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“He is the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.”
Colossians 1:18 (New King James Version)

CONSTITUTION OF SWIFT CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

PREAMBLE

We, the believers of Swift Creek Baptist Church, do hereby declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, and to ensure that this body may be governed in an orderly manner. This Constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual Church member and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches.

United by the grace of God in Christian experience as members of this Church, we recognize and receive the Bible as the inspired Word of God and agree to accept it as our rule of faith and practice. We declare our adherence to the doctrines and teachings of the New Testament. We affirm our faith in God the Father Almighty; in Jesus Christ His only begotten Son; and in the Holy Spirit our Divine Comforter and Teacher - - all one God even as our forefathers believed in Him.

Article I. NAME

This body shall be known as Swift Creek Baptist Church.

Article II. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of our existence is to honor God by growing and edifying the body of Christ by each part doing its work in love. We will do this by:

1. Worshiping God.
2. Having fellowship with other believers through Bible study, worship and prayer.
3. Encouraging and assisting each other in the practice of Christian discipleship.
4. Being a witness for Jesus Christ in this community through love and service to all its people.
5. Obeying the command of Jesus Christ to spread the gospel throughout the world.

Article III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

Section 1. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

Section 2. God

There is one, and only one, living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21;8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His Church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the Church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

Section 3. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

Section 4. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

Section 5. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

Section 6. The Church

A New Testament Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the Church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the Church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

Section 7. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a Church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of Church membership.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the Church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

Section 8. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

Section 9. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the

Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

Section 10. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. He will rapture the church out of this world to be caught up by Christ to meet Him in the air. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

Section 11. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every Church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

Section 12. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the Churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

Section 13. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

Section 14. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the Churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament Churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for

common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

Section 15. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

Section 16. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

Section 17. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every Church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The Church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free Church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

Section 18. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His Church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the Church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the Church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Article IV. BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible 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. For purposes of church doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Pastoral Staff under the leadership of the Senior Pastor is the church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

Article V. CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we earnestly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, the body of Christ. Therefore, as members of God's covenant family known as Swift Creek Baptist Church, we commit ourselves to God and to one another to be Christ-like in our lives and relationships through the presence, guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

We will love one another as Christ loved us¹, be kind and compassionate to one another², encourage and build up one another³, comfort one another⁴, and offer hospitality to one another⁵. We will have equal concern for each other⁶, suffer when others suffer and rejoice when another is honored⁷, and consider others more important than ourselves⁸.

We will seek to have a spirit of unity based on our common bond in Christ⁹. We will not gossip or talk negatively about one another¹⁰. Instead, we covenant as one unified body to join each other in spiritual fellowship, encourage and edify our brothers and sisters in Christ, and never forsake the assembling of ourselves together¹¹.

We will confess our sins to one another¹², pray for each other¹², encourage the discouraged¹³, help the weak¹³, be patient with one another¹³, forgive one another as the Lord forgave us¹⁴, and seek to gently restore those in habitual sin¹⁵.

We will use our God-given knowledge to instruct one another¹⁶, use our spiritual gifts to bless one another¹⁷, use the Word of Christ to teach and admonish one another¹⁸, and nurture one another toward spiritual maturity measured by the life and ministry of Jesus¹⁹.

We commit to obey the Great Commission²⁰ and work together to reach out to our community, our state, our nation and the world as ambassadors of Christ²¹. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the spread of the Gospel²².

Finally, we commit to honoring the body of Christ by maintaining a good testimony²³. We will let the light of our godly lives shine together to bring glory to God²⁴.

¹John 13:34

²Ephesians 4:32

³1 Thessalonians 5:11

⁴1 Thessalonians 4:18

⁵1 Peter 4:9

⁶1 Corinthians 12:25

⁷Romans 12:15

⁸Philippians 2:3

⁹Ephesians 4:3

¹⁰Ephesians 4:29;

James 4:11

¹¹Hebrews 10:24-25

¹²James 5:16

¹³1 Thessalonians 5:14

¹⁴Colossians 3:13

¹⁵Galatians 6:1

¹⁶Romans 15:14

¹⁷1 Peter 4:10

¹⁸Colossians 3:16

¹⁹Ephesians 4:12-13

²⁰Matthew 28:18-20

²¹2 Corinthians 5:20

²²2 Corinthians 9:7;

1 Corinthians 16:2

²³Philippians 1:27

²⁴Philippians 2:14-15

Article VI. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended or repealed at a regular or specially called business meeting in the following manner:

- A. An amendment must be proposed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors;
- B. The proposed amendment(s) must be made available to Church members at least thirty (30) days before the business meeting at which ratification will be sought;

- C. If ratification of the amendment will be sought at a specially called business meeting, then the Church members must be provided the date of such meeting at least thirty (30) days in advance; and

- D. The amendment must be ratified by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the voting Church members in attendance with a quorum of at least 40 active Church members present.

