Acts 4:19; 5:29; 1 Cor. 7:23; Col. 2:20-23)
3. We believe that, to harbor sin's evil desires, or to practice any sin or pursue a lifestyle that is antithetical to the Bible's teaching on pretense of enjoying Christian liberty perverts the main purpose of gospel grace and is to be rejected. (Rom. 6:1-2; Gal. 5:13; 2 Pt. 2:18-21; Titus 2:11-15)

I. The Church

1. We believe the universal church is invisible with respect to the internal work of the Spirit. It consists of the whole number of the elect since Adam who have been, who are being, or who yet shall be gathered into one under Christ, Who is the Church's Head. The Church is the wife, the body, the fullness of Christ Who "fills all in all." (Matt. 16:18; Heb. 12:22-23; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:12-13; 5:23, 25-27, 32; Col. 1:18)
2. We believe that the local church is comprised of people who profess to believe the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, have been born-again, then baptized after being saved, and who render obedience unto God by Christ. (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; Acts 2:41; 15:22, 28-30)

3. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17; 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:15; Titus 1:5; Acts 2:42, 46-47; Heb. 10:25)
4. We recognize the observance of the Lord's Supper, as a memorial of Christ's death on the cross, and water baptism by immersion as the two Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the local church. These two ordinances instituted by Christ are not a means of saving grace. (1 Cor. 11:23-26; 1:13-17; Acts 2:41-42; 8:12, 35-39; 10:47, 48; Matt. 28:19-20)
5. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pt. 5:1-4)
6. The role of women in the church - Godly women have played a vital role in the ministry of the local church as clearly shown in the Scripture. God has given them spiritual gifts which are to be utilized in the local church and which serve to enhance the body of Christ in that local assembly. We believe that there is an equality in being and value when it comes to the standing of men and women before God as they are in Christ, yet they have differing roles and so are not assigned the same functions or responsibilities within the local church. God has established the order and qualifications for spiritual leadership in the church with one of these being women are not permitted to exercise spiritual leadership over the men. Therefore, we believe women should not be a teacher of men in any adult setting. They should not lead the church in its worship. We believe God's Word is clear that women are not to serve as elders, bishops, or pastors of a local church nor should they serve in the office of deacon. However, women should use their gifts in teaching women and children and serving in other capacities in the local church. (Rom. 12:4-8; 16:1-16; 1 Cor. 11:3, 7-11; 14:34-37; 1 Tim. 2:11-14; 3:2, 12; Titus 1:5-7; 2:3-8)
7. We believe men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (1 Tim. 2:11-15; 3:2, 4-5, 12; Acts 6:1-7)

J. The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts

1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ gives to the Church evangelists and pastor-teachers as gifts to equip the saints for "the work of the ministry." (Eph. 4:11-12)
2. We believe that the Holy Spirit bestows spiritual gifts upon believers for Christian service and for the edification of the Church (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 1 Pt. 4:10-11)
3. We believe that after Christ's resurrection and the organizational beginning of the local church at Pentecost, the ministry and message of the Apostles were accompanied by sign gifts to confirm the authenticity and accuracy of their message. These sign gifts, such as speaking in tongues and healing, gradually ceased by the time of the completion of the New Testament and were never intended to be the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Spirit. (Acts 2; 1 Cor. 12:28-31; 13:8-10; 14:1-33; 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:19-22; Heb. 2:3-4)
4. We believe that God hears and answers prayer according to His own will for the healing of the sick and afflicted. (Jas. 5:13-16; 1 Jn. 5:14-15)

K. Missions

We believe that Christ has given to His disciples 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 on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use available means to spread the Gospel in this country and in foreign nations rather than waiting for them to come to

us. We believe that this obligation Christ has placed upon every believer is not only to witness by word but also by their lifestyle. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15; Jn. 20:21; 2 Cor. 5:20; Lk. 24:46-48; Acts 1:8; Phil. 2:12-16)

L. Giving

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that God initially established the tithe as a basis for giving, and that every Christian should give sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. (Matt. 23:23; 25:14-30; Prov. 3:9-10; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; Gen. 14:20; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8 & 9; Eph. 4:28; 1 Jn. 3:17; Mal. 3:8-10)

M. The Lord's Day

We believe the first day of the week is the Lord's Day and by apostolic example and the express teaching of Scripture, is to be observed in worship and spiritual exercises of devotion, both public and private, and in resting. Works of necessity and mercy are permitted on this day. (Matt. 28:1; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Rev. 1:10; Gen. 2:2-3; Ex. 20:8-11; Lk. 13:15-16; Matt. 12:11-12)

N. Separation and Fellowship

1. We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. God commands His people to separate from all sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and to refrain from all immodest and immoderate appearances. (1 Tim. 6:1b; Ps. 4:2; Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 Cor. 6:18-20; 10:31; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2-11; Titus 2:10-14; Jas. 4:4; 1 Jn. 2:15-17)
2. We believe fellowship is vital to any Bible-believing Christian. It is the believer's responsibility to endeavor to maintain the unity of the Spirit but that this unity is not to be at the expense of biblical truth but within the realm of God's divinely revealed truth. (Eph. 4:1-6; Jn. 17:17-23; Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:10-11; 2 Jn. 9-11; Rev. 18:4)
3. We believe separation is first positive before it is ever negative. It is thoroughly positive because it is basically a separation unto Christ. Close fellowship with any organization or movement that denies Christ, repudiates His Word, attempts to add or detract from the finished work of Christ and the gospel of justification through faith apart from works, and seeks to maintain close ties with those that do such, is a fellowship that leads one away from Christ. Enjoyment of a relationship with and a jealous safeguarding of a fellowship with our Lord demand a separation from apostasy, fundamental error, and those groups content to walk with or tolerate religious unbelief within their ranks. Every proposed alliance must be considered in the light of our commitment to the Bible's teaching on separation. We stand against any and all philosophies that seek to destroy or undermine the truth of biblical Christianity. (Heb. 13:13; Rom. 1:1-3; 16:17-18; Gal. 1:6-9; Eph. 5:8-11; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; Titus 3:10-11; 2 Jn. 9-11; Rev. 18:4)

O. The Second Coming of Christ and the Eternal State

1. We believe that Jesus Christ will one day literally, visibly, and physically return and His saints will be caught up to meet Him in the air. He then returns with all His saints to earth. The day of His return is unknown to man but will certainly come. (Job 19:25; Matt. 24:36-51, 25:31-34; 1 Cor. 15:23-26; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 1:10, 3:13; 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Titus 2:13; Rev. 19:11-16)

2. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men: the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Job 19:25-27; Jn. 5:28, 29; 1 Cor. 15:50-54; Dan. 12:2, 13; Matt. 25:46; Jn. 6:39-40, 44, 54; Rev. 20:12-13)
3. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious happiness they await their bodily resurrection when both soul and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Lk. 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:51-53)
4. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until their resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and then shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Lk. 16:19-31; Matt. 25:41-46; Mk. 9:43-48; Rev. 20:11-15)

P. The Personality of Satan

We believe that Satan is a literal angelic being, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Gen. 3; Matt. 4:2-11; Jn. 8:44; Isa. 14:12-15; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10)

Q. Creation

We believe the Genesis account of creation to be neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of God's creation of the entire universe in six literal, consecutive, 24-hour days. The triune God, by a free act of His will and for His own glory, without the use of existing materials or secondary causes, brought into being the entire universe immediately and instantaneously by the word of His mouth. Therefore, we reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, Theistic Evolution and any other deviation as unscriptural theories of origin. (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 104:24-27; Isa. 40:21-26; 43:7; Jer. 51:15; Jn. 1:1-5; Col. 1:16-17)

R. Civil Government

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: a) the home, b) the church, and c) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. The home, the church, and the state have their respective, biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. We believe that we must obey civil government unless it requires us to act contrary to our faith at which time we must obey God rather than the state. Believers are to pray for those who occupy positions of civil authority. (Matt. 22:17-21; Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-14; Heb. 13:17; Eph. 5:22-24; 1 Tim. 2:1-3; Titus 3:1-2)

S. Human Sexuality

1. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality or pansexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. (1 Thess. 4:1-8; Gen. 2:24; 19:5-7, 13; 26:8-9; Ex. 20:14; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-32; Matt. 5:28; 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Heb. 13:4)
2. Sexual intimacy is a wonderful gift of God that is only to be expressed between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman within the love and boundaries of marriage to each other. (Gen. 2:24-25; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 6:18; 7:1-5; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4).

