

MISSION POINT, INC.

CHURCH CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Mission Point, establish the following principles by which we mutually agree to be governed in the affairs of our church. Our daily conduct should be done decently and in an orderly fashion in accordance with scripture. So that we may help churches of like faith as well as our community in Christian service, we declare and establish this constitution to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I

NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION 1 - NAME

This congregation of believers shall be known as, Mission Point of Mansfield, Ohio.

SECTION 2 - PURPOSE

A. This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for the charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship; and the building, maintaining, and operating of churches, parsonages, schools, chapels, radio stations, television stations, rescue missions, print shops, day care centers, camps, nursing homes, and cemeteries, and any other ministries that the Church may be led by God to establish.

B. The Church shall also ordain and license men to the Gospel ministry; evangelize the unsaved by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ; educate believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of scripture, including both Sunday and weekday meetings; maintain missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country; and engage in any other ministry that the Church may decide, from time to time, to pursue in obedience to the will of God.

ARTICLE II

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT

SECTION 1 - STATEMENT OF FAITH

A. The Holy Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, in their original state, to be the inerrant, infallible, God-breathed, verbally inspired Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The scriptures are able to bring us to salvation, and it is the only guide for faith, life and practice (Acts 17:11). The Bible carries with it the divine authority of God. Jesus Himself said, “the scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35). The Bible is the complete Word of God and therefore no further revelation is needed (1 Corinthians 13:10, Revelation 22:18-19).

B. The Godhead

We believe in one triune God, eternal (Genesis 21:33), self-existing (Exodus 3:14, John 8:58, Psalm 90:2) — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (Deuteronomy 6:4, Matthew 28:19, Romans 1:20, 2 Corinthians 13:14, John 14:10, 26).

C. God the Father

We believe the Father is a spirit (John 4:24). He is the first person of the Trinity (Matthew 28:19). Some of His basic attributes include:

Omnipresence	(1 Kings 8:27, Psalm 139:7-10, Acts 7:48-49).
Omniscience	(Isaiah 46:10, Psalm 147:5, Hebrews 4:13).
Omnipotence	(Job 42:2, Jeremiah 32:17, Matthew 19:26, Revelation 19:6).
Immutable	(Psalm 102:26-27, Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 1:12, James 1:17).
Sovereign	(Exodus 15:18, 1 Chronicles 29:11, Psalm 115:3, Revelation 11:17).
Holy	(Leviticus 11:44, Psalm 22:3, 1 Peter 1:15).
Righteous	(Ezra 9:15, Isaiah 45:21, Psalm 89:14, 97:2, Revelation 16:5).
Good	(Exodus 34:6, Mark 10:18).
Loving	(2 Corinthians 13:11, 1 John 4:8, 16).
Merciful	(Ephesians 2:4, James 5:11, 1 Peter 1:3).
Grace	(Exodus 34:6, Ephesians 2:7-9, Titus 2:11).
Truth	(Jeremiah 10:10, John 3:33, Romans 3:4).

D. God the Son

We believe that Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity (Matthew 28:19), fully man (John 8:40), yet fully God (Colossians 2:9). He existed with the Father in eternity past (John 1:1). He was born of a virgin, conceived by the Holy Spirit in a miraculous way, and He is both the Son of God and God the Son. He experienced all human temptations and lived a completely sinless and perfect life (Hebrews 4:15).

We believe Christ's death on the cross, His burial, and resurrection, purchased fallen man to God for all that believe (John 3:16). It was the chief purpose of His incarnation (Mark 10:45, 1 John 3:5). Christ paid the sinner's penalty (Romans 3:25). He did not die for His own sin (Mark 10:25, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 3:18). The Person and work of Christ is the foundation and basis of our faith (1 Corinthians 15:1-4) and is essential for salvation (Matthew 16:21, Acts 17:3). Christ's death is sufficient, and it satisfies God's wrath against sin (Romans 3:26, 1 John 2:2, 4:10). By Christ's death, we are reconciled to God (Romans 5:10, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20). Forgiveness is available for all (John 1:29, 1 Timothy 2:6, 2 Peter 2:9), but effective only for those who believe (John 3:18, Romans 10:9-11).

We believe that Christ physically and bodily rose from the grave (Matthew 28:9, Mark 16:6, Luke 24:39, John 20:25-28). Christ's resurrection is the fundamental doctrine of Christianity (1 Corinthians 15:12-19). It attests to Christ's deity (Romans 1:4) and assures the acceptance of His work (Romans 4:25). Christ's resurrection gives the believer the assurance that all necessary power for life and service is available to him (Ephesians 1:18-20).