BYLAWS OF SWIFT CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Article I. OFFICES

Section 1. Principal Office

The principal office of Swift Creek Baptist Church ("Church") is located at 7511 North Spring Run Road in Midlothian, Virginia 23112. The Church members, by majority vote, may change the location of the principal office.

Section 2. Other Offices

Other Church offices may be established by a duly called majority vote of the Church members.

Article II. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. General

Swift Creek Baptist Church ("Church") is an autonomous and democratic Baptist Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this Church. It recognizes and supports the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which exists among Baptist Churches.

Section 2. Reception of Members

Recognizing that the membership of this Church is composed of such persons who have accepted and confessed Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, have been immersed in accordance with the example and command of our Lord, have affirmed the tenants of this Church's Constitution and Bylaws, and have been received into the fellowship of the Church; any person may apply for membership in any of the following ways at any service where an invitation to membership is extended:

1. By profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior, as a candidate for baptism.
2. By promise of letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church of like faith and order.
3. By statement of Christian faith, followed by baptism where applicable.
4. By restoration to membership of those who for some reason have been dropped from the roll of this Church.

Each person who applies for Church membership will have a conversation with a member of the Deacon Ministry Team or the Pastoral Staff, in order to share their personal testimony and have any questions about the Church answered. Candidates for membership will be voted upon and received into the fellowship by the Deacon Ministry Team. Their names will be announced by the Senior Pastor or Chairman of the Deacon Ministry Team or the Church Clerk at a Church business meeting

Section 3. Commitment

Each new member is expected to become familiar with and believe the Statement of Faith. Each new member is expected to attend the New Member's Class. Each member is expected to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life; to attend regularly the worship services of this Church; to give financial support to the Church and its causes; to share in its organized ministries; to enter into its covenant; and to actively offer their gifts for the use of the body as empowered by the Holy Spirit. The Church is not just a social organization, but first a family and then a ministry.

Section 4. Voting Rights of Members

All active members of the Church are entitled to vote at all elections and on all business matters submitted to the Church provided the members are present at the Church during the election and age sixteen (16) or older. Voting by proxy is prohibited. A member may be considered an inactive member if they have not supported the work of the Church or failed to attend regular worship services or Sunday School classes for a period of two (2) years. Voting privileges and percentages are as follows:

1. Annual Budget and any amendments thereto – majority vote
2. Election of at-large members of the Board or other Church Officers – majority vote
3. Dissolving of all, or substantially all, of the Church assets – 2/3 vote
4. Acquisition or sale of real property, and/or building projects and related indebtedness – 2/3 vote
5. Amendments to the Church Bylaws – 3/4 vote
6. Calling or removing of the Senior Pastor – 3/4 vote
7. Calling of all pastoral staff – 3/4 vote
8. Removal of members pursuant to Article II, Section 5, subsection 5 – majority vote
9. Any other event or decision not otherwise delineated herein requiring a vote by the Church – majority vote unless otherwise provided.

Section 5. Termination of Membership

Membership in this Church may be terminated in any of the following ways:

1. By death.
2. By transfer to another Baptist Church. Members shall be transferred by letter at their request to unite with a Baptist Church of like faith and order. Upon approval at any business meeting of the Church, such letter shall be forwarded to the Senior Pastor or clerk of specified Church.
3. By dismissal upon joining another faith or denomination; in such cases, letters of recommendation may be sent if requested.
4. Upon request by a member in good standing to be released from their covenant obligations to this Church, but only after patient and kind endeavor to secure the continuance of their fellowship.
5. By removal should a member become a hindrance to the work of the Church by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, but only after patient and loving counsel, and after all efforts to bring the member to repentance have been exhausted. The Deacons shall consider these requests for termination of membership or action thereon, and make recommendations to the Church.

Section 6. Obligations and Responsibilities of Members

1. The conduct of all members shall be in accordance with the standards of Christ as taught in the New Testament.
2. Unless providentially hindered, all members are expected to give their financial support to the Church as led by the Lord.
3. If a member moves from the Church community, it is their responsibility to join another Church in that community as soon as possible, and have their letter transferred to that Church.
4. Members must work to fulfill the direction set by the Senior Pastor.