3. We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. The two distinct, complementary genders individually and together reflect the image of God. Attempts to alter one's sex or appearance by surgery or by hormone therapy or any other means reflect a heart that does not submit to God's good and sovereign right to determine our sex and thus are disapproved of and forbidden by God. (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1-3; Deut. 22:5; Ps. 139:13-16; Jer. 1:5; Matt. 19:4; Mk. 10:6; 1 Cor. 6:9)

T. Marriage and Family Relationships

1. We believe that marriage and family are sacred institutions ordained by the Lord God Himself from the very beginning of human history for the purpose of representing the profound mystery of the union that exists between Christ and His Church, to produce godly offspring, to provide helpful companionship, and to promote sexual purity and fulfillment. Since God's plan is that marriage is to be a single, exclusive union between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman until death parts them, any other definition of marriage is invalid, contrary to the clear teachings of the Holy Bible and consequently, against the expressed will of God. (Eph. 5:31-32; Gen. 1:28; 2:18-25; 1 Cor. 7:2-5, 39; Mk. 10:4-12; Rom. 7:2-3)
2. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position and in worth before God, since both are created in God's image but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and in the church. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people and the way His people are to relate to Him. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the Church. The wife is to submit herself to the scriptural leadership of her husband as the Church submits to the headship of Christ. The husband is to be the leader of the home. (Gen. 1:26-28; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:11-15; Titus 2:1-5)
3. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. Children are a blessing from God and a heritage from Him. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's plan and pattern for marriage. Parents are responsible to teach their children spiritual and moral values based upon the Bible, and to lead them to make choices based on biblical truth, through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate, loving discipline, including but not limited to scriptural, corporal correction. Children are to honor and obey their parents. Able-bodied husbands and fathers are to provide for their families. Refusing to do so is a clear violation of their responsibility and of God's command. (Ps. 127:3-5; 128; 139:13-16; Prov. 6:20-22; 13:24; 19:18; 22:6, 15; 23:13-14; 29:15, 17; Eph. 5:21-33; 1 Pet. 3:1-7; Heb. 13:4; Mal. 2:14-16; Col. 3:18-21; Ex. 20:12; Eph. 6:1-4; Deut. 6:4-9; 2 Thess. 3:7-15; 1 Tim. 5:8)

U. Divorce and Remarriage

We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce, and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce followed by remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of the Lord for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Cor. 7:39; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12)

V. Abortion

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living, human being. Abortion, which constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life, is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection,

birth or population control, or the emotional or mental well-being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:13-16; Luke 1:31-57; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; Ex. 21:22-25)

W. Euthanasia

We believe that the direct taking of human life to relieve pain and suffering is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a sacred gift from God and must be respected as such. We therefore reject the “right to die” and the so-called “death with dignity” viewpoints as unscriptural positions. (Ex. 20:13; 23:7; Acts 17:28)

X. Love

We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lk. 6:31; Jn. 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; 1 Jn. 3:17-18; Matt. 5:44-48; 1 Cor. 13:4-8; Titus 3:2; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26)

Y. Lawsuits Between Believers

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or against the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32; Matt. 18:15-17)

Section 3.03 - Authority of Statement of Faith

This Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible. All literature, whether print or electronic, used in the church shall be in agreement with this Statement of Faith. For purposes of Foster Creek Baptist Church’s faith, doctrine, practice, policy and discipline, our pastor is this church’s final interpretative authority on the Bible’s meaning and application.

Section 3.04 - Church Covenant

As those redeemed unto God by the precious blood of Christ, it is our desire to live in a manner befitting our relationship with Christ, being obedient to the Word, to diligently seek to “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pt. 3:18) and to walk by the Spirit of God, enabled by His power to manifest the fruit of His work in us (Gal. 5:16, 22-26). All relationships in the church will be guided and governed by the biblical principles as set forth in this Church Covenant and Bylaws. Accepting the totality of the Scripture as our basis for faith and practice, we desire to live according to its teachings. The following specific goals are stated as representing that desire:

A. Separation unto God

We purpose to abstain from all fleshly lusts (1 Pt. 2:11), to present our bodies unto God “as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is [our] reasonable service” and to be “not conformed to this world” (Rom. 12:1-2), and to “yield our [bodies] as instruments of righteousness unto God” (Rom. 6:13). In our fashion we will strive for modesty in appearance remembering we represent the Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom. In our physical appearance and deportment, we aim to give others an accurate opinion of the character of our God, clearly showing we identify with Him rather than with the spirit of this age in which we live. We believe that God wants men to look like men

and women to look like women with no blurring of the lines of distinction between the two sexes (1 Tim. 2:9-10; 1 Cor. 11:14-15).

B. Love for One Another

We purpose to love one another without hypocrisy (Rom. 12:9), to help one another when needed, and to pray for all the saints (Eph. 6:18). We endeavor to “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3), refraining from “all bitterness and wrath and clamor and evil speaking” (Eph. 4:31).

C. Commitment to Our Ministry

As physically enabled, we purpose to support this church faithfully in all its ministries, attending its services, diligently exercising our individual gifts of the Spirit on its behalf, and contributing both bountifully and cheerfully to its ministries and expenses “as the Lord hath prospered us.” (Cf. Heb. 10:25; Lk. 4:16; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7)

D. Teaching of Sound Doctrine

We purpose that we shall “earnestly contend for the faith which was once [for all] delivered unto the saints” (Jude 1:3), and “speaking the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15). We believe the essentials of the Christian faith are embodied in our Statement of Faith, and we shall therefore strive to defend and propagate those truths, both vigorously and graciously.

E. Reaching People for Christ

We purpose to witness to the unsaved in both word and deed, seeking to win them to saving faith in Christ, and then to bring them into the fellowship of the local church. We purpose also to give our earnest support to home and foreign missions, seeking to do all we can in accord with Scriptural teaching, and as the Lord enables, to get the Gospel out to all men (Acts 1:8).

Article 4 - Authority and Oversight

This church recognizes the Lord Jesus Christ as its Head and His Holy Scriptures (the sixty-six books that comprise both the Old and New Testaments) as its supreme and final authority (Ps. 119:128; 138:2; Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18; 2 Tim. 3:16). The spiritual oversight of this congregation shall be vested in duly qualified and selected pastor(s) in cooperation with duly qualified and elected deacons (1 Tim. 3:1-13).

Article 5 - Government

Section 5.01 - Form

Under the authority mentioned in Article 4, the government of this church shall be of the congregational type with authority vested in its members, who shall hold title to all properties and whose vote shall be final in all matters pertaining to this church. The business of the church shall be transacted by the congregation in a duly called business meeting as defined in Section 6.04. All interim business matters shall be transacted in regularly held deacon meetings except in cases where a regular or specially called business meeting must be arranged to obtain congregational approval.

Section 5.02 - Church Leadership

Recognizing that the Holy Spirit endows men with particular spiritual gifts and personal areas of expertise that are intended to benefit the body of Christ and for the furtherance of this Gospel ministry, this church’s leadership shall be headed up by a pastor who serves in cooperation with deacons, men who shall be elected by the members of the church who give evidence of the moral and spiritual qualifications laid down in God’s Word. Other church members may be appointed to head up various positions of service as the need may arise to further enhance the ministry’s effectiveness. These individuals would be selected for service

by the pastor and deacons and the congregation informed of their appointment.

A. The Pastor

1. Qualifications

- a. Because the Bible commands Christians to walk worthy of the vocation to which God has called them (Eph. 4:1) and commends a man desiring the office of a bishop as one who desires a good work (1 Tim. 3:1), the pastor must, in addition to his adherence to the Statement of Faith as provided in Article 3 and the qualifications for and duties of membership as provided in Sections 8.02 and 8.04, conduct his personal and professional life according to the biblical standards presented in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
- b. He should be gifted to teach, be able to equip and shepherd the saints as well as be able to administrate and serve in humility and harmony with other church leaders. He should demonstrate spiritual and relational maturity and not be less than twenty-five (25) years of age.
- c. *Gender.* Only naturally born men are eligible to assume the office of pastor. In no circumstance shall this church ever appoint or hire a woman to serve in the office of pastor (1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:2).
- d. *Marriage.* While marriage is not a prerequisite to serve as pastor, if he is married, then the Bible commands that the pastor be the husband of one wife. Therefore, he disqualifies himself from pastoral ministry if he is divorced or becomes divorced while a pastor. (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6).
- e. *Wife and Children.* The pastor is the under shepherd of the church as he is the leader of his family. His ability to lead his family and bring any children in the home into proper subjection to spiritual, parental, legal, and other proper authorities reflects upon his ability likewise to bring the church into proper subjection to spiritual authority and to facilitate the proper spiritual development of saved members (1 Tim. 3:4-5; Titus 1:6).

2. Calling of a Pastor

Upon the resignation, death, or dismissal of the pastor, the church shall seek a candidate who subscribes to the Statement of Faith, the Church Covenant and Bylaw provisions of this church and whose life aligns with the qualifications of a pastor as described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The church shall abide by the following guidelines for calling a pastor:

- a. A prospective candidate for the pastorate should be duly screened by a pulpit committee formed according to Section 5.11 to ensure scriptural qualifications are met; that his ministry philosophy and practice are in harmony with the church's mission and ministry purpose (Section 1.03); its orientation as specified in Article 2; and that he is in full agreement with the church's Statement of Faith and Church Covenant as specified in Article 3.
- b. Prior to being announced to the congregation as a formal candidate, any man being considered to serve in the office of pastor must preach at least two services on a Sunday. He along with his family, shall meet with the pulpit committee and deacons. Thereafter, upon a majority vote of the deacons, the pulpit committee may formally announce the candidate to the church. Subsequently, the candidate must be present with his wife and children (if any) for at least two services on a Sunday in which he is to preach and then be available for a church-wide question/answer time prior to being voted upon by the congregation.