We believe that Christ ascended into heaven after His resurrection (Mark 16:19, Luke 24:50, Acts 1:9) and has been exalted by the Father (Acts 2:33, 5:31, Romans 8:31, Philippians 2:9). As our High Priest (Hebrews 4:14), Christ is currently fulfilling His role as our Intercessor and Advocate to the Father (Hebrews 7:25, 9:24, Romans 8:34, 1 John 2:1-2).

E. God the Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is fully God (Acts 5:3-4). He is the third person of the Trinity (Matthew 28:19). He possesses all the divine attributes of God (Psalm 139:7, Luke 1:35). The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, the need of salvation, and the judgment to come (John 16:8-11). He testifies of Christ (John 15:26), bears witness of the truth (John 14:17), and He restrains evil (2 Thessalonians 2:6-8). To resist the Spirit is a sin (Acts 6:10, 7:51).

The Holy Spirit is the author of Scripture (2 Peter 1:21, John 16:13, Ephesians 3:5). He is also the interpreter and teacher of Scripture (Ephesians 1:17, 1 Corinthians 2:12, 1 John 2:27). It is the Spirit who produces the fruit of the Spirit in the life of believers (Galatians 5:22, Ephesians 5:9, Philippians 1:11).

The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to all believers (1 Corinthians 12:4, 7-11, Romans 12:6-8, Ephesians 4:11, 1 Peter 4:10). We believe sign gifts (speaking in tongues, prophesying, and healing) were used to authenticate the Apostle's ministry and message to unbelievers and were temporary (1 Corinthians 14:21-22, Mark 16:20). When the Bible was completed, the signs ceased and are not for today (1 Corinthians 13:8-10). We do believe God frequently answers prayer for physical healing, according to His will, but we do not need a human mediator (Hebrews 4:16).

F. Man and Sin

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27, 5:1). By the willful disobedience of the first man, Adam, sin entered the world (Genesis 3:1-7). Through this act of disobedience, sin and the consequences of sin are passed on to all men (Romans 5:12-19, 1 Corinthians 15:21-22). All men are now born sinners (Psalm 51:5, 3:10, 12, 23). The scriptures speak of human nature as totally corrupt and morally wicked (Romans 3:10-17, 7:18, 8:7, Ephesians 4:18). Because of this man is guilty before God (Romans 1:18, 1 John 3:20).

The penalty of sin is death, and it is three-fold:

- 1) Physical Death (Genesis 3:19, John 8:44, Romans 5:12-17).
- 2) Spiritual Death (Genesis 2:17, Romans 5:21, Ephesians 2:1, 5).
- 3) Eternal Death (Matthew 10:28, 25:41, Revelation 20:14).

We believe that man was created in innocence, by voluntary sin fell from his sinless state, and as a consequence, all mankind are now sinners, not by force, but by choice, and therefore under judgment without defense or excuse.

G. Salvation

We believe that salvation is provided by God's grace, sufficient for all men, by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Man can do nothing to save himself; salvation is a free gift (Ephesians 2:8-9). Salvation is available to all who will call upon the Lord Jesus Christ in repentance and faith (Acts 4:12, Romans 10:9-10, 13). The shed blood of Christ redeems us (1 Peter 1:18-19), and His resurrection assures us that Christ's sacrifice was accepted by the Father (Romans 4:25, 1 Peter 1:21).

H. Assurance of Believers

We believe that once saved, believers are kept by the power of God's love and secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40, 10:27-30, Romans 8:38-39, 1 Peter 1:4-5). Believers have the privilege of rejoicing in their assurance of salvation, but their salvation in no way gives an opportunity to use their Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh (Romans 13:13-14, Galatians 5:13, Titus 2:11-15).

I. The Church

We believe the church consists of all those, in this age, who have placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of God have been baptized into His body (Matthew 16:18, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 5:25). We believe that a church is associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its officers of ordination are pastors (elders) and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the scriptures.

We believe that the true mission of the church is found in the Great Commission; first, to make individual disciples; second, to teach and instruct as He commanded. We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any organizations; that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel; but every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline and kindness.

In the local sense, the church consists of a group of believers in any one locality (Acts 8:1, 20:17, Romans 16:1, 1 Corinthians 1:2, etc.). The word church means a “called-out” assembly and “belonging to the Lord.” The church was founded on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Christ is the head of the church, which is His body (Romans 12:3, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, Ephesians 1:22, Colossians 1:18). We believe in the autonomy of the local church – it is independent and self-governing (Acts 6:1-6, 13:3, 15:2, 4, 1 Corinthians 5:13, 2 Corinthians 8:19).

Every believer should live in such a way as to bring glory and honor to Christ, separating themselves from sinful living and worldly practices (Romans 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, 1 John 2:15-17). We do not believe, however, that we should be cut off from society. Believers are to be in the world but not of it – to be separated internally, not externally (John 17:15-16).