Section 7. Church Discipline

A. Church members who exhibit a continuing unrepentant lifestyle of sin in regard to doctrine or conduct shall be dealt with according to the biblical process of church discipline. This is always to be done for the ultimate goals of glorifying God, purifying the Church, and restoring the individual.

B. The first step in this process shall be for fervent continual prayer to be made on behalf of the member in sin by the one who has knowledge of the sin (James 5:16-20). It shall also be the responsibility of any member of the Church who has knowledge of a member's heresy and/or misconduct to reprove and seek to correct and restore the member in private (Matthew 18:15; Galatians 6:1). If the member repents, and seeks forgiveness, the matter shall be closed and the member considered restored.

C. If the member does not repent, the reprovng member shall make one or two other members aware of the offense and go with these witnesses to again reprove and seek

to correct and restore (Matthew 18:16).

D. If the member in sin still refuses to heed to the reproof, then it shall be brought to the attention of the Chairman of the Deacon Ministry Team, who will direct a committee of deacons to reprove and seek reformation and restoration of the member. If this fails, the committee of deacons will make a recommendation to the full Deacon Ministry Team for consideration.

E. If the Deacon Ministry Team determines that withdrawal of Church membership and fellowship is appropriate the Chairman of the Deacon Ministry Team will inform the Senior Pastor, and, if he agrees, make a recommendation to remove the unrepentant member from Church membership and fellowship, which will be taken to the Church membership at the next business meeting.

F. Once Church membership and fellowship is withdrawn, the individual is to be treated as an unbeliever (Matthew 18:17).

G. If at any time during the process of church discipline the member in sin repents, seeks forgiveness and is restored, the process will cease.

H. Disciplinary action shall cease upon notification that a member under discipline has requested withdrawal of membership. In such cases, the Church will be informed at the next regular business meeting (Matthew 18:17).

I. If after removal of Church membership and fellowship, the former member repents, seeks forgiveness, is restored, and seeks renewal of membership and fellowship, he or she shall be joyfully received as a candidate for membership.

J. These actions shall be carried out with a gentle, loving and humble servant attitude with sensitivity to God's timing, and with the ultimate goals of glorifying God, purifying the Church and restoring the individual.

K. The underlying objective of church discipline is never to punish or banish but to comfort, reprove, correct and restore.

Article III. MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

We believe that the term 'marriage' has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all members as well as all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church.

Article IV. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. General Powers

Subject to the authority of the congregation, the corporate powers of the Church shall be exercised by or under the authority of the Board of Directors, also referred to in these bylaws as the "Board," for the sole purpose of overseeing the legal, business, financial and administrative affairs of the Church.

Section 2. Board Members

There shall be seven (7) Directors on the Board who shall include the Senior Pastor, Senior Associate Pastor, Chairman of the Deacon Ministry Team and the Chairmen of the Stewardship and Personnel Ministry Teams, and two other Church members nominated by the Senior Pastor and elected by the Church members for up to a three (1)-year terms. The two (2) at-large Board Members shall be nominated by the Senior Pastor and voted on by Church members at a business meeting. With the exception of the Senior Pastor and Senior Associate Pastor, no Board Member shall serve more than three (3) consecutive one (1)-year terms (3 years total) and may not be reelected until at least one annual election has intervened. The at-large Board Members shall strive to rotate on a staggered basis. The Board shall elect annually from its members a secretary to give notices of meetings and record the minutes.

Section 3. Vacancies, Resignation and Removal

A non-Pastoral vacancy on the Board because of death, resignation, removal or any other cause shall be filled by nomination of respective Ministry Team/Pastor and election by majority of the members of the Board for the remainder of the term. Any Board member may at any time deliver a written notice of intent to resign to the Senior Pastor, which shall be effective upon the date specified in the notice or upon receipt by the Senior Pastor, whichever is later. Other than the Senior Pastor and Senior Associate Pastor, any Officer or Director may be removed at any time with cause when, in the sole judgment and discretion of the Board, it is so recommended by a three-quarters (3/4) majority of the Board.

