

ARTICLES OF FAITH OF BAPTIST CHURCH PLANTERS

I. OF THE SCRIPTURES

We believe in the authority and sufficiency of the Holy Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, as originally written; that it was verbally and plenary inspired and is the product of Spirit-controlled men, and therefore is infallible and inerrant in all matters of which it speaks. We believe the Bible to be the true center of Christian unity and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creed and opinions shall be tried (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21).

II. THE TRUE GOD

We believe there is one and only one living and true God, an infinite Spirit, the Maker and supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (Exod. 20:2, 3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Rev. 4:11).

III. JESUS CHRIST

A. THE VIRGIN BIRTH

We believe that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can be born of woman, and that He is both the Son of God and God, the Son (Gen 3:15; Isa. 7:14, Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14).

B. RESURRECTION AND PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ and in His ascension into Heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of the Father as our High Priest interceding for us (Matt. 28:6, 7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; 1 Cor. 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6, 51; Acts 1:9-11; Rev. 3:21; Heb. 8:6; 12:2; 7:25; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 John 2:1; Heb. 2:17; 5:9, 10).

IV. THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; that He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the Agent in the new birth; that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer (John 14:16, 17; Matt. 28:19; Heb. 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Gen. 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5, 6; Eph. 1:13, 14; Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; Rom. 8:14, 16, 26, 27).

V. THE DEVIL, OR SATAN

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, the Devil; and that he was created by God as an angel but through pride and rebellion became the enemy of his Creator, that he became the unholy god of this age and the ruler of all the powers of darkness and is destined to the judgment of eternal justice in the lake of fire (Mark 4:1-11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:10).

VI. CREATION

We believe the Biblical account of the creation of the physical universe, angels, and man; that this account is neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of God without any evolutionary process; that man was created by a direct work of God and not from previously existing forms of life; and that all men are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race (Gen 1:2; Col. 1:16, 17; John 1:3).

VII. THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created in innocence (in the image and likeness of God) under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression Adam fell from his sinless and happy state, and all men sinned in him, in consequence of which all men are totally depraved, are partakers of Adam's fallen nature, and are sinners by nature and by conduct, and therefore are under just condemnation without defense or excuse (Gen. 3:1-6; Rom. 3:10-19; 5:12, 19; 1:18, 32).

VIII. SALVATION

We believe that the salvation of sinners is divinely initiated and wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who, by the appointment of the Father, voluntarily took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin, and honored the divine law by His personal obedience, thus qualifying Himself to be our Savior; that by the shedding of His blood in His death He fully satisfied the just demands of a holy and righteous God regarding sin; that His sacrifice consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ the Lord bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; that having risen from the dead He is now enthroned in Heaven, and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection. He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and an all-sufficient Savior.

We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation. Repentance is a change of mind and purpose toward God prompted by the Holy Spirit and is an integral part of saving faith (Jonah 2:9; Eph. 2:8; Acts 15:11; Rom 3:23, 25; John 3:16; Matt. 18:11; Phil. 2:7, 8; Heb. 2:14-17; Isa. 53:4-7; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24).

IX. GRACE AND THE NEW BIRTH

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about by our sovereign God in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith and newness of life (John 3:3; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 John 5:1; Acts 16:20-33; 2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13; John 3:8).

X. JUSTIFICATION

We believe that justification is that judicial act of God whereby He declares the believer righteous upon the basis of the imputed righteousness of Christ; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any work of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's shed blood (Rom. 3:24; 4:5; 5:1, 9; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9).

XI. SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God accomplished in a threefold manner; first, an eternal act of God, based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he trusts the Savior; second, a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the life; third, the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord's return (Heb. 10:10-14; 3:1; John 17:17; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 5:25-27; 1 Thess. 4:3, 4; 5:23, 24; 1 John 3:2; Jude 24, 25; Rev. 22:11).

XII. THE SECURITY OF THE SAINTS

We believe that all who are truly born again are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:6; John 10:28, 29; Rom. 8:35-39; Jude 1).

XIII. THE CHURCH

We believe that a local church is an organized congregation of immersed believers, associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its officers as pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures.

We believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity. We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only Superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it is Scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; that on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final (1 Cor. 11:2; Acts 20:17-28; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Acts 2:41, 42).

We believe in the unity of all New Testament believers in the Church which is the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12, 13; Eph. 1:22, 23; 3:1-6; 4:11; 5:23; Col. 1:18; Acts 15:13-18).

XIV. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that Christian baptism is the single immersion of a believer in water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our identification with the crucified, buried and risen Savior, through Whom we died to sin and rose to a

new life; that baptism is to be performed under the authority of the local church; and that it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He come, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. We believe that the Biblical order of the ordinances is baptism first and then the Lord's Supper, and that participants in the Lord's Supper should be immersed believers (Acts 8:36, 38, 39; John 3:23; Rom. 6:3-5; Matt. 3:16; Col. 2:12; 1 Cor. 11:23-28; Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:41, 42).