- c. Notice in writing and from the pulpit must be given two consecutive Sunday mornings prior to a formal candidate's preaching, and two consecutive Sunday mornings prior to the church congregational vote in a business meeting.
- d. Any pastoral candidate being presented to the congregation for a vote must be accepted by a minimum of 75% vote of those eligible members at an officially called business meeting. Voting shall be done by written ballot.
- e. The pulpit committee will only present one candidate at a time for the church's consideration. An up or down vote must be cast prior to consideration of other potential candidates.

3. Duties of the Pastor

- a. The pastor's primary responsibility is to preach and teach God's Word. The goal is to "equip the saints for the work of ministry" (Eph. 4:12) through his teaching and preaching of the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27) and by whatever scriptural and beneficial means may be at his disposal. His preaching of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is with the view of urging individuals to positively respond to that message, and then by such message to promote their subsequent growth in grace as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- b. This ministry of building up the saints may also include time spent with individuals in personal discipleship, or counseling and encouragement. He shall lead by example in seeking to win the lost to Christ through personal witnessing.
- c. The pastor is to administer the ordinances of the church and personally direct or appoint others to lead in the church's worship services.
- d. The pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church and maintain oversight of the various ministries and functions of the church as he shepherds the flock of God, and shall do what he can to advance the spiritual life, welfare, and best interests of the congregation.
- e. All church employees shall be under the supervision of the pastor who has the authority to dismiss the same. No employee shall be hired or retained who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant.
- f. The pastor shall be a voting, ex-officio member of every committee and board.
- g. All nominees submitted by the congregation to serve as deacon must be approved initially by the pastor and then by the currently serving deacons before being voted upon by the church congregation.
- h. All appointments for public worship, Bible study and the arrangements thereof, and the use of the property belonging to the church for purposes other than the stated appointments, shall be under the direction and discretion of the pastor, who shall be able to determine the appropriateness of practices as well as persons permitted to use church property. He may also consult with the deacons in these matters as the need arises.
- i. The pastor may serve as moderator at all congregational business meetings. In his absence or at his request, the deacon chairman or vice-chairman may serve as moderator.

- j. The pastor shall be responsible to fill the pulpit for each regularly scheduled church service as well as any special services. In the event of his absence, illness, or in the case of a vacancy in the office of pastor, the deacon chairman shall be responsible to invite speakers from within the membership or outside the church to preach in a manner consistent with the beliefs articulated in the Statement of Faith.
- k. The pastor shall be responsible, in coordination with the deacons, to establish mandatory safety and security procedures for all ministries and programs involving minors.
- l. The pastor may not hold any other office in the church.

4. **Term of Office**

The relationship between the pastor and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of one month's notice, or less by mutual consent.

5. **Dismissal of the Pastor**

- a. The severance of the relationship between the pastor and the church may be considered at any church business meeting, provided notice to that effect shall have been given from the pulpit to the church two Sundays prior to said regular church business meeting. A simple majority of the eligible members present and voting shall be required to sever the relationship between pastor and the church. Disciplinary removal of the pastor from office automatically terminates his membership in the church. A restoration to membership after disciplinary removal will be subject to the requirements of Section 8.06.
- b. A pastor may be removed from office after thorough investigation by the deacons if:
 - 1) he is found to be mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified according to pertinent Scripture, including 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
 - 2) at any time a pastor's beliefs, preaching or teaching shall depart heretically from the Statement of Faith or his ministry philosophy and practice is no longer in full accord with these Bylaws.

Since the pastor is an elder of the church, any accusations, investigation or discipline of a pastor shall be handled in accordance with the procedures outlined by pertinent Scriptures, including 1 Timothy 5:19 and Matthew 18:15-18.

- c. A pastor that is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from shepherding and subsequently refuses to repent of that sin, shall be publicly rebuked as 1 Timothy 5:20 commands, and notice shall be made before the church at a regularly scheduled worship service.
- d. In the event that the pastor has potentially disqualified himself, he may be suspended from his ministerial duties by immediate action at the discretion of the majority of the deacons and with full compensation pending the outcome of the investigation.
- e. Upon severance or resignation, a pulpit committee shall be formed in accordance with Section 5.11A.
- f. Upon resignation or dismissal, salary and other benefits shall continue for thirty (30) days maximum or until he has obtained a full-time paid position, whichever comes first, unless a longer period of time is approved by a majority vote of the congregation at a duly called business meeting.

B. Assistant or Associate Pastors

1. Subject to appropriate budgetary approval and on the condition that they shall become a member of the church upon assuming their duties, the pastor may hire assistant/associate pastors or other staff members to advance the ministry's efficiency and effectiveness. Under the direction and guidance of the pastor, the associate pastor(s) and any staff of the church shall assist the pastor in carrying out the ministries of the church. Duties shall be assigned by the pastor.
2. Men must be considered for this position in keeping with the Scriptural standards and qualifications set forth in Section 5.02, A.1.
3. In the event that the senior pastor determines that a dismissal is necessary, the pastor shall have the authority to dismiss him.
4. In the event that the assistant or associate pastor becomes the object of an accusation that harms the future welfare of the church's ministry, he may be suspended from his ministerial duties by immediate action at the discretion of the majority of the deacons and with full compensation pending the outcome of the investigation. Upon completion of the investigation of the deacons, they shall make a recommendation to the pastor who shall decide whether he should be reinstated or dismissed.

C. Deacons

1. Selection and Qualifications

- a. Deacons shall be men nominated by the congregation from among the members of this church. Nominees shall not be less than twenty-five (25) years of age and shall meet the moral and spiritual qualifications set forth in God's Word (1 Tim. 3:8-13; Acts 6:3).
- b. They shall have been active members of the church for at least twelve months before serving as deacon and shall have proved themselves faithful in church attendance and in faithfully carrying out their responsibilities as they have actively served in one of the ministries of the church prior to their nomination (1 Tim. 3:10).
- c. Any nominee submitted by the congregation to serve as deacon must be approved initially by the pastor and then by the currently serving deacons. The pastor and deacons shall strive to recommend to the congregation a candidate for each vacancy plus one.
- d. Any candidate that has been recommended to serve as a deacon shall be elected by congregational vote using a written ballot at a business meeting. The candidate(s) with the most votes would be elected.

2. Number and Term

- a. The number of deacons to be elected shall be determined by the pastor and deacons based upon the needs of the church.
- b. Deacons shall serve a three-year term and may be eligible for nomination for one additional three-year term if the need arises due to the fact there is an insufficient number of duly qualified men or a shortage of qualified men from the congregation willing to serve in that office. All terms begin January 1 and end December 31 at midnight. Except as outlined above, a deacon must rotate off for one year before he can be re-elected to return to serving as deacon again.
- c. In the event of a deacon resignation or dismissal, the office of deacon shall be filled with a replacement as soon as it is possible to finish out his unfinished term. The

congregation shall elect a replacement recommended by the pastor and other deacons. Provided the unfulfilled term was less than a year, the new deacon would be eligible for nomination at the completion of the unfulfilled term.

d. Installation of a new deacon who has never served in that capacity before will be by a dedication service following his election.

3. Responsibilities

a. Deacons shall assist the pastor in the work of the ministry and serve as ministers to the needs of the congregation that do not require direct involvement of the pastor(s) and that would distract the pastor(s) from his/their primary pastoral duties (Acts 6). An example would include taking care of benevolence requests either from those in the community or within the congregation.

b. They should be available to help the pastor, in any manner as he shall request, in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church and in performing all other work of the ministry.

c. They shall be responsible with the pastor for the physical oversight of the church facilities and of all church property.

d. They shall administer all business matters of the church and along with the pastor, constitute the board of directors for this corporation. The following members of the board of directors shall function as trustees of the organization--the senior pastor, deacon chairman, and deacon secretary. The board of directors shall exercise only the following specific powers, upon authorization by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the church members present at a duly called church business meeting:

1) To purchase, hold, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the church, and to take real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church;

2) To sell, convey, alienate, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, and to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the church, to borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and use of the church; to cause to be executed, issued, and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and to secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, or pledges;

3) To exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church corporation as required under Article 14;

4) All powers of the directors shall be compatible with the laws of the State of South Carolina.

e. Any committees formed to conduct business for the church are responsible to the pastor and deacons for carrying out those responsibilities assigned to them. Any recommendations for actions to be taken on behalf of the church must be presented to the pastor and deacons for their review and approval before such recommendations are carried out. No committee shall act unilaterally on behalf of the church.

f. Following the election of deacons at a business meeting, at the first regularly scheduled deacons meeting thereafter, the deacons shall elect their own chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary, who will record the minutes of each deacons' meeting, for the upcoming year.

- g. The pastor may preside over all business meetings but can delegate to the deacon chairman or vice-chairman the responsibility of moderating at any business meeting. In consultation with the pastor, the deacon chairman will also develop the agenda for each deacon's meeting. In the chairman's absence, the vice-chairman can moderate the business meetings. If neither are able to moderate, then the pastor will either appoint another member to moderate the meeting or should moderate the business meetings himself.
- h. Deacons shall meet to conduct business matters for the church on a monthly basis and at other such times as are necessary.
- i. The deacons shall obtain a proposed annual budget prepared by the finance committee for their review and approval a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the set date of the annual business meeting in which the church is to vote on the new budget for the coming fiscal year.