Section 4. Transactions with Interested Parties

A contract or other transaction between the Church and one or more of its Board Members, Pastors, Officers, Deacons or family members thereof (hereinafter "Interested Party"), or between the Church and any other entity, of which one or more of the Church or its Board Members, Pastors or Officers are also Interested Parties, or in which entity is an Interested Party, has a financial interest, shall be voidable at the sole election of the Church unless all of the following provisions are satisfied:

- i) The Church entered into the transaction for its own benefit;
- ii) The transaction was fair and reasonable as to the Church, or was in furtherance of its exempt purposes at the time the Church entered into the transaction;
- iii) Prior to consummating the transaction, or any part, the Board authorized or approved the transaction, in good faith, by a vote of a majority of the Directors then in office, without counting the vote of the interested Director or Directors, and with knowledge of the material facts concerning the transaction and the Interested Parties' interest in the transaction; and
- iv) Prior to authorizing or approving the transaction, the Board, in good faith, determined after reasonable investigation and consideration, that either the Church could not have obtained a more advantageous arrangement, with reasonable effort under the circumstances, or the transaction was in furtherance of the Church's tax-exempt purposes.

Interested Board Members may not be counted in determining the presence of a quorum at a meeting of the Board (or a committee thereof) which authorizes, approves or ratifies such contract or transaction. Notwithstanding the above, no loan should be made by the Church to any of its Board Members, Pastors, Officers, Deacons or Members.

Section 5. No Compensation for Directors

No salary or compensation shall be paid to any member of the Board in their capacity as Member of the Board, but nothing herein shall be construed to preclude any Board Member from serving the Church in any other capacity and receiving reasonable compensation. Moreover, the Board member may receive reasonable reimbursement

for travel and other approved expenses upon request and written documentation.

Section 6. Quorum of Board

At least five (5) Board Members shall constitute a quorum for purposes of transacting business at a meeting. Every action taken or decision made by a majority of the Board shall be deemed to be the act of the Board Members.

Section 7. Action without Meeting

Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board Members may be taken without a meeting, if all of the Board Members, individually, or collectively, consent in writing to the action. Such action by written consent shall have the same force and effect as the unanimous vote of the Board Members. Such written consent or consents shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board Members.

Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the act of the majority of the Directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board.

Section 8. Participation by Conference Telephone/Webcam

Members of the Board of Directors or of any committee thereof may participate in a meeting of such Board or committee by means of a conference telephone, webcam or similar communications equipment whereby all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at such meeting. When such a meeting is conducted by means of a conference telephone, webcam or similar communications equipment, a written record shall be made of the action taken at such meeting, noting participation of those who were present by means of such communications equipment, and waiver of face to face appearance.

Section 9. Board Committees/Teams

The Board may appoint two or more persons from among its number and other members to serve on special Board Committees or Teams, such as the Board may determine are necessary, which shall have such powers and duties as shall from time to time be prescribed by the Board. Except as otherwise provided by law, the Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws or by a Resolution of the Board, each Board Committee or Team may not exercise the authority of the Board.

Section 10. Church Operating Manual

The Board may maintain a Church operating manual detailing the operation of the various ministries, committees and ministry teams, as well as their respective

responsibilities and duties.

ARTICLE V. OFFICERS OF CHURCH CORPORATION

The Church shall have at least three (3) officers. The Senior Pastor shall serve as President. The Chairman of the Deacons shall serve as Vice President. One of the remaining officers shall be the Secretary, which shall be elected by the Board, and such other officers as the Board may appoint by majority vote of the Board.

Section 1. Senior Pastor/President

It shall be the duty of the Senior Pastor to give special attention to the spiritual and physical needs of the members (1 Peter 5:2–3), preach God’s Word (2 Timothy 4:1–5), administer the ordinances of the New Testament, serve as an ex-officio member of all committees, serve as president of the Church corporation and moderator of all Board meetings, and perform any other duties incumbent upon his office (1 Timothy 3:1).

Section 2. Vice President

In the event the Church is without a Senior Pastor, the Vice President shall serve as moderator for Board meetings. Furthermore, in the event there is no Chairman of the Deacons, the Senior Associate Pastor shall serve as the moderator.

Section 3. Secretary

The Secretary is elected annually by the members of the Board. The duties of the Secretary shall include keeping Board member rolls, sending notices of Board member meetings and recording the minutes.