The offices of the church are pastor (Acts 20:17, Titus 1:5-9) and deacon (Philippians 1:1, 1 Timothy 3:8-13). The pastor is the shepherd, leader, overseer, and example to the church. He is responsible to God for its care (Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:1-4). Deacons are to be servant leaders in the church and aides to the pastor (Acts 6:1-7).

The ordinances of the church are baptism (Matthew 28:19) and the Lord’s supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). Baptism is a symbol of the believer’s identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Romans 6:3-11, Colossians 2:12, 1 Peter 3:21). It is an outward expression of what has taken place in the heart and is in no way essential for salvation (Luke 23:42-43). Baptism is necessary for church membership (Acts 2:41). We believe the only Biblical mode of baptism is by full immersion (Mark 1:10, John 3:23, Acts 8:38). The Lord’s Supper is where saved individuals remember the beaten body and shed

blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and its significance in their life (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). Believers may come to the Lord's Table only after careful examination (1 Corinthians 11:27-30). To be obedient to Christ, we are obligated to observe both ordinances.

J. Christ's return and related events

We believe the next event on God's prophetic calendar is the rapture of the church (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). In this coming Christ does not come to the earth, but He gathers His own in the air. The dead in Christ are raised, and those living are changed (1 Corinthians 15:51-54). This event will take place before and usher in the tribulation period (1 Thessalonians 5:9, 2 Thessalonians 2:7, Titus 2:13, Revelation 4:19).

After the rapture, the church will be assembled in heaven for two events. The Marriage Supper is the presentation of the Bride (church) to the Bridegroom (Christ). The church will be presented spotless, cleansed by Jesus Christ and for His glory (Revelation 19:7-9). The Judgment Seat of Christ is when Christ judges the works of the believer and gives his rewards (Romans 14:10, 12, 2 Corinthians 5:10). The believer will not be judged for his sin (John 5:24), for that penalty has been paid in the person and work of Jesus Christ (Isaiah 53:5, 2 Corinthians 5:21). The believer will be judged as to the use of his talents (Matthew 25:14-30), resources (Luke 19:11-27), and opportunities (Matthew 20:1-16) that were entrusted to him. His works will be tested by fire, and rewards will be given accordingly (1 Corinthians 3:11-15).

After the rapture of the church, earth will be thrown into "a time of great distress" (Daniel 12:1) and "great tribulation" (Matthew 24:21) for a period of seven years (Daniel 7:25, 12:7, Revelation 11:2-3, 12:6, 14, 13:5).

At the end of the great tribulation, Christ will literally, physically, and visibly return to the earth to defeat his enemies (Zechariah 12:1-9, 13:8-14:2, Revelation 16:12-16, Revelation 19:11-21). Satan will be bound (Revelation 20:1-3), and Christ will physically and literally rule and reign the world for a thousand years on the throne of David from Jerusalem (Isaiah 11:6-10, Psalm 72, Matthew 25:31-46, Revelation 20:1-6). At the close of the millennial reign, Satan will be loosed for a short time (Revelation 20:3, 7-10). After a short rebellion, Satan will be banished to his final place of punishment, the lake of fire (Revelation 20:7-10). At this time, the resurrected unbelievers will stand before the Great White Throne Judgment to receive their eternal punishment (Revelation 20:11-15, 21:8). With God's plan consummated, there will be a new heaven, a new earth, and a New Jerusalem (Isaiah 65:17, 66:22, 2 Peter 3:10-13, Revelation 21:1). The New Jerusalem will be a city of perfect security and beauty, where the redeemed of Christ will serve God and be blessed in His presence for all of eternity (Revelation 21:9-22:5).

K. Angels and Satan

We believe angels are created beings (Psalm 148:2, 5, John 1:3, Colossians 1:16). They are not glorified human beings (Matthew 22:30). They are spirit not physical beings (Psalm

104:4, Hebrews 1:7, 14), but have often revealed themselves in bodily form (Genesis 18, 19, Luke 1:26, John 20:12). They were created to worship God and accomplish His plans and will (Psalm 103:20). They possess great wisdom (2 Samuel 14:20), but are not omniscient (Matthew 24:36). They are very powerful (Psalm 103:20, 2 Peter 2:11), but are not omnipotent (Daniel 10:13, Jude 9). They roam and walk about the earth (Job 1:7, Zechariah 1:11, 1 Peter 5:8), moving from one place to another (Daniel 9:21-23).