XV. SEPARATION

We believe in obedience to the Biblical commands to separate ourselves unto God from worldliness, ecclesiastical apostasy, and neo-evangelicalism (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 1 Thess. 1:9, 10; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; Rom. 16:17; 2 John 9-11).

XVI. CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed; except in those things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ Who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming King of kings (Rom. 13:1-7; 2 Sam. 23:3; Exod. 18:21, 22; Acts 23:5; Matt. 22:21; Acts 5:29; 4:19, 20; Dan. 3:17, 18).

XVII. ISRAEL

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people, that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ, and that she will be regathered in the Holy Land and, after the completion of the Church, will be saved as a nation at the second advent of Christ (Gen. 13:14-17; Rom. 11:1-32; Ezek. 37).

XVIII. RAPTURE AND SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

We believe in the pretribulational rapture of the Church, an event which can occur at any moment, and that at that moment the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death, and all shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the seven years of the Tribulation (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:42-44, 51-54; Phil. 3:20, 21; Rev. 3:10).

We believe that the Tribulation, which follows the Rapture of the Church, will be culminated by the revelation of Christ in power and great glory to sit upon the throne of David and to establish the millennial kingdom (Dan. 9:25-27; Matt. 24:29-31; Luke 1:30-33; Isa. 9:6, 7; 11:1-9; Acts 2:29, 30; Rev. 20:1-4, 6).

XIX. THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that only those who are justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in the lake of fire (Mal. 3:18; Gen 18:23; Rom. 6:17, 18; 1 John 5:19; Rom. 7:6; 6:23; Prov. 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matt. 25:34-41; John 8:21; Rev. 20:14, 15).

APPENDIX B:

THE ELECTION PROCESS AND SUGGESTED FORMS

A. Regional Areas and Representation From Each Area:

1. Six Regional Areas:

a. THE NORTHEAST AREAS - 13 STATES:

| | | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------|--------------|---------------|
| Connecticut | New Hampshire | Rhode Island | Delaware | New Jersey | Vermont |
| Maine | New York | Virginia | Maryland | Pennsylvania | West Virginia |
| Massachusetts | | | | | |

b. THE SOUTHEAST AREA - 7 STATES:

| | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|----------------|---------|----------------|
| Alabama | Mississippi | South Carolina | Florida | North Carolina |
| Tennessee | Georgia | | | |

c. THE MIDWEST AREA - 9 STATES:

- | | | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Illinois | Kentucky | Missouri | Indiana | Michigan |
| Ohio | Iowa | Minnesota | Wisconsin | |
- d. THE MOUNTAIN-PLAINS AREA - 9 STATES:
- | | | | | |
|----------|---------|--------------|---------|----------|
| Colorado | Montana | South Dakota | Idaho | Nebraska |
| Utah | Kansas | North Dakota | Wyoming | |
- e. THE SOUTHWEST AREA - 6 STATES:
- | | | | | | |
|---------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|-------|
| Arizona | Louisiana | Oklahoma | Arkansas | New Mexico | Texas |
|---------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|-------|
- f. THE WESTERN AREA - 6 STATES:
- | | | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
| Alaska | Hawaii | Oregon | California | Nevada | Washington |
|--------|--------|--------|------------|--------|------------|

2. Representation By Region:

| REGION | STATES | Miss. to COUNCIL | Pastor to COUNCIL | YEAR |
|-----------|--------|---------------------|----------------------|------|
| NORTHEAST | 13 | 1 | 2 | 2007 |
| MT PLAINS | 9 | 1 | 1 | 2007 |
| SOUTHEAST | 7 | 1 | 2 | 2005 |
| SOUTHWEST | 6 | 1 | 1 | 2005 |
| MIDWEST | 9 | 1 | 2 | 2006 |
| WESTERN | 6 | 1 | 1 | 2006 |

Added by the Council in 2001, two missionaries to be elected at large by the missionaries and three laymen – one each from two regions using the rotation used for election of pastors, if possible..