ARTICLE VI. LEADERSHIP TEAM

Section 1. Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor is responsible for leading the Church to function as a New Testament Church. The Senior Pastor will guide the congregation, the organizations and the Church staff to perform their tasks. The Senior Pastor shall seek, with God’s direction, to perform all the duties of his office faithfully, to preach at the scheduled worship services, to direct teaching and prayer ministries, and to administer the

Ordinances of the Church as commanded in the New Testament. The Senior Pastor shall faithfully study and meditate so as to perform these functions. As leader of pastoral ministries, the Senior Pastor shall work closely with the Ministry Teams to: (a) lead the Church in the performance of its duties; (b) guide the Church membership in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, and ministry; (c) lead in the proclamation of the gospel; and (d) lead the Church in the care for the sick, elderly, and troubled members of the Church and others in the community.

As the need to fill a Senior Pastor vacancy arises, the Deacon Ministry Team shall develop an Interim Plan, which may include Pulpit Supply, a Transitional Pastor, or an Interim Pastor, to serve the Church until the position of Senior Pastor has been filled. If the Interim Plan calls for a temporary pastor, the Deacon Ministry Team will create an Interim Search Team to recommend a Pastoral candidate for approval by the Deacon Ministry Team. The Deacon Ministry Team shall also recommend a Pastoral Search Team, along with Chairman and Vice Chairman designations, to the church for approval. The Pastoral Search Team shall have at least seven (7) members and two (2) alternates. This search team will then bring a Pastoral recommendation to the Church for a decision.

The Deacon Ministry Team, having consulted with the Personnel Ministry Team, has the responsibility to recommend termination if this becomes necessary. It is understood that these conditions would represent a severe deviation from the teachings of the Bible as found in the Statement of Faith, a consistent failure to accomplish assigned duties, or for illegal/immoral/unethical acts. A vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the active Deacon Ministry Team shall be necessary to present such action to the Church. The Chairman of the Deacons shall announce the motion to the congregation at least one week prior to holding the vote. Once the meeting is called, no amendment to the motion or any other motions will be accepted. A quorum for this meeting will be defined as 10% of the average worship attendance from the previous month. This quorum must be present to proceed with the vote, and a three-fourths (3/4) majority conducted by written ballot must be achieved in order to remove the Senior Pastor.

Section 2. Other Pastors

The Church shall call such other Pastors as the membership shall authorize; such as Education Pastor, Worship Pastor, Senior Associate Pastor, Student Pastor, etc. As the need for such persons arises, the Personnel Ministry Team and Senior Pastor shall search for a suitable candidate and bring its recommendation to the Church for action.

Section 3. Deacons

The Church shall elect the necessary number of deacons needed to fulfill the responsibilities set forth in the Deacon's Manual. The qualifications of a deacon are set forth in Acts 6:1-7 and 1Timothy 3:8-13. A deacon should read and be willing to

accept, without reservation, the Church Covenant and the Statement of Faith as stated in the Constitution, Article III.

He must support the scheduled worship services of the Church, in accordance with the New Testament. Deacons are to be servants of the Church, working closely with the Senior Pastor to minister to the needs of Church members and other persons in the community and to lead the Church in its endeavors of worship, witness, education, ministry, and Christian living.

The term of each deacon shall be three (3) years, and no deacon shall be eligible for reelection for at least one (1) year after the expiration of each term of service. The Chairman of the deacons has the authority to request inactive, but ordained deacons, to participate in capacities as needed to serve the congregation of Swift Creek Baptist Church. This would include allowing a deacon who just completed a three (3) year term to assist as needed. However, voting rights at deacon meetings would be reserved for deacons serving a three (3) year term authorized by congregational election. To be eligible to serve, a man must be twenty-one (21) years of age, never been divorced and have been a member of the Church for at least one (1) year. The deacons shall begin their terms in September. In case of a vacancy created by death, resignation, or otherwise, the Church may elect a deacon to fill the unexpired term. The beginning of the term for these Deacons (brought onto the Deacon Ministry Team during mid-year) will revert to the previous September. This selection process will utilize the procedure for the election of deacons as outlined for yearly election. An ordination service will be planned for anyone selected who has not been previously ordained.

The officers of the Deacons, all of whom shall be members of the Church in full fellowship and active deacons, shall be the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary. The election of these officers shall take place each year in September at the time of the adding of the new deacons and the election for these officers shall be done by the Deacon Ministry Team.

Procedure for the election of Deacons by the Congregation

1. Annually, and/or at any other time deemed necessary by the leadership of the Deacon Ministry Team, the Deacon Ministry Team shall begin the Deacon selection process. The Deacon Ministry Team will determine the number of Deacons needed based on the responsibilities set forth in the Deacon's Manual. Consideration shall be made to anticipate Church growth throughout the year. Nominations are submitted to the current Deacon Ministry Team by Church members. Upon review of the nominees, and after considering input from the Pastoral Staff, provided there is no reason found to disqualify a candidate, the candidates will be contacted by mail and invited to a prospective deacons meeting led by the Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Deacon Ministry Team. If upon receipt of the letter the nominee is interested in being considered as a deacon, he shall attend the meeting.