4. **Dismissal**

- a. A deacon may be recommended for removal from office for unbiblical conduct not becoming to the dignity of the office as set forth in Scripture and as determined by the other deacons, by the pastor and a majority vote of the remaining deacons. Approval of dismissal shall be by simple majority vote of the congregation at any business meeting.
- b. In the event of a resignation or dismissal, the procedure to follow is given in Section 5.02, C2c.

D. **Church Treasurer**

1. **Selection and Qualifications**

- a. The prospective treasurer shall be a man nominated by the congregation from among the members of this church. Nominees shall not be less than twenty-five (25) years of age and must be approved by the pastor and deacons to serve in that capacity.
 - b. Individuals elected to this position of service may also serve as a deacon provided the necessary qualifications for that office of deacon have been met (See Section 5.02, C1.).
 - c. **Qualifications**
 - 1) He must be an active member of the church for at least twelve months before serving as treasurer and shall have proved himself faithful in church attendance and in faithfully carrying out his responsibilities as he has actively served in one of the ministries of the church prior to his nomination.
 - 2) He must be trustworthy in character; his life must be in keeping with the standards set forth in the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant; he must be faithful in his own fiduciary responsibility before the Lord and then to this local church; he must have a biblical understanding of how money is to be used.
2. **Term** - The Treasurer shall be elected by the membership of this church by simple majority vote cast on a written ballot for a one-year term. He may serve sequential terms if re-elected to the same office each year by the church.

3. Responsibilities

- a. The Treasurer serves as the finance committee chairman and shall function as the treasurer of the corporation.
- b. The Treasurer or his designee shall oversee the counting of all offerings wherein at least two nonrelated individuals are required to tabulate the monies collected at each service and prepare the bank deposit according to the written procedures.
- c. He shall follow the written procedures for and be responsible for all funds of the corporation and for the deposit of all funds in the name of the church in banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected by the pastor and deacons.
- d. He shall coordinate with the church's administrative assistant or church financial secretary to ensure that...
 - 1) receipts and a permanent weekly record of individual giving for all donations, offerings, contributions and gifts are maintained, and said records are confidentially guarded as a sacred trust. Yearly contribution statements shall be sent to donors at the end of each fiscal year as the law requires.
 - 2) the funds of the church are being disbursed as may be directed by the pastor, deacons, or by the budget adopted by the members of the church at its annual business meeting, or by the congregation's vote at any regular or special business meeting.
 - 3) checks for church bills are written, signed, recorded and mailed and that pay stubs are delivered for salaries that are paid via direct deposit.
 - 4) adequate and accurate accounts of the church's properties and business transactions including the account of its assets, liabilities, receipts, disbursements and capital be kept and maintained.
 - 5) monthly written financial reports of the church's financial condition are generated and delivered to the pastor and deacons for their monthly deacons' meetings and for review when and as requested at other times. Copies should be made available to the finance committee and to church members to review.
 - 6) written financial reports of the church's financial condition are prepared and distributed at the regular quarterly business meetings and annual business meetings.
 - 7) all church financial records are kept at the church office or in another location approved by the pastor and deacons and are easily accessible.
 - 8) all deposited funds received from the finance committee each week are verified.
 - 9) a smooth transition takes place between the Treasurer and his successor upon leaving office.
- e. He shall work with the finance committee and pastor in developing an annual budget for the coming fiscal year. The proposed annual budget should be presented to the deacons for their review and approval no less than thirty (30) days prior to the date set for the annual business meeting.

- f. He shall give a financial report of the church's financial condition to the congregation at the regular quarterly business meeting and at the annual business meeting. He shall also present the new proposed budget for the coming fiscal year to the congregation at its annual business meeting. If unable to give the financial reports to the congregation, then either the vice-chairman of the finance committee or deacon chairman shall do so.
- g. He shall see to it that all checks have the required signatures on them each Sunday so that disbursements are made and bills paid on time. Any finance committee member, deacon chairman or deacon vice-chairman can sign church checks. Furthermore, he shall ensure that no person shall be permitted to sign checks written to themselves and no expenditures of the church (except miscellaneous petty cash disbursements) shall be made by cash. No person who writes checks can sign checks they have written.

4. Dismissal

- a. In the event of a resignation or dismissal, the office of treasurer shall be filled with a replacement as soon as it is possible. The congregation shall elect a replacement approved by the pastor and deacons in a business meeting.
- b. A simple majority vote will be necessary in cases in which dismissal is recommended by pastor and deacons for breach of trust. A simple majority vote by the congregation is required to elect a replacement. (See Section 5.07.)

E. Church Secretary

The deacon secretary shall be the secretary of the corporation.

1. The secretary shall keep the historical records of the church; annually report on the membership roll; keep an accurate record of all church membership activity such as admissions, dismissals, deaths, baptisms, and ordination, licensing/ordination and commissioning services; and of all correspondence and/or other such records as may pertain to this office. He shall deliver such documents and records to the successor upon leaving office.
2. He shall keep all minutes of church business meetings and an accurate record of all church business approved at each meeting. A copy of these minutes shall be kept as the permanent record of the church and shall be made available at all reasonable times to any proper person on terms provided by law and pursuant to these laws.
3. He shall also oversee the custody of all legal and business documents related to this ministry as directed by the pastor and deacons. An original or copy of this church's Bylaws including all amendments or alterations to the Bylaws are to be kept at the church office and should be easily accessible.
4. He shall sign, certify, or attest documents as required by law.
5. He is to ensure that a record of the proceedings of all deacon meetings are kept at the church office.
6. He is to see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws. (In the case of the absence or disability of the secretary, either the pastor or the deacon chairman may give notice.)
7. Assistance with the aforementioned duties can be obtained from the church administrative assistant or another church member approved by the pastor and deacons.

Section 5.03 – Administrative Assistant

- A. Subject to appropriate budgetary approval and on the condition that the individual shall become a member of the church upon assuming the duties, the pastor may hire an administrative assistant to advance the ministry's efficiency and effectiveness. Under the direction and guidance of the pastor, his/her duties shall be assigned by the pastor.
- B. In the event that the senior pastor determines that a dismissal is necessary, the pastor shall have the authority to dismiss him/her.

Section 5.04 - Designation of Corporate Officers

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the pastor shall serve as the president of the corporation; the deacon chairman shall serve as the vice president of the corporation; the treasurer shall serve as the treasurer of the corporation; and the deacon secretary shall serve as the secretary of the corporation.

Section 5.05 - General Eligibility for All Officers

- A. The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to live by or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith (Article 3) and Church Covenant (Article 3).
- B. Upon termination of membership, any officer of the church shall immediately forfeit his position and return any church property to the church office.

Section 5.06 - Terms of Office

- A. For the Pastor - See Section 5.02, A4.
- B. For Assistant/Associate Pastors or staff - See Section 5.02, B3 and 5.03B.
- C. For the Deacon - See Section 5.02, C2.
- D. The term of service for all offices and positions in the church, except for pastor(s) and deacons, and hired staff, shall be for one year at the expiration of which the officers may be re-elected or re-appointed.
- E. A vacancy for any office, except in the case of a pastor and deacon, may be filled at any church business meeting.

Section 5.07 - Installation of Officers

A public installation service in which all newly elected officers of the church are to be dedicated to their respective offices and the ordination of newly elected deacons shall be held at a church service following their election at the annual church business meeting.

Section 5.08 - Duties of All Officers

The responsibilities of the officers shall be commensurate with their titles, duties outlined in these Bylaws, and/or according to the teaching of the Word of God. Any officer who neglects their duties for three months can be removed from office.

Section 5.09 - Pastoral Oversight of Officers and Staff

- A. All officers and committees work under the oversight of the pastor.
- B. All church staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the pastor who has the authority to dismiss the same. No employee or volunteer shall be hired, appointed, or retained who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with this church's Statement of Faith.

Section 5.10 - Ministry Leadership Positions

- A. Only members can serve as a permanent ministry leader and are eligible for appointment to any church leadership position. They must be approved initially and thereafter annually by the pastor in order for them to commence or continue in their positions. Associate members, interns, or invited laborers are not eligible for appointment to a permanent ministry leadership position.
- B. Leadership positions may be developed as the need arises and individuals are asked to oversee various aspects of ministry including but not limited to the nursery, Junior Church, Sunday School, etc. Their duties and responsibilities will be developed by the pastor in consultation with the deacons.
- C. One person may hold two or more ministry positions. The church treasurer and the church secretary may not be the same person.
- D. The church shall not install or retain a ministry leader who fails to live by or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith (Article 3) and Church Covenant (Article 3).

