

CONSTITUTION OF JEFFERSONTON BAPTIST CHURCH

*Adopted October 26, 2020 – First reading
Adopted February 15, 2021 Second reading.*

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Jeffersonton Baptist Church, Incorporated

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Jeffersonton Baptist Church Incorporated, hereinafter referred to as the Church, adhering to the teachings of the Bible, establish this Constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, consistent with the accepted tenets of the 2000 Southern Baptist Convention Faith and Message.

Article I. NAME AND LOCATION

This body of believers shall be organized as a Church corporation and known as the Jeffersonton Baptist Church Incorporated, located in Jeffersonton, Virginia.

Article II. COVENANT

Having been led as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and 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 do now in the presence of God and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as members of the Body of Christ.

We strive, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its welfare and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and discipline; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also strive to maintain family and personal devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; and to abstain from the use of those things the Holy Scriptures teach as harmful to our physical bodies and our souls, and are hindrances to our Christian witness (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).

We further strive to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

Moreover, when we move from this place we will, as soon as possible, strive to unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Article III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

A. The Scriptures:

We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as divinely inspired of God and inerrant in the original writings and that they are the supreme and final authority in all matters of doctrine, faith, and conduct. (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

B. God:

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (2 Corinthians 12:14; Matthew 3:16-17, 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 1John 4:15)

C. Jesus:

1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary, in order that he might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (John 1:1-2, 14; Luke 1:35)
2. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitution sacrifice, and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Romans 3:24-25; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:3-5, 2:24)
3. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, whereas our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Intercessor and Advocate. (Acts 1:9-10; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24; 1 John 2:1-2)
4. We believe in the "Blessed Hope" (Titus 2:13), the personal, imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the pre-tribulation rapture of His redeemed ones; and in the subsequent return to earth with His saints, to establish His millennial kingdom. (1 Thessalonians 1:10, 5:9, 4:13-18; Zechariah 14:4-11; Revelation 3:10, 19:11-16, 20:1-6; Romans 5:9)

D. Holy Spirit:

We believe the Holy Spirit, a Person of the Godhead, convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment, and that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers at conversion into the Body of Christ; indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. (2 Peter 1:20-21; John 14:16-26, 16:7-11; 2 Corinthians 3:6; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27)

E. Man:

We believe that man was created by God in His image and likeness. In Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became separated from God; and we believe that man is totally depraved, a sinner in thought, word and deed, and of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:23, 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3, 12)

F. Salvation:

We believe that man's salvation is the gift of God brought to him by God's grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins; and that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (Ephesians 1:7, 2:8-10; John 1:12, 6:37-40, 10:17-30; Romans 8:1, 38-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; 1 Peter 1:5, 18-19; 2 Timothy 1:12)

G. Church:

1. We believe that the Church is the Body of Christ, made up of all persons who have received Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior. (Ephesians 1:22-23, 5:25-27; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 11:2)
2. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 20:17; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11)
3. Believers who constitute the local church are those persons who desire to assemble for such activities as worship; prayer; praise; study of the Word; observance of the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and fellowship under the leadership of pastors, teachers, deacons, and evangelists. (Matthew 16:16-18; Ephesians 1:22, 5:25-27; Colossians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Acts 2:45-47; Ephesians 4:11-18)
4. We believe in religious liberty for every individual, exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word and that individual Christians and churches must cooperate in their efforts to spread the Gospel around the world.

H. Ordinances of the Church:

1. Believers' Water Baptism: While recognizing that baptism has no saving merit, it is our conviction that after one is saved, baptism should follow in order to portray to the world the believer's identification and union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. It is our conviction that the Scriptural method of water baptism is immersion. (Mark 1:9-10; Acts 8:36-39; Matthew 3:1-15, 28:19-20; Romans 6:3-4)
2. The Lord's Supper: We believe that Jesus Christ instituted the Lord's Supper to commemorate His death until He comes. It provides the bread and juice of the vine as symbols of His body and blood to be partaken of by His followers and is always preceded by solemn self-examination. (1 Corinthians 10:16-17, 11:23-32)

I. Satan:

We believe that Satan is a literal being, the author of sin and the cause of the fall, that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man, and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11, 25:41; Revelation 20:10)

J. Eternal State:

1. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matthew 25:45; John 5:28-29, 11:25-26; Revelation 20:5-6, 12-13)
2. We believe that the soul of the redeemed is, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection when spirit, soul, and the glorified body are reunited to be forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; 1 Corinthians 15:50-53)
3. We believe that the spirit of unbelievers remains, after death, in conscious misery until the second resurrection when, with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment. (Luke 16:19-25; Revelation 20:11-15; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Mark 9:43-48)

K. Marriage:

We believe that God has established marriage as a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman and that all intimate sexual activity outside the marriage relationship, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or otherwise, is immoral and therefore sin (Gen. 2:24-25; Ex. 20:14,17,22:19; Lev. 18:22-23, 20:13, 15-16; Matt. 19:4-6. 9; Rom. 1:18-31; I Cor. 6:9-10, 15-20; I Tim. 1:8-11; Jude 7). We believe that God created the human race male and female and that all conduct with the intent to adopt a gender other than one's birth gender is immoral and therefore sin (Gen.1:27; Deut. 22:5).

Commented [JRC1]: Proposed language covers sincerely held religious beliefs on of Biblical marriage but only hint at beliefs on sexual sin and does not discuss Church's belief regarding gender and how God determined our gender at conception and attempts to change it would be sexual sin. Recommend revising to add this language for religious liberty defense for claims of discrimination based on SOGI.

Commented [LP2R1]: Accepted use the language from Christian Legal Sectary p13

Article IV. POLITY AND RELATIONSHIP

This Church shall be an independent body of believers that shall govern itself by the Holy Scriptures. This body of believers shall continue to have association with the Southern Baptist Convention, and other like-minded ministries and churches as the Church deems necessary to fulfill its mission and purposes. If in the future our Church corporation wishes to dissolve their association with any of these groups, it may be done so by a 2/3 majority of members voting at any regular or special called business meeting. The same procedure is to be followed to associate with other outside groups or ministries.

Article V. AMENDMENTS

Members may propose changes to the Constitution that shall be submitted to the Council for consideration and comment. The Council shall present the proposed changes and their comments to the Church at a regular or special members' meeting where a quorum is present. This Constitution may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the members present and voting, provided the following procedure has been followed:

1. The proposed written amendment has been presented at a previous members' meeting.
2. The proposed amendment has been announced and copies made available for review at least two Sundays before the meeting to act on the amendment.
3. The Constitution and Bylaws will be reviewed every five years.

ADOPTION

I, the undersigned Clerk of Jeffersonton Baptist Church, do hereby certify that the above Constitution was adopted on October 26, 2020 by the members at a duly called meeting and that this Constitution is current and in operation as of that time.

First Reading October 26, 2020

Adopted February 15, 2021

Lorene Payne

Church Clerk
Jeffersonton Baptist Church