B. DESCRIPTION OF ELECTION PROCESS -- PASTORS/LAYMEN

- Pastors – A nomination ballot will be sent by January 1st of each year to supporting churches of missionaries and/or the general fund that are located in the regions that are to elect Council members. Each nominating church must be a fundamental Baptist Church that is not affiliated with the National Council of Churches, the National Association of Evangelicals, or any Convention of Churches. Nominations must be postmarked by March 1st of the same year. The Elections Committee will choose at least two (2) names if electing one pastor and at least four (4) names if electing two pastors and present an election ballot to the same churches. The election ballot should be sent to the churches as soon after the March Council meeting as possible and returned to BCP by May 15th. The pastor/pastors receiving the highest number of votes will be seated on the Council for a three-year term.
- Missionaries – At each Regional Field Council meeting, the missionaries will vote for one active missionary to be elected from their region to sit on the Council for a three-year term. One missionary will serve from each of the six regions with two missionaries being chosen at-large. For the two at-large positions, the Service Center will send a nomination ballot to all active missionaries on January 1st of the election year. They then will prepare an election ballot of at least four (4) missionaries that received the highest number of nominations. The election ballot shall then be mailed to all active missionaries. The two missionaries receiving the two highest number of votes will be seated on the Council for a three-year term.
- Laymen – Four (4) laymen shall be appointed by the Council. The Election Committee shall receive names of potential laymen from the administration, churches, missionaries, and Council members. The names presented shall be reviewed to determine their qualifications for serving on the Council. The reviews will also include a reference call to the pastor of the church where the layman is a member. These reviews will be a prerequisite before any recommendation is made to the Council for any layman's appointment for a three-year term.

C. SUGGESTED FORMS:

NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS
BAPTIST CHURCH PLANTERS
FOR THE _____ REGION

- Each independent Baptist church (1) affiliated either on the national (G.A.R.B.C. or F.B.F.A), state or a regional level with a Regular Baptist fellowship, or be a member of an unaffiliated Baptist church of like faith and practice, (2) which financially supports the general fund of B.C.P. and/or financially supports at least one B.C.P. missionary is entitled to nominate up to three (3) names of pastors and up to three (3) names of laymen whose membership is in one of the

independent Baptist churches that is affiliated with the G.A.R.B.C., the F.B.F.A., or a state, or a regional association of Regular Baptist churches and which churches are located within the _____ region. (States included are: _____)

2. Qualifications of Council members according to Baptist Church Planters' Constitution: "Members of the Council must demonstrate a commendable Christian life and have an active and prayerful interest in home missions and in the support of home missionaries. They must be a member of an independent, fundamental Baptist church that is affiliated either with the G.A.R.B.C., the F.B.F.A., or a state or a regional association of Regular Baptist churches, or be a member of an unaffiliated Baptist church of like faith and practice, and have their church's approval of their involvement. They must be in wholehearted agreement with the doctrinal position of the Mission Agency and its purposes, policies, and practices, and be willing to sign the doctrinal statement annually."

3. The following pastor/laymen have served from the _____ Region and are eligible, if you so desire, to be nominated again: _____ and _____. The following pastors/laymen have served two consecutive terms and are therefore NOT eligible for nomination: _____ and _____.

4. The four (4) names receiving the highest numbers of nominations will be listed on the ballot. A Nomination Committee composed of three (3) members of the Council who are not up for election will contact each nominee as to his willingness and to verify his qualifications as stated in the Constitution. In case of a tie, the Nomination Committee will vote among itself to determine the top four (4) names. The four (4) names are placed on the ballot and mailed to the churches in the region for their selection of two (2) Council members.

5. Nominations must be mailed in by May 1 to Baptist Church Planters, PO Box 836, Elyria, OH 44036-0836.

6. A ballot listing the four (4) highest nominations will be mailed back to the churches by June 1.

OUR CHURCH NOMINATIONS ARE:

Name: _____ Phone: () _____

Church: _____

Name: _____ Phone: () _____

Church: _____

Name: _____ Phone: () _____

Church: _____

Your church name: _____

Address: _____

City, state, zip: _____

BAPTIST CHURCH PLANTERS
OF NORTH AMERICA
PO BOX 836, Elyria, OH 44036-0836

BALLOT FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS FROM _____ REGION

- | Name | Church | |
|--------------|---------------------------|-------|
| 1. John Doe | First Baptist, Home Town | _____ |
| 2. John Deer | Second Baptist, Your Town | _____ |
| 3. John Buck | Third Baptist, Their Town | _____ |

4. John Shot Fourth Baptist, Any Town _____

NOTE: For Regions requiring two (2) Council members, vote for two (2) names only. A vote for more than two names invalidates the entire ballot. The two (2) names receiving the highest number of votes serve on the Baptist Church Planters' Council for a term of three (3) years. In case of a tie, the Nomination Committee composed of three (3) members of the Council who are not up for election will vote to determine the two (2) highest.

NOTE: For Regions requiring one (1) Council member (pastor or layman), vote for one name only. A vote for more than one name invalidates the entire ballot. The name receiving the highest number of votes serves on the Baptist Church Planters' Council for a term of three (3) years. In case of a tie, the Nomination Committee composed of three (3) members of the Council who are not up for election will vote to determine the one who serves. (Only three [3] names will be on the ballot for regions electing one [1] Council member (pastor or layman).

BALLOT MUST BE RETURNED TO:
BAPTIST CHURCH PLANTERS
PO BOX 836, ELYRIA, OH 44036-0836
NO LATER THAN JULY 1

Your Church Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____