

Constitution & Bylaws for The Church at Chelsea-Westover

Preamble

This Constitution and Bylaws are made to:

1. Preserve and secure the principles of our faith.
2. Preserve the peace and unity of the fellowship of the church.
3. Ensure autonomy and independence from any religious body or organization.
4. Provide for orderly conduct of internal affairs.

I. Name

The name of this church shall be *The Church at Chelsea-Westover*. It shall be affiliated with the Shelby County Baptist Association, Alabama Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

II. Principle Location

The address of the principal office of this church shall be 11063 Hwy 280, Westover, AL 35147.

III. Vision, Mission, & Core Values

1. Our vision is to be a gospel-centered, community church for all generations.
The Church at Chelsea-Westover: "sharing the good news with all generations."
2. Our mission is to have a great commitment to a great commandment. We endeavor to love God, to love people, and to serve the community at home and abroad. Luke 10:27
3. Our core values include: clear Biblical truth, intimate fellowship, vibrant worship, and fulfilling service.

IV. Articles of Faith

In simple terms, the CCW believes the following:

1. We believe in one God, eternally existent as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
2. We believe that the Bible, composed of the Old and New Testaments, is God's inspired and infallible Word, and is the supreme standard and final authority for all conduct, faith, and doctrine.
3. We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father and in His premillennial, personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God, but by willful transgression became sinful and is justly under the condemnation and wrath of Almighty God.

5. We believe that the only salvation for this guilt and condemnation is through faith in the righteousness and atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that this salvation is the free gift of God's love and grace.
6. We believe in the person of the Holy Spirit and that His ministry is to reveal Christ to men, to convict of sin, to regenerate repentant sinners and by His presence and power, to sanctify the lives of the redeemed.
7. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted the ordinances of baptism and communion; that baptism is only to be administered upon profession of faith in Christ, by immersion, thereby declaring our faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior; that communion is only for believers, is to be preceded by faithful self-examination, and is in remembrance of the Lord's death until He comes.
8. We believe that a New Testament Church is a body of believers, baptized by immersion, associated for worship, service, and the spread of the gospel of the grace of God to all the world.
9. We believe that there will be a resurrection of the just and the unjust; the just having been redeemed by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be with Him throughout eternity in heaven; the unjust, having died unrepentant and unreconciled to God to eternal condemnation in hell.

The CCW also supports the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 (<http://www.sbc.net/bfm/bfm2000.asp>)

A. 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.

B. 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.

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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 Savior, 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.

C. 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 inherits 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.

D. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, 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.

1. 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 Savior.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

E. 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.

F. 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.

G. 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 and to the Lord's Supper.

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.

H. 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; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

I. 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; I Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; I Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

J. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. 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; I Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; I Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; I Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; I John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

K. 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; I Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; I Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

L. 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.

M. 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 debt 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.

N. 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.

O. 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.

P. 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.

Q. 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.

R. 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.

V. Government

The government of *The Church at Chelsea-Westover* is vested in its pastor, church council and members. The church retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of its life and organization. It recognizes the need for mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches. This church will cooperate with and mutually work with Shelby County Baptist Association, Alabama Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

VI. Covenant of Membership

The Covenant of Membership of the Church at Chelsea-Westover is as follows:

1. Realizing my guilt before God, I have confessed my sin to Him, and have received the Lord Jesus Christ, who bore my sins on the cross as my personal Savior (see Romans 3:19, 23, 5:8, John 1:12)
2. I acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord of all my life, and seek to confess Him as such before others by the testimony both of life and lip (see Romans 10:9, 2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

3. I trust in the power of the Holy Spirit, who lives in my heart, to keep me, guide me, and lead me in the way of purity and holiness (see John 14:26, 16:13, Romans 8:2-4, Galatians 5:14-15)
4. I accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God, and my final authority in all matters of faith and practice (see 2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21).
5. I recognize my responsibility by tithes and offerings to extend the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ both at home and abroad (see Malachi 3:8-10, 1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 9:7).
6. I recognize my responsibility to pray regularly for the work of this church, for its pastors, officers, and members, that the witness of all concerned may be to the glory of God and to the salvation of souls (see Ephesians 6:18-19, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 25).
7. I recognize my responsibility to be regular in my attendance at the services of the church and at the Lord's Table (see Acts 2:42, Hebrews 10:25, 1 Corinthians 11:26).
8. I have been baptized by immersion, in obedience to my Lord's command, thus signifying my union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (see Matthew 28:19-20, Romans 6:4)
9. I have read the Articles of Faith as contained in the Constitution and Bylaws and am in complete agreement (see 1 Timothy 6:12, 2 Timothy 4:7, Jude 3)
10. Recognizing my inability in my own strength to adhere to the terms or any covenant, yet believing that my Lord will enable me to fulfill the terms of this Covenant, I gladly confirm each of the above clauses (Philippians 4:13).