Section 5.11 - Committees

- A. **Pulpit Committee** - Five male members of this church shall constitute a pulpit committee when the office of pastor is vacant. It is functional only when the pastor has resigned or has been dismissed and it shall have completed its duties once the congregation has voted in a new pastor. A minimum of three shall be deacons. The congregation shall nominate men to fill the other two positions. The deacons shall appoint two men from those nominated who are willing to serve in that capacity and then shall notify the congregation once both positions are filled. The responsibility of this committee is to supervise the church in the call of its pastor and to represent the church in dealing with prospective candidates for the office of pastor. Candidates who have been thoroughly screened and approved by the committee for serious consideration as having met the standards set forth in God's Word, these Bylaws, shall be presented one at a time to the congregation and then voted upon by the congregation before any other candidate is presented.
- B. **Nominating Committee** - The pastor and deacons of this church shall serve as the nominating committee.
- C. **Finance Committee** – Adult men and women may serve on this committee which shall be taken from the membership of this church and appointed on an annual basis by the pastor in consultation with the deacons and announced at its annual business meeting. The number of members serving shall be set according to the need as determined by the pastor and deacons. They shall meet as often as is necessary throughout the year to discharge the responsibilities given to them on behalf of the church. They must have shown themselves to be trustworthy in character who will be faithful in their fiduciary responsibility to the Lord and to this local church, who have a biblical understanding of how money is to be used, and whose lives are in keeping with the standards set forth in the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. Their responsibilities will include the drafting of an annual budget for the church each year which will be presented to the pastor and deacons for their review and approval a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the set date of the annual business meeting in which the church votes on the new budget for the new fiscal year.
- D. **Other Committees** - Other committees may be created and appointed by the pastor in consultation with the deacons for whatever purpose and duration necessary and dissolved by them when no longer needed. Responsibilities will be developed by him in consultation with the deacons as the need arises for a committee to be formed. In the absence of a pastor, the deacons shall have this ability.

- E. No committee shall have the authority to act on behalf of the corporation unless permission to do so has been delegated by the pastor and deacons and within set parameters established by them. All committees are to provide the pastor and deacons with advice and information regarding matters submitted to the committee for consideration and serve at their pleasure.
- F. Committees shall make available upon request all records and materials to the pastor or deacons, who shall have the right to overrule any plans or decisions made by the committee. Each committee shall have a secretary that keeps minutes of each meeting and shall timely submit the minutes to the pastor and church secretary to be filed with church records. If deemed appropriate by the pastor and deacons, the committee chairman or his designee, shall submit a report to the church of the decisions and plans of the committee.

Section 5.12 - Employment

In order to protect the function and integrity of this church as the local body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to its members and to the community, the pastor and/or this church (in the case of the absence of a pastor) reserve the right to make decisions regarding the possible employment of individuals for ministry or staff positions based upon this church’s religious beliefs and the moral values as expressed in its Statement of Faith (Article 3). No employee or staff member shall be hired or retained who does not subscribe to and live in accordance with the moral values expressed in its governing Bylaws.

Article 6 - Meetings

Section 6.01 - Public Worship Services

- A. Except when circumstances warrant otherwise, this church shall hold public worship services twice on Sunday, a day that the New Testament distinguishes by event--the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:1); by example--the practice of the early church (Acts 20:7); by precept--the command to gather and give (1 Cor. 16:1-2); and by designation--the day belonging to the Lord (Rev. 1:10).
- B. It shall also gather together during the week for Bible study and prayer.
- C. The observance of the ordinance of baptism shall occur when needed, preferably in conjunction with a Sunday worship service. The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper shall be observed at least once every quarter on a Sunday.
- D. At the pastor’s discretion and in consideration of the congregation’s needs, special emphases such as evangelistic meetings, Revival services, Bible conferences, missionary conferences or any other special meetings may be held.
- E. Other meeting times for the purposes of fellowship can be set up at the discretion of the pastor.

Section 6.02 - Other Meeting Times

In consultation with the deacons, the pastor may schedule the use of the church for meetings that are not strictly worship related as long as the purposes for these meetings do not contradict any stated position in the Statement of Faith.

Section 6.03 - Church Leadership Meetings

- A. **Place and Time** - The pastor and deacons shall meet on a regular, monthly basis to plan and execute the affairs of the church. The date and time for the meeting each month shall be determined by the consensus of the men based upon their schedules. In consultation with the pastor, the deacon chairman should devise an agenda for the upcoming meetings and chair the deacon meetings at the pastor’s discretion.

- B. **Special Meetings** – Either the pastor or the deacon chairman may call for a special meeting of the deacons at a time agreed upon by the majority of the deacons.
- C. **Quorum at Meetings** - Deacons are expected to attend all meetings unless prevented from doing so by circumstances beyond their control. If unable to attend, they should notify the chairman. The secretary shall remind the deacons of their meeting time and place each month. A quorum for the transaction of business at all deacon meetings shall be at least 66% of the total number of deacons.
- D. **Actions Without Meetings** - When any time sensitive or urgent action is required, verbal or electronic consent of the majority of the deacons will be sufficient, and then all such action shall be formalized as soon as practical thereafter at a future meeting of the deacons.
- E. **Decisions at Meetings** - After careful discussion, prayer and submission to applicable biblical principles governing our relationship with fellow believers, the deacons shall strive to reach consensus on all decisions. A simple majority vote of the leadership shall constitute a final decision. All disagreements of the deacons are to be voiced during meetings, but once a decision is made, all deacons are to publicly support the decision of the majority. Minutes of all official meetings shall be recorded by the secretary of the deacons and a copy of them given to the church secretary who shall keep them in the church office.

Section 6.04 - Church Business Meetings

- A. **Attendees** – Nonmembers may attend business meetings held by members unless a members-only meeting is called for by the pastor and deacons. Nonmembers do not have any input nor do they have voting privileges.
- B. **Moderator** - The pastor may serve as the moderator at all congregational business meetings. In his absence or at his request, the deacon chairman or his designee may serve as the moderator.
- C. **Quarterly Business Meetings** - The church shall hold quarterly business meetings at such times as it deems convenient to do so in order to keep the membership informed of its financial condition by written report, to give reports regarding other important matters related to the ministry, and to conduct the business affairs of the church presented to it by the church leadership. Other items of business may be conducted as the members of the congregation may deem necessary.
- D. **Annual Business Meeting** - The annual church business meeting shall be held during the fourth quarter of the year, and may be held as the fourth quarterly business meeting, at a time convenient for the congregation and church leadership. In addition to reports given to the congregation of the church's financial condition and other important matters related to the church, there shall be the adoption of the budget for the new fiscal year, the election of officers, and the election of deacons. Other items of business may be conducted as the members of the congregation deem necessary.
- E. **Special Business Meetings** - The church may convene to deal with operational matters or items related to the ministry that may arise from time to time (such as the purchase, acquisition or selling of property or the incurring of indebtedness that exceeds ten percent of the annual budget or ten percent of the book value of all church property, changes in the Bylaws, church discipline issues, or the dissolution of the corporation, etc.). After informing the deacons, the pastor (or the deacon chairman if the office of pastor is vacant or if the pastor is the subject of possible disciplinary action) may call a special business meeting. A meeting for the calling of a pastor or the severance of the relationship between the church and pastor shall be called in accordance with the provision set forth in Sections 5.02, A2 and 5.02, A5.
- F. **Notification** - Notice of any duly-called business meeting will be announced from the pulpit by the pastor or deacon chairman (in the pastor's absence) or delivered in written form to the congregation in one Sunday morning service prior to the business meeting. Notice for any special, quarterly or

annual business meeting shall be given orally from the pulpit and in written form on two Sunday mornings prior to the meeting. During the notification process, the pastor or deacons will provide sufficient information to the membership to allow them to make an informed decision on the item of business that is being recommended to them.

G. Voting -

1. An affirmative voice vote or raise of hands by a simple majority is required for approval of a business item unless a larger majority or another method of voting is specified elsewhere in these Bylaws.
2. The purchase, acquisition or sale of real property, and the incurring of debt shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting.
3. Voting on a pastoral candidate shall follow the guidelines presented in Section 5.02A.
4. Voting privileges (motions and voting) at all business meetings shall be limited to members with good membership standing who are eighteen years of age or older. Those holding associate membership do not have voting privileges and shall not be counted for quorum purposes.
5. A ballot vote may be requested by existing church leadership or by at least 33% of the members present in the meeting indicated by a raising of hands. No member shall vote more than once on any given motion.
6. There shall not be any absentee-votes cast nor proxy votes cast. Any abstentions from voting shall be considered a non-vote.
7. A quorum for any duly called church business meeting shall consist of the members present at that meeting.

H. Rules of Order -

1. Meetings will be conducted according to the principle of fairness, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on any matter of business; common sense, mutual respect and the spirit of humility should be displayed as required in Philippians 2:2-8. Those violating this spirit and acting in a disruptive manner will be asked to leave by the moderator. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, the moderator may revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises in accordance with Section 11.03E and treat the person as a trespasser.
2. The following order shall be generally observed at quarterly and annual business meetings as needed or as required according to the Bylaws:
 - a. Opening Prayer
 - b. Reading of Minutes
 - c. Reception of or Dismissal of Members
 - d. Reports from Officers
 - e. Reports from Committees
 - f. Elections
 - g. New Business
 - h. Adjournment
 - i. Closing Prayer

Article 7 - Finances

Section 7.01 - Fiscal Year

The church's fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

Section 7.02 - Financial Accountability

- A. The treasurer will work with the administrative assistant or church financial secretary to see to it that financial reports are available each month for the pastor and deacons to review at their meeting. Once those reports are approved at the monthly deacons' meeting, the treasurer will see to it that copies of the financial reports are made available to the congregation upon request.
- B. An independent, qualified CPA or reviewing agency shall examine the church financial records and money handling procedures annually after the close of the fiscal year or more often if deemed necessary by the deacons. The examination should be on a repeating five year schedule: year one there should be a review, year two a compilation, the third year a review, the fourth year a compilation, the fifth year an audit, etc.