2. At this meeting led by the Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Deacon Ministry Team, the prospective deacons will be advised of what is to be expected of him as a Deacon at Swift Creek Baptist Church. Those who, after hearing what is expected, believe that they meet the qualifications for deacon and that God is leading them to be further considered, are given a Deacon questionnaire. This questionnaire is to be taken with them for their prayerful consideration. Sometime following the meeting two existing deacons will be scheduled to meet with each prospective deacon to review and to pick up the completed questionnaire. After considering candidates' qualifications for deacon, answers to their questionnaire, and prospective meetings with the Senior Pastor and Deacons, final nominations will be presented to the congregation. From this list of candidates, the congregation will vote to fill the number of positions needed at a quarterly business meeting.

Section 4. Clerk

The Nominating Ministry Team shall nominate and the Church elect a Clerk at a business meeting who will serve for a period of one year and can serve consecutive terms. With the approval of the Senior Pastor, appropriate clerical duties of the Clerk may be delegated to Church staff as needed. The Clerk shall be an actively participating Church member. The Clerk is responsible for the following duties:

1. Attend or be represented at all Church business meetings, prepare an agenda, keep the meeting minutes, present minutes for approval and give a membership report.
2. Maintain a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, demission or death, together with a record of baptisms.
3. Keep accurate records of all official actions of the Church.
4. Record letters of transfer or dismissal as authorized by the Church.
5. Sign papers requiring the signature of the Clerk.

All official Church records are property of the Church and shall be kept in the Church office.

The Clerk can be removed with or without cause by a majority vote of Church members. In the case of an unanticipated vacancy, the Nominating Team will present a qualifying candidate for Church approval at the next business meeting.

Section 5. Moderator

The Nominating Ministry Team shall nominate and the Church elect a Moderator and Vice Moderator who will serve for a period of one year and can serve consecutive terms, and shall preside at all Church business meetings. The Moderator and Vice Moderator shall be actively participating Church members. The Vice Moderator shall

serve in the absence of the Moderator. In the absence of both the Moderator and Vice Moderator, the Clerk shall call the Church to order and an acting moderator shall be elected for that meeting. The Moderator shall not be the Chairman of any Ministry Team.

Article VII. CHURCH STAFF

Additional staff may be employed as needed in accordance with Church personnel procedures. Such persons shall work under the supervision of the Senior Pastor or such other person as he may delegate. A personnel manual shall be maintained to provide instruction and guidance on workplace expectations.

Article VIII. CHURCH MINISTRIES

The Church shall maintain ministries that accomplish the purpose of the Church. All Church ministries shall be under the supervision of a Senior Pastor, staff members or ministry leaders. Ministry leaders shall give updates and reports as needed. The Senior Pastor or his designee shall have meetings with ministry leaders and ministry teams as necessary.

Article IX. STANDING MINISTRY TEAMS AND COORDINATING GROUPS

All Standing Ministry Team members must be members of the Church and recommended by the Nominating Team. Standing Ministry Team members will serve on a three year rotation period and be eligible for reelection only after a lapse of one year. Only one third of any Standing Ministry Team will rotate off in a given year. Standing Ministry Teams should have at least six (6) active members. All other coordinating groups and volunteer leaders shall be appointed by the Pastoral Staff. They too will serve on a three year rotation period and be eligible to return only after a lapse of one year. The following list of Standing Ministry Teams is only a partial list; other Standing Ministry Teams can be added or deleted when need arises by recommendation of the Nominating Ministry Team and voted on by the Church.

Section 1. Nominating Ministry Team

The Nominating Ministry Team receives recommendations from the Pastoral Staff for the staffing of all Standing Ministry Teams (and their respective Chairmen and Vice Chairmen) and recommends persons for such positions to be elected by the Church. The members of the Nominating Ministry Team will be nominated by Pastoral Staff, approved by the Deacon Ministry Team, and elected by the Church. The Church office will maintain and make available upon request a complete list of all Standing Ministry Teams and other coordinating groups.