VII. Nonprofit Status and Liquidation

This church is not organized for profit. In the event of liquidation or dissolution of the church all of its assets and property of every nature and description whatsoever shall be paid over and transferred to another non-profit gospel ministry at the direction of the Church Council.

VIII. Amendment

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended provided the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing at a church business meeting and then circulated to the membership. Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws shall be two-thirds vote of members of the church who are qualified to vote and are present in the business meeting with a quorum to discuss and vote for this matter.

BYLAWS

I. Church Membership

A. Rights and Responsibilities:

1. Membership of *The Church at Chelsea-Westover* shall be based on a covenant relationship. Membership will consist of people who have made a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and who, having been scripturally baptized by immersion, are in agreement with the Articles of Faith, and the Covenant of Membership of the church.
2. Members in good standing shall have the right and privileges to full participation in the life and work of the church. Voting privileges are limited to members over the age of 17 and who are abiding by the church covenant. Church members shall approve the budget annually, any revisions to the Constitution and Bylaws, and the selection of the pastor.
3. It shall be the duty of church members to uphold the Articles of Faith, the Constitution and Bylaws, and the Covenant of Membership of the Church.

B. Process of Becoming a Church Member:

Membership in the church may be attained by completion of the Covenant Class, committing to the Church Covenant, and recommendation by the Church Council or Pastor.

C. Termination:

Membership in this church shall be terminated when a member:

1. Requests a letter of transfer to join another church.
2. Requests removal from the membership.
3. Dies.
4. Is dismissed by a vote of the Church Council due to reasons and circumstances supported by Biblical principles of church discipline. The pastor and deacons will do all they can to counsel the member for restoration prior to action of dismissal or a request of the member to be dismissed from the church membership.

II. Church Officers

All church officers must be members of the church in good standing. A church officer may be removed from service by the Church Council on Biblical grounds with a majority vote of the Council.

A. The Pastor:

1. The qualifications for pastor shall be consistent with those listed in I Timothy 3:1-7. His training, skills, and experiences are appropriate for this area of leadership.
2. His responsibilities:
 - (a) These generally fall into the following areas: Preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes.
 - (b) He shall lead the church, the organizations, and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.

(c) The pastor shall be an ex officio member of all church standing committees, except the Pastor's Selection Committee.

3. Call:

- (a) A pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs.
- (b) A Pastor's Selection Committee shall be appointed by the church to seek out a suitable pastor and this committee's recommendation will serve as a nomination.
- (c) The Pastor's Selection Committee will recommend only one candidate at a time.
- (d) The pastor's election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week notice shall be given to the members.
- (e) An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those present is necessary for a choice.

4. Terms of Service:

- (a) The chosen pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the church. In either case, at least sixty (60) days' notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.
- (b) There shall be a written mutual contract/agreement made between the pastor and the church.

B. Church Staff:

This church shall employ or call staff as it shall need.

- 1. Staff members other than that of the pastor shall be recommended for employment by the pastor and/or Church Council.
- 2. A written job description and mutual contract/agreement will be prepared when the need for church staff is determined.

C. Deacons:

1. Qualifications:

- (a) A church deacon must meet the qualifications listed in I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6.
- (b) A deacon shall demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family, and public life; be a committed Christian leader and partner of the pastor; support and promote the church's faith and ministries.

2. Ordination:

- (a) Selection, election, and ordination of deacons is a privilege of the local church.
- (b) Godly candidates will be recommended to the Church Council for consideration. After examination by the Church Council, newly selected deacons will be presented to the church for affirmation.

3. Duties:

- (a) A chairman of the Deacons shall be appointed by the pastor and affirmed by the other deacons.

- (b) Deacons serve as a committee of counsel to assist the pastor concerning the administration and ministry of the church.
- (c) Assist the pastor in administering the church ordinances.
- (d) In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the deacons shall serve as an advisory member to all organizations, departments, and committees of the church.

D. Moderator:

1. The church moderator may be the pastor or his appointee.
2. The moderator shall preside at all regular and called business meetings of the church.
3. In the absence of the moderator, the chairman of deacons shall preside at the regular and called business meetings of the church.
4. In the absence of the moderator and the chairman of deacons, the church administrator shall call the church to order..

E. Clerk:

1. The church clerk shall be appointed by the pastor and be responsible for keeping an accurate record of all business meeting transactions of the church and preparing the annual report to the association.
2. He or she shall keep a register of the names and addresses of the church members, with dates of admission, dismissal, dedication of children, and deaths of members of the church family.
3. He or she shall keep a register of salvation decisions and baptisms, as well as document church attendance.
4. He or she shall issue letters of dismissal, write letters of transfer of membership, prepare written reports of the church, and keep an accurate history of the church.
- 5 The clerk's responsibilities shall be delegated to a church administrative assistant if desired.
6. The church clerk shall be the custodian of all moneys of the church and shall disburse these moneys by checks as authorized by the church through a system of requisitions and approvals.
7. He or she shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall render a quarterly and annually written report of this account to the church.
8. The clerk's report shall be reviewed annually by a CPA.
9. The clerk shall be responsible for seeing that the offerings are properly received, counted, and deposited in the church's bank account.
10. He or she shall properly credit each contributor and their offerings and be responsible for distribution of an annual record of contribution to donors.