Section 7.03 - Budget Preparation and Approval

- A. The finance committee in consultation with the pastor will be responsible to prepare a church budget for the new fiscal year, including compensation and benefits to be paid to any church staff member, and should submit that budget to the deacons for their review and approval no less than thirty (30) days before the date of the annual business meeting which shall be held during the fourth quarter of each calendar year.
- B. The approved overall total of the budget, as presented to and approved by the church membership in its annual business meeting will be the intended ceiling on spending for that year. With membership approval, the deacons may adjust the overall budget at any time during the year as the need may arise.

Section 7.04 - Income

- A. **Voluntary Contributions** - The church is supported by voluntary contributions from its members and any nonmembers who shall give according to their abilities and according to the dictates of their own consciences.
- B. **Designated Contributions** - From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Any contribution given that is not designated to any church approved fund, shall be placed in the general fund.
- C. Other income may be received from pastor and deacon approved activities. The receiving and handling of monies will be according to procedures approved by the pastor and deacons.
- D. The church will maintain a minimum balance in its general fund that is agreed upon by the membership. Any surplus funds may be reallocated based upon ministry needs with the approval of the congregation.

Section 7.05 - Spending Authority

- A. The pastor and deacons have the authority to spend funds as outlined in the church budget.
- B. Neither the pastor nor the deacons may spend more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for any non-budgeted church expenditure, or a maximum of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) total per month, without congregational approval.
- C. The membership may make or authorize the making of any expenditure or obligation in any amount.

Section 7.06 - Emergency Expenditures

The pastor and deacons may, in an emergency situation, make or approve the making of any expenditure or obligation exceeding the limit imposed on them in Section 7.05 under the following conditions:

- A. The pastor and deacons, by majority vote, must determine that the matter is of such an urgency that it cannot wait until the next business meeting of the membership.
- B. The action taken by the pastor and the deacons shall be reported by the moderator at the next possible time for a church business meeting for congregational approval. If the members refuse to approve, the action shall be reversed insofar as possible, but the pastor and the deacons shall not be held personally liable for such action, provided that they have, in good faith, followed the procedures set forth in this section.

Section 7.07 - Conflict of Interest

- A. No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the tax-exempt purposes of the church.
- B. The deacons shall endeavor to remain sensitive to potential conflicts of interest in all use of church resources. They shall determine whether a contemplated transaction may be authorized as just, fair, and reasonable to the church. In order to protect Foster Creek Baptist Church's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the organization or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction, a separate conflict of interest policy will be developed by the pastor and deacons that is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Section 7.08 - Contracts

The pastor and deacons may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents of the church, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of any on behalf of the church when such action has been authorized by the church. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances but in accord with the practices defined within these Bylaws.

Section 7.09 - Endowments

The pastor and deacons may establish on behalf of the church any endowments for the general purposes or for any special purpose of the church.

Article 8 - Membership

Membership in this church is a privilege and not a right and carries with it specific responsibilities and moral obligations (1 Tim. 3:15). We reserve the right to refuse to retain any member or to refuse to accept as a candidate for membership, anyone who is openly living in sin or who does not subscribe to the moral values expressed in our church's Statement of Faith.

Section 8.01 - Basis for Membership

- A. The Bible is very clear that church membership is not a requirement for salvation (Cf. Eph. 2:8-9) but it is a good work that evidences a person has been saved (Cf. 1 Jn. 3:14; 2:19). However, membership in a local church is biblically important and beneficial--both to the individual members as well as the local body. When an individual is saved, that individual becomes a member of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Because that individual is united with Christ and the other members

of the body in this way, the individual is therefore qualified to be considered for membership in the local expression of that body.

- B. Although the Bible does not contain an explicit command for a believer to formally join a local church, nonetheless the biblical foundation for church membership permeates the New Testament. (For details regarding our beliefs regarding the scriptural basis for a church membership, see the separate document *The Biblical Case for Church Membership*.)
- C. Without a church membership, there is no way the local church can fulfill the New Testament commandments regarding the believer's place in the local church, the believer's function in the church, and the believer's submission to the spiritual authorities in the church. There is no power nor place to select the leadership of the church unless a church membership is recognized and participated in. Becoming a member of an identifiable, local assembly of baptized believers formally commits oneself to that local body which individually and corporately discharges the biblical responsibilities found in God's Word and participates in the privileges that such membership provides.

Section 8.02 - Qualifications for Membership

Those seeking membership must...

- A. Confess they have received God's gift of eternal life and profess the Lord Jesus Christ to be their personal Lord and Savior.
- B. Testify to having been baptized by immersion after their salvation.
- C. By their conduct give evidence they are pursuing and continuing in a vital fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ and demonstrate a sincere desire to live a godly, obedient Christian life.
- D. Attend Sunday worship services for at least four weeks before joining the church.
- E. Fully subscribe to and agree to live a life in keeping with the church's Statement of Faith (Article 3) and Church Covenant (Article 3).
- F. Agree to arrange themselves under the authority of the church and its leaders as set forth in these Bylaws.
- G. Not be living in a way that would warrant church discipline or be currently under church discipline from another church of like faith and practice.
- H. Realize that upon recommendation to the church, membership shall be granted upon a simple majority vote of the members present and voting after any church worship service or business meeting and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:
 - 1. By baptism (immersion) at this local church following a profession of faith as a true believer in Christ Jesus as personal Savior;
 - 2. By statement and testimony of faith in Christ, having been baptized by immersion;
 - 3. By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith in Christ Jesus; or
 - 4. By restoration - If after having been disciplined and removed from membership, upon majority vote of the congregation and after confession is made publicly before the church membership of the sin or sins involved, and satisfactorily evidencing repentance to the pastor (or to the deacons if the office of pastor is vacant,) such a one may be reinstated as a member of the church with all its privileges and duties.

- I. Successfully complete the process for membership as stated in Section 8.03.

Section 8.03 – Process for Membership

Recognizing how the ministry can build up the lives of those who join us as well as the beneficial impact a new member can have on others by investing their time, talents, skills, abilities and resources to enhance ministry to others, we welcome born-again Christians for consideration to become members of our church. Each candidate for membership must go through the following process:

- A. Express their desire to join the church to the pastor by coming forward during an invitation time at the end of a worship service. A membership packet and application would be given to them at that time. Their desire to join would be announced to the congregation.
- B. Review the church's Bylaws, Statement of Faith and Church Covenant.
- C. Agree to meet with the pastor and available deacons for an interview to ensure qualifications in Section 8.02 have been met and the membership process (Section 8.03) has been followed.
- D. After one of our subsequent worship services or at a business meeting, the prospective member will be presented to the church for a vote. Upon receiving a simple majority vote from the church members present and casting votes in that meeting, the membership candidate would be welcomed into the church membership.

Section 8.04 - Duties of Membership

On becoming a member of this church, in addition to the Church Covenant contained in Section 3.04, each member further covenants to love, honor, esteem the pastor; to pray for him; to recognize his authority in the spiritual and day-to-day affairs of the church; to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the church; to support the church with regular attendance, prayer, tithes, offerings, and with any other means as the Lord enables; and in accordance with biblical commands, affirm the beliefs and practices of the church.

Section 8.05 - Privileges of Membership

- A. Only members at least eighteen (18) years of age who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. Members may offer motions to initiate church action in a duly called business meeting except in cases dealing with personnel matters and in the philosophical direction of the church. The pastor and deacons shall handle any complaints against personnel so the matter can be addressed properly. The eligible membership of the church may only exercise voting privileges in those areas that are defined and limited by these Bylaws.
- B. Only persons on the current membership roll may hold a permanent ministry position in the church.
- C. This congregation does not function as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the under shepherd with the counsel of the deacons. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The pastor shall oversee all aspects of this church and either conduct or appoint individuals to conduct aspects of business for this church. The deacons shall give counsel and assistance to the pastor as requested by him.
- D. Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual or civil legal rights in the property or other ministry affairs of the church based upon principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the deacons) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such suspension or revocation, the

person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of the pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the deacons), be treated as a trespasser.

- E. Current, prepared financial statements will be made available to the church on a regular basis for their review. A member may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church and the minutes of the proceedings of church meetings and of committee meetings, provided he shall have made a written request to the church and the church has received the written request at least five (5) business days before the requested inspection date. Minutes from deacons' meetings and discipline committee meetings are exempt from this provision and are not subject to inspection or copy. A member may not, under any circumstances, inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the church or the accounting books.

Section 8.06 - Discipline and Restoration of a Member

As a form of our biblical commitment to one another and desire for the spiritual welfare and purity of this church, we practice church discipline according to the principles and commands of Scripture in general and in Matthew 18 in particular.