Section 2. Personnel Ministry Team

The Personnel Ministry Team assists the Church and Senior Pastor in matters pertaining to employed personnel. Its work includes recommending pastoral staff needs to the Church; writing job descriptions; recommending employment, salaries, benefits, and personnel services except as stated in these Bylaws. All salaries, except for the Senior Pastor's salary, will be established by the Senior Pastor, and the Personnel Ministry Team and Stewardship Ministry Team shall review and approve budget allocations for staff salaries. The Senior Pastor's salary will be set by the Pastoral Search Team when he is hired. His performance and potential salary increases will be reviewed annually by the Chairman of the Personnel Ministry Team, the Chairman of the Deacon Ministry Team, and the Chairman of the Stewardship Ministry Team. The Personnel Ministry Team will also assist the Senior Pastor in handling the dismissal of any Associate Pastor or other church staff in accordance with established guidelines maintained in the Personnel Manual.

Section 3. Stewardship Ministry Team

The Stewardship Ministry Team is responsible for providing oversight and accountability regarding the receiving and spending of all funds donated to the Church. The Stewardship Ministry Team is also responsible for reviewing and presenting the annual budget to the Church for approval, encouraging good stewardship among the members, and providing oversight for the administration of the budget adopted by the Church. The Stewardship Ministry Team will arrange for an independent audit of the Church's financial records as needed but at a minimum an audit should occur at least every five years.

Section 4. Missions Ministry Team

The Missions Ministry Team shall assist the Senior Pastor in developing policies to guide and direct the mission endeavors of the Church. The Missions Ministry Team will also work with the Senior Pastor to provide and promote opportunities for Church members to reach our Jerusalem (local missions), Judea and Samaria (state and national missions) and the ends of the Earth (international missions). The Missions Ministry Team will also assist in promoting the annual World Missions Offering.

Article X. CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1. Church Budget

The Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff, Directors of various ministries and Team Chairmen shall prepare and submit an Annual Budget to the Stewardship Ministry Team for review and oversight. Once the budget is approved, the Stewardship Ministry Team will

present it to the Church for approval at a business meeting prior to the end of the year.

Section 2. Accounting Procedures

The Stewardship Ministry Team shall have the responsibility for a system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds. The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

Section 3. Fundraising

Love Offerings for guest speakers or programs may be collected at the discretion of the Senior Pastor. There shall be no fundraising allowed without the approval of the Pastoral Staff and Stewardship Ministry Team. Fundraising should be limited to Swift Creek's mission activities.

Article XI. ORDINANCES

The ordinances of this Church shall be Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship at any service by the Senior Pastor or whomever he or the Church shall authorize.

Article XII. WORSHIP MEETINGS

The Swift Creek Baptist Church shall meet each Sunday for preaching, instruction, evangelism and for the worship of Almighty God. These meetings shall be open for the entire membership of the Church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the Senior Pastor.

Article XIII. BUSINESS MEETINGS

Roberts Rules of Order, Revised is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure at all business meetings of the Church.

Section 1. Regular Business Meetings

Regular business meetings shall be held quarterly at a time and date set by the Pastoral Staff.

Section 2. Special Business Meetings

The Senior Pastor, or Moderator in absence of the Senior Pastor, may, and shall when requested by the Deacons or a Standing Ministry Team, call from the pulpit a special business meeting. A public announcement of the time and purpose of the meeting

shall be made in the regular Sunday morning services at least two (2) Sundays prior to the date of the meeting. In addition, written notice of the subject, date, time and location of such meeting of the Church shall be given in order to have a specially called business meeting. The business transacted at a special meeting shall be limited to the stated purposes of the meeting, and shall be provided to the body in advance for the purpose of individual prayer, meditation and fasting to obtain God's direction.

Section 3. Quorum

In all Church business meetings, not less than 40 voting members shall constitute a quorum.

Article XIV. INDEMNIFICATION AND ELIMINATION OF LIABILITY

Section 1. Indemnification of Agents

Except as otherwise provided in this Article, the Church shall indemnify every individual made a party to a proceeding because he or she is or was an agent of the Church against liability incurred in any proceeding if: (i) he or she conducted himself or herself in good faith; and (ii) he or she believed, in the case of conduct in his or her official capacity with the Church, that his or her conduct was in its best interests (or in the case of conduct with respect to an employee benefit plan, that his or her conduct was for a purpose he or she believed to be in the interests of the participants and beneficiaries of the plan); and (iii) in the case of any criminal proceeding, he or she had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

Section 2. Indemnification Not Permitted

The Church shall not indemnify any agent (i) against his or her willful misconduct or a knowing violation of the criminal law; (ii) in connection with a proceeding by or in the right of the corporation in which the agent was adjudged to be liable to the Church; or (iii) in connection with any other proceeding charging improper personal benefit to him or her, regardless of whether such action was performed in his or her official capacity, in which he or she was adjudged to be liable on the basis that personal benefit was improperly received by him or her.