F. Trustees:

1. At least three (3) trustees shall be selected by the Church Council.
2. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the

church without specific notification to the church in advance of such action and approval of the Church Council.

3. It shall be the function of the trustees to sign any and all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or lease of church property or any other legal documents requiring the signature of the trustees for and in behalf of the church.

4. Church property shall be held in the name of The Church at Chelsea-Westover.

G. Church Council:

1. The Church Council shall have as regular members, the pastor, church administrator, and other leaders as appointed by the pastor, and shall not exceed seven members.

2. The Church Council shall recommend to the church objectives and goals; review the coordinated program plans recommended by the pastor, church officers, organizations, and committees; recommend to the church the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to program priorities; and evaluate program achievements in terms of church goals and objectives.

III. Ministry Teams

All ministry team leaders shall be appointed by the Church Council as needed. Church members are strongly encouraged to find their place of service in one or more of the church ministries.

IV. Church Meetings

A. Worship Services:

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning for the worship of God; for preaching, instruction, and evangelism, and meet on Wednesday, or another night, designated for prayer and Bible study. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor or designated church officer in the absence of the pastor.

B. Regular and Special Business Meetings:

Regular business meetings shall be held annually. The agenda shall be circulated or made known to the church one week prior to the business meeting. Should there be any unusual meeting or matter of unusual interest to be brought before such regular meeting, notice shall be given to the membership one week prior to that meeting. Special business meetings may be held with one week prior notice to the membership.

C. Quorum:

The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called. At least one-fourth of the members shall constitute a quorum.

D. Parliamentary Rules:

Robert's Rules of Order (revised edition) is adopted as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church and for all other meetings that demand voting of the church members, including committee meetings.

V. Licensing and Ordaining

A. Licensing:

Any member of the church who has shown by his or her life and has felt the call to the gospel ministry may by vote of the Church Council be licensed by the church to the gospel ministry.

B. Ordination:

Any member of the church who has served the church faithfully and felt the call to the gospel ministry may request in writing that the church ordain him to the gospel ministry. He should possess scriptural qualifications, testify to the special call of God, demonstrate by his gifts and preparation his commitment to the work of the gospel ministry. The Church Council shall affirm his desire by establishing a special ordination council to conduct a thorough evaluation of his qualifications for the work of the gospel ministry. After this process, the ordination council may present him to the church for ordination.

Deacons of the church may be ordained as deacons upon the recommendation of the Church Council. The pastor shall assemble an ordination council for the examination of qualified and recommended candidates. After this process, the ordination council may present the candidates to the church for ordination.

VI. Church Discipline

A. Should any unhappy difference arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17.

B. Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal occur, the Church Council shall endeavor to resolve the conflict; and if this effort fails, shall report the case to the church.

C. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

D. Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored upon evidence of his repentance and reformation; or if an account of continued absence, upon satisfactory explanation.

VII. Marriage Ceremonies

Consistent with our Articles of Faith, we believe that marriage is a union between one man and one woman, following Biblical principles (Genesis 2:19-24, Leviticus 18:22, Matthew 19:4-6, Romans 1:18-27, Ephesians 5:22-23, Hebrews 13:4). We believe that God sanctions only the union in marriage of a man to a woman. Therefore, this church sanctions only wedding ceremonies compatible with those standards. Same sex couples will not be married in any facilities or on any properties owned by the church. Ministers of The Church at Chelsea-Westover will not perform any same sex marriages or civil unions whether on or off church owned properties. Doing so would be grounds for termination.

Adoption and Revision Authorizations

1. The Church Council of *The Church at Chelsea-Westover* met Saturday, March 31, 2012, discussed and approved the initial Constitution and Bylaws and established a process of regular review and modification.

Adopted on March 31, 2012 by the founding Church Council.

2. The Church Council of *The Church at Chelsea-Westover* conferred Wednesday, January 2, 2013, discussed and approved the revision of the Constitution and Bylaws, before charter membership was established.

Revised on January 2, 2013 by the Church Council.

3. The Church Covenant members met on June 1, 2014 to revise the section related to the trustees duties and the appropriate title for church properties.

Revised on June 1, 2014 by the Church Covenant Members.

4. The Church Covenant members met on June 1, 2015 to amend the Constitution and Bylaws to include a statement regarding Biblical marriage.

Revised on June 1, 2015 by the Church Covenant Members.