- A. There shall be a discipline committee consisting of the pastor and deacons. If the pastor or a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the discipline committee. The pastor and deacons shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.
- B. The sincere and genuine goal shall be to biblically restore those church members who undergo the process of church discipline.
- C. Biblical matters that could lead to church discipline if there is no evidence of repentance would include denying a fundamental doctrine in our doctrinal statement (Romans 16:17-18); an able bodied man refusing to work to support his family (2 Thess. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 5:8); embracing a false religion (Gal. 1:6-9; Rev. 18:4-5); drunkenness, extortion, slander (1 Cor. 5:11); sexual immorality of any kind (either heterosexual or homosexual) (1 Cor. 5:1-13); or any other matter that the pastor and deacons decide has biblical warrant.
- D. Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and testimony, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first prayerfully examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.
- E. If reconciliation is not reached, a second member, either a deacon or a pastor, is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
- F. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections D and E have been taken, the discipline committee, as the church representatives biblically responsible for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the hearing before the discipline committee, the committee shall recommend to the members of the church that they, after self-examination, make an effort personally to go to the offending member and seek that member's restoration.
- G. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections D, E, and F have been taken and ample time for such steps to be taken has been granted, such members who refuse to repent and be restored are to be removed from the membership of the church upon a simple majority vote of the membership present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action.

- H. The congregation may vote to dismiss or otherwise discipline a member who is not present at the business meeting in which the vote is taken provided that the member to be disciplined has been given written notice of the meeting. The vote to exercise church discipline is not contingent upon that member's attendance at the meeting.
- I. Since a church discipline meeting is a special meeting, the procedures for calling a special meeting established in Section 6.04 F must be followed.
- J. The discipline committee has the authority to determine whether the process has been properly followed.
- K. No matter may be heard by the discipline committee or the church unless the steps outlined in the subsections D and E have been taken, except in the case of a public offense.
 - 1. The determination of a public offense should be left to the discretion of the discipline committee.
 - 2. A public offense does not biblically require the procedure of church discipline as normally laid out in the above sections. Instead the matter may be expedited to prevent any additional shame or contention within the church. For an example of a public offense, see 1 Corinthians 5.
- L. If an unrepentant, offending party is removed from the church membership, all contact with him from that point forward (except by family members) must be for the sake of restoration. Persons placed under church discipline must immediately return any property belonging to the church.
- M. A person removed from membership by church discipline will no longer be eligible to partake of the Lord's Supper at our church, hold a position or serve in a ministry of the church, or vote in church business meetings.
- N. If a disciplined member has repented and desires reinstatement as a member, he may be restored to full membership in accordance with Section 8.02H4.
- O. The procedures provided in this section are based upon Matthew 18:15-20; Romans 16:17-18; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:1-11; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 5:19-20 and Titus 3:10-11.
- P. The provisions in this section are not applicable to those subject to automatic termination of membership (See Section 8.09.).

Section 8.07 - Transfer of Membership

Members not under the disciplinary process of Section 8.06 may request that a letter of transfer be sent to another church.

Section 8.08 - Associate Membership

- A. Members of this church who are temporary residents, full time college students, or those military personnel who may be stationed out of the greater Charleston area for an extended period of time may hold membership in another church during the time of their absence so that they may participate in the ministry of that local church while away from their home church.
- B. Those who are in the local area while attending college full-time or are full-time students at a graded school or military personnel and desire fellowship, accountability, and opportunities for ministry with this church on a temporary basis but who maintain active membership in another church of like faith and practice located in another city may be granted an associate membership.
- C. Associate members may not be an officer of the church but may serve in certain capacities as

determined by the pastor and deacons.

- D. Associate members do not have voting privileges and shall not be counted for quorum purposes.
- E. Those desiring associate membership must subscribe to our Statement of Faith and Church Covenant, make request for this status to the pastor who will interview the candidate, and then will consult with the deacons, if necessary, to determine if it should be granted to the individual. If the pastor so determines, the person may be granted such status upon a simple majority vote of the church membership after any public worship service or church business meeting.
- F. This associate membership automatically terminates after they permanently leave the area or have not attended services in twelve months from the date the status is conferred and must be renewed then by another request from the individual.

Section 8.09 - Termination of Membership

Termination provisions are not subject to the procedures governing church discipline as set forth in Section 8.06. Membership in this church will be automatically terminated under the following cases:

- A. By death
- B. By erasure
 - 1. When the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of this church in the preceding six months
 - a. Exceptions to this would be full-time college students, missionaries, evangelists, military personnel stationed outside the greater Charleston area, those who are unable to attend due to an extended illness or hospitalization, or shut-ins.
 - b. Upon just cause being shown to the pastor, this provision for termination may be waived for any individual member at the discretion of the pastor and deacons.
 - c. There is no “inactive membership” provision because of the problems this vague status creates.
 - 2. A member may relinquish membership at any time, but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the pastor.
 - 3. Whenever a member has indicated to the pastor either verbally or in writing that the member is leaving the church due to a desire to either no longer attend or is no longer in agreement with the church’s position or practices
 - 4. Whenever any member conducts himself in a manner which is deemed harmful to the interests and purposes of this church, providing that disciplinary measures have first been taken and have failed to effect repentance and correction, and providing that such member has been given opportunity to be heard at a joint meeting of the pastor and deacons
- C. By joining another church

Except for the cases mentioned above in Section 8.08, any member uniting with another church thereby automatically ceases to be a member of this church and his/her name shall be erased from the roll. When requested by another church, a Letter of Recommendation to that church will be considered by the pastor on a case-by-case basis.
- D. By exclusion
 - 1. The membership of any individual shall automatically terminate without notice if the deacons or pastor become aware of a member’s open and unrepentant involvement in any sexual lifestyle conduct described in Section 3.02S as being biblically prohibited or files a

- lawsuit in violation of Section 3.02Y.
2. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member openly and unashamedly disagrees with any provision found in the Statement of Faith.

Article 9 - Ministries of the Church

Section 9.01 - Purpose

This church believes that it is to provide its members and members' children with an education which is based upon and consistent with biblical teachings. The church believes that the home and church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education and opportunities for service. To this end, the church shall engage in ministries in education and service with the following dictates as expressed in this Article.

Section 9.02 - Participation

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the church; however, the pastor may permit non-church members to participate in church educational programs or courses of instruction if he deems it in the best interest of the church.

Section 9.03 - Staff Membership

All instructors, teaching assistants, and administrators shall be members of this church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, preachers or educators engaged for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals or other special worship services for the church, or other special meetings held on a temporary basis. The services of outside speakers who do not embrace the moral values expressed in our ministry's Statement of Faith shall not be used.

Section 9.04 - Statement of Faith Accord

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the Statement of Faith of this church. This church shall not hire, appoint, or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the church's Statement of Faith.

Section 9.05 - Unity

All ministries, service opportunities, educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the church. Each ministry must be in alignment with the overall philosophy of ministry, thrust and direction of this ministry.

Section 9.06 - Teaching

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted consistent with the teaching of the inerrant and infallible Word of God. Any assertion or belief which conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every instructor or teacher to present the inerrant Word of God as the only infallible source of knowledge, truth, and wisdom.

Section 9.07 - Christian Walk

All administrators, instructors, and teachers shall continue or adopt a lifestyle consistent with the precepts which they teach, whether in or out of the classroom setting.

Article 10 – Licensing and Ordination

This church shall have the authority to license or ordain to the gospel ministry those men who meet the qualifications set forth and who have successfully completed the procedure set forth in this article. The license for pastoral ministry is available to men called by God to the Ministry of the Gospel and who, though qualified for the role of a pastor, have yet to meet all the requirements for Ordination. Licensing represents approval for all pastoral duties and ministerial functions as defined in these Bylaws and as interpreted and applied by the Pastor. Licensing and ordination credentials are subject to suspension or revocation in matters of discipline.

Section 10.01 - Qualifications

Only members of this church or its mission churches, or an associate member of this church, who gives evidence of a genuine call of God to the work of the ministry and possesses the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, may be either licensed or ordained as a minister of the Gospel. He should be able to give satisfactory account as to his conversion, call to the ministry, and preparations for it.

Section 10.02 - Procedure

A. For Licensing

1. Candidates seeking licensure must make that request known to the pastor. After receiving that request, the pastor will meet with the deacons to discuss the matter and a time and place will be set where the candidate will be interviewed in person by both pastor and deacons to review his qualifications for ministry.
2. Following the interview and upon the unanimous consent and recommendation of the pastor and deacons, the candidate will be presented to the church to be licensed at any regular or called business meeting.
3. A license will be granted upon a simple majority vote of the voting members present as such meeting.

B. For Ordination

1. Those men who desire ordination into the Gospel ministry should make that desire known to the pastor. Upon a conference with the pastor and after the pastor has given his initial approval for the candidate to pursue ordination, the pastor shall call a council to examine the candidate with regard to his call to the ministry, his preparations for ministry, doctrinal soundness, moral and spiritual qualifications, personal fitness and spiritual gifts.
2. The ordination council shall consist of the pastor of this church, who shall serve as the chairman and moderator of the council, and invited ordained and qualified ministers of like faith to participate in the examination of the candidate. The number of ministers shall be determined by the chairman of the council. The examination of the candidate shall be in a public meeting conducted by the council assembled for this purpose.
3. Upon successful completion of the examination and upon the unanimous recommendation of the Council, the Pastor will present the candidate to the church to be ordained to preach by the congregation at either any regular or called business meeting.
4. Upon simple majority vote of the voting members present as such a meeting, the Pastor will then set a date for a public ordination service.
5. Upon completion of the service, the candidate is an ordained minister and is entitled to all the privileges thereof.