We believe every angel was created perfect, but some became evil, having rebelled against God (2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6). Satan was the instigator of the rebellion, trying to assume the place of God (Isaiah 14:12-14). One-third of the angelic beings followed in disobedience (Revelation 12:4-9). Satan is the leader of these fallen angels (Matthew 12:24, 25:41), and they are his servants (2 Corinthians 11:15). Satan employs various methods to accomplish his purpose today. The believer must not be ignorant of his schemes (2 Corinthians 2:11). He should be sober and alert, and must resist him (Ephesians 4:27, James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8). He should take on the whole armor of God to stand against him (Ephesians 6:11).

L. Creation

We believe in the Genesis account of creation and that it is to be accepted literally and not allegorically or figuratively; all things were created by God, including man. Creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary changes of species, nor a development over long periods of time from lower to higher forms. The scriptures contradict the evolution model, that all animal and vegetable life were made directly, and God's established law was that they should bring forth only "after their kind" (Genesis 1-2, Exodus 20:11, John 1:3, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 11:3).

M. Civil Government

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority, consisting of three basic institutions:

- 1) The Home
- 2) The Church
- 3) The State

Every person is subject to these authorities; these authorities are governed by God's Word, and all will answer to God. God has given each institution specific biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities for the interests and good order of human society.

All three of these institutions are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed; except only in the things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of our conscience (Romans 13:1-7; Acts 5:29).

N. Missions

We believe that the command to make disciples and give the Gospel to the world is clear and unmistakable, and this commission was given to the church (Matthew 28:19-20).

O. Grace Giving

We believe that God's method of financing His earthly work of spreading the Gospel to all nations, the care of the churches, and the support of the ministry is through the tithes and offerings of God's people. It is to be given to the Lord through His church and distributed as directed by the leadership of the Spirit as the need arises (1 Corinthians 16:1-2).

We believe the tithe (or tenth) is a good place to begin giving (Luke 11:42), but that New Testament believers are to participate in "grace giving" as directed by God (2 Corinthians 9:6-8). Grace giving is above and beyond the tithe. God is a God of order (1 Corinthians 14:33), and our giving should be in His order as well:

- 1) The Tithe = also called general offering, is to be used for the upkeep of the Church and support of the staff.
- 2) Missions = this is to be above the tithe or general offering (not to be taken from the tithe) for the missionaries we support as a Church.
- 3) Offerings = this is to be above the tithe/general and missions (not to be taken away from the first or second aspect of giving) and is for personal support of an individual missionary; missions efforts; or youth, children's, ladies', or men's ministry, etc.

In all matters of giving, everyone is accountable to the Lord for the resources entrusted to them (Matthew 25:14-28).

P. Sexual Immorality

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 homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, sex between two parties not married (including pre-marital and adultery), and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance (Genesis 2:24, 19:5, 13, 26:8-9, Leviticus 18:1-30, Romans 1:26-29, 1 Corinthians 5:1, 6:9, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8, Hebrews 13:4).

We believe that the only scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24, 1 Corinthians 7:10, Ephesians 5:22-33).

Q. Aids/Communicable Disease Policies

We recognize also that Mission Point with its finances is not equipped to physically care for the need of very ill students or any student with a communicable disease.

Therefore, because we are moved with compassion for the sick child and the well-being of the child, if the need arises, we will provide a separate space for a child with a communicable disease. Our concern is twofold: it is that other students not be infected, and that the ill student not become infected with other illnesses transmitted by fellow students or others within the Church family.

R. Authority of Statement of Faith

This Statement of Faith does not exhaust all that we accept. The Bible itself is the sole and final authoritative source of all that we believe.

SECTION 2 - COVENANT

As a bond of unity among us, Mission Point, accepts for its members the following covenant:

Having been led by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and on profession of our faith in Him, having been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, we do now most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We promise that we will watch over and counsel one another in the Spirit of brotherly love, that we will remember one another in our prayers, and that we will aid each other in sickness and distress.

We further agree, 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 prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to give it first place over all institutions of human origin; and to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We further covenant to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to see the salvation of our family and acquaintances; to live carefully in this present world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, excessive anger; to abstain from everything that will cause our brother to stumble or that will bring reproach upon the cause of Christ; and to strive to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, that amidst evil and good report, we will humbly and earnestly seek to live to the honor and glory of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 – QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Believers in isolation, operating independently of other believers of a local assembly, is an idea contrary to Scripture. Scripture teaches that there are to be local assemblies of believers, united together by a common faith, by union in Christ, and by the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, by common purposes, commitments and responsibilities, and with a common leadership of that specific body, independent in government from other local assemblies (Ephesians 4:4-6, 1 Peter 5:1-3, 1 Corinthians 1:2, Hebrews 13:7, 17, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13). The local church is to be a body of people allotted to the charge of pastors (1 Peter 4:8-10, 5:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Hebrews 10:14-15, 1 Corinthians 