Section 3. Effect of Judgment of Conviction

The termination of a proceeding by judgment, order, settlement or conviction is not, of itself, determinative that an individual did not meet the standard of conduct set forth in Section 1 of this Article or that the conduct of such individual constituted willful misconduct or a knowing violation of the criminal law.

Section 4. Determination and Authorization

Unless ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction, any indemnification under Section 1 of this Article shall be made by the Church only as authorized in the specific case upon a determination (as provided for below) that indemnification of the individual is permissible in the circumstances because: (i) he or she met the standards of conduct set forth in these Bylaws and any future amendments; and (ii) the conduct of such individual did not constitute willful misconduct or a knowing violation of the criminal law.

(A) Such determination shall be made by the Board of Directors by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the Directors not at the time parties to the proceeding.

(B) Authorization of indemnification, evaluation as to reasonableness of expenses, and determination and authorization of advancements for expenses shall be made in the same manner as the determination that indemnification is permissible.

Section 5. Advance for Expenses

The Church may pay for or reimburse the reasonable expenses (including but not limited to reasonable attorneys' fees) incurred by any individual who is a party to a proceeding in advance of final disposition of the proceeding if: (i) he or she furnishes the Church a written statement of his or her good faith belief that he or she met the standard of conduct described in Section 1 of this Article and a written undertaking, executed personally or on his or her behalf, to repay the advance if it is ultimately determined that indemnification of such individual in the specific case is not permissible; and (ii) a determination is made that the facts then known to those making the determination would not preclude indemnification under this Article. An undertaking furnished to the Church in accordance with the provisions of this Section shall be an unlimited general obligation of the individual furnishing the same but need not be secured and may be accepted by the Church without reference to financial ability to make repayment.

Section 6. Provisions not Exclusive

As authorized by the Virginia Non-Stock Corporation Act, the provisions of this Article are in addition to and not in limitation of the specific powers of a church to indemnify agents set forth therein. If any provision of this Article shall be adjudicated invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, such adjudication shall not be deemed to invalidate or otherwise effect any other provision hereof or any power of indemnity which the Church may have under the Virginia Non-Stock Corporation Act or other laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Article XV. DISSOLUTION AND WINDING DOWN

Section 1. Dissolution

A resolution for dissolution of the corporation shall be initiated by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors. The Church membership must be given at least thirty (30) days advance notice to vote on a resolution for dissolution. Dissolution of the corporation shall only be authorized if the called meeting has a quorum and at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members at the meeting vote in favor of the dissolution.

Section 2. Winding Down

In the event of dissolution of the Church corporation, the proceeds and assets shall be transferred to Swift Creek Baptist Church as if the Church were never incorporated. In that event, the Church may select Trustees to hold title to land and the Church real property should be transferred to the Trustees.

If upon dissolution of the Church corporation Swift Creek Baptist Church ceases to exist as an unincorporated entity, then the proceeds shall be used for a non-profit organization chosen by the membership by a majority vote that meets the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code § 501(c)(3).

Article XVI. AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended or repealed at a regular or specially called business meeting in the following manner:

- A. An amendment must be proposed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors;
- B. The proposed amendment(s) must be made available to Church members at least thirty (30) days before the business meeting at which ratification will be sought;
- C. If ratification of the amendment will be sought at a specially called business meeting, then the Church members must be provided the date of such meeting at least thirty (30) days in advance; and
- D. The amendment must be ratified by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the voting Church members in attendance with a quorum of at least 40 active Church members present.

I, the undersigned Clerk of Swift Creek Baptist Church, do hereby certify that the above Constitution and Bylaws were adopted on June 28, 2015 by the members at a duly called meeting and that this Constitution and Bylaws are current and in operation as of

that time.

s/Mike Monroe _____
Church Clerk

June 28, 2015 _____
Date

Original Constitution & Bylaws Committee

Jerry Long
Braxton Morgan
Wayne Rackley
Charlotte Perkins

Bylaws Review Team established December 2013

Shane Dowdy
Keith Martin
Mike Monroe
Charlotte Perkins
Bruce Simms