Article 11 - Morality and Ministry Practices

Section 11.01 - Resolution

The spiritual leadership and membership of Foster Creek Baptist Church, in accordance with its governing Bylaws, resolves to protect the Bible-based moral values of this ministry. It is committed to preserve Scriptural morals in the face of outside societal influences seeking to degrade the biblical family, pervert the moral values of our nation and its Judeo-Christian founding, and intimidate God's people from speaking God's truth in love.

Section 11.02 - Ministers and Use of the Property

In keeping with its governing Bylaws, no minister of this church shall engage in the performance of functions, ceremonies, or practices that run contrary to the moral values expressed in its Statement of Faith. Neither shall any building or any property owned by the church be used for functions, ceremonies, or practices that directly oppose or give sanction to the violation of its moral beliefs as stated in its Bylaws. Use of the facilities shall be in accordance with the church's facility usage policy.

Section 11.03 - Guiding Policies

Because of this church's resolve to protect and preserve the Bible-based moral values of this ministry, the following policies are to be communicated to each staff member and ministry volunteer and enforced as the guiding policies of this ministry.

A. Staff Training

All volunteers or staff that have contact with the general public on behalf of the ministry are perceived to be speaking on behalf of the ministry. These positions include, but are not limited to, receptionists, ushers, greeters, and anyone else who has contact with the general public as a representative of the ministry. All staff with contact with the general public are required to exhibit the utmost display of Christian character. Use of abusive or pejorative language of any kind is strictly prohibitive and shall be grounds for discipline. No staff member shall ever be disrespectful to any person for any reason.

B. Ushers

Ushers are required to conduct their activities with decorum and respect. Any conduct that an usher observes that may be distracting to the activities of the ministry should be brought to the attention of the pastor immediately. An usher should never touch any person in an effort to remove that individual from the premises except when absolutely necessary to prevent the individual from injuring himself or others. An usher may contact the authorities to respond to the scene in an effort to remove the individual(s) causing the disturbance and restore order.

C. Receptionists/Administrative Assistants

Receptionists/administrative assistants are responsible for greeting anyone who contacts the ministry by telephone or visits the ministry. Any questions regarding the Scriptural position or activities of the ministry should be directed to the pastor for further handling. Prospective participants in the ministry should be mailed an information packet. Receptionists shall not answer questions regarding the position of the church in matters of faith, practice, or policy over the phone or to persons unknown to the ministry. Answering such questions can be grounds for possible removal from the position including the possibility of termination of employment.

D. Church Attendance/Services

Attendance in the general worship services of this church shall be open to the general public subject to the standards and expectations contained in this article and other applicable ministry policies.

E. Behavior Standards

In all services and programs of this ministry, reasonable standards of decorum and order shall be maintained at all times. As such, no one shall, by appearance or behavior, be permitted to draw attention to themselves in contravention to the ministry's purposes. Any individual who, in the sole discretion of the pastor or ministry leadership, is found to be in violation of this policy shall be asked to leave immediately or shall be removed from the ministry premises by authorities.

F. Special Class Designations

Where appropriate, the pastor, in his sole discretion, shall designate specific assignments and qualifications for various special classes or group activities. Such assignments and qualifications shall be enforced for all individuals who wish to attend the ministry function. Individuals who do not meet the qualifications for a specific class or activity, in the sole discretion of the pastor, shall not be allowed to participate in the designated activity.

Article 12 - Indemnification

Section 12.01 - Actions Subject to Indemnification

- A. The church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of this church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church, against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by the individual in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding; and if that person acted in good faith and in a manner the individual reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe that the individual's conduct was unlawful.
- B. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that the individual reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

Section 12.02 - Expenses Subject to Indemnification

To the extent that a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in this Article, or in defense of any claim, issue, or matter in that action, suit, or proceeding, he or she may be indemnified against expenses, including attorneys' fees, actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in conjunction with the action, suit, or proceeding.

Section 12.03 - Limitations of Indemnification

Any indemnification made under this Article, may be made by the church only as authorized in the specific case on a determination that indemnification of the pastor, deacons, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because the individual has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Section 12.01. The determination shall be made (a) by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the pastor and deacons who were not and are not parties to or threatened with the action, suit, or proceeding; (b) if the described quorum is not obtainable or if a majority vote of the quorum of disinterested deacons so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by a majority vote of the members of the church.

Section 12.04 - Timing of Indemnification

Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article, may be paid by the church as they are incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, as authorized by the deacons in the specific case, so long as the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the church.

Section 12.05 - Extent of Indemnification

The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise required as a matter of law or under any agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the church, both as to action of each person seeking indemnification under this Article in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding that office, and may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent and may inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

Section 12.06 - Insurance

The church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this Article.

Article 13 - Binding Arbitration

Section 13.01 - Submission to Arbitration

- A. Any and all claims or disputes arising between church members, pastors, staff, and/or the church shall be settled by mediation following Scriptural example. Believing that lawsuits between believers and between a church member and the church are prohibited by Scripture (see Article 3, Section 3.02.Y, Lawsuits Between Believers) and cannot be litigated in the civil courts, all members of this church agree to submit to binding arbitration any matters which cannot be resolved otherwise, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bringing any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof. Title 15, Chapter 48 of the South Carolina Code of Laws (Uniform Arbitration Act) shall not apply to the arbitration of this Article or any award made as a result of the arbitration.
- B. If the dispute remains between church members who are not deacons, then the decision of the pastor and deacons shall be final. If the dispute involves a church member and a deacon, then the pastor and other deacons will try to effect a resolution and their decision will be final. If the dispute involves the pastor and no resolution is reached, legally binding arbitration will be pursued according to the guidelines described in this Article.

Section 13.02 - Notice of Arbitration

- A. In the event of any dispute, claim, question, or disagreement arising out of or relating to these Bylaws or any other church matter, the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreement as befits Christians and in accord with Matthew 5:15-17.
- B. To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interests to not disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution.
- C. If they do not reach such solution within a period of sixty (60) days, then upon notice by either party to the other, disputes, claims, questions, or differences shall be finally settled by arbitration as

described in Section 13.01, above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to Section 13.04, below.

Section 13.03 - Limitations on Arbitration Process

- A. Should any dispute involve matters of church discipline, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures for church discipline as outlined under Section 8.06 were followed.
- B. Should any dispute involve the removal of the pastor from office or any church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in Sections 5.02, 5.09, or 5.10 were followed.

Section 13.04 - Arbitration Procedures

The Procedures for Arbitration shall be as adopted by the pastor and deacons and kept on file at the church office.

Article 14 - Dissolution

Section 14.01 - Distribution of Assets

- A. Upon the dissolution of the corporation, after paying or making provision for payment of all its liabilities, the corporation shall dispose of all of its remaining assets to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).
- B. The assets of the corporation shall be distributed to another church or churches of like faith and practice or to one or more religious organizations who are of like faith and engaged in affairs substantially similar to those of Foster Creek Baptist Church.
- C. Church members may submit recommendations in writing to the deacons for recipients of the corporation's assets upon dissolution that are in keeping with the guidelines of this Article. The deacons shall consider all recommendations submitted to it by the membership and make its recommendation to the congregation. This distribution of assets shall be in accordance with a plan of distribution adopted by the deacons and approved by simple majority vote of the members present and voting on this plan in the business meeting. The request to the recipient(s) of such assets would be that they be used to directly facilitate church planting efforts or missionary efforts either in this country or in another.
- D. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, member, director, or officer of the corporation or any private individual; and no donor, member, director, officer of the corporation or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporation's assets.

Section 14.02 - Notice

Notice of dissolution shall be sent in writing to each member at least three weeks prior to the date of the scheduled business meeting called for this purpose. Verbal announcement shall be made from the pulpit in two Sunday morning worship services prior to the called business meeting.

Section 14.03 - Process

- A. Upon recommendation by the deacons, the deacon chairman may call for a special membership meeting for the purpose of dissolving this church. Ample notice shall be given as stated in Section 14.02. Two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast at the meeting must be in the affirmative to dissolve the

church. Upon dissolution, any assets of the corporation will be distributed according to the guidelines set forth in Section 14.01.

- B. Acting on behalf of the church congregation, the deacons shall assume responsibility of all dissolution proceedings and shall seek and obtain legal assistance to complete said proceedings.

Article 15 - Amendments

Upon the recommendation of the pastor and deacons, these Bylaws may be revised or amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present and voting using a written ballot at any duly-called regular or special meeting called for that purpose, provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing to the congregation and announced from the pulpit in two Sunday morning worship services prior to the business meeting in which the vote is taken.

Adoption

These Bylaws, consisting of Articles 1-15, were adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present. These Bylaws supersede any other Bylaws approved by this church and are effective January 25, 2016.

Date

Church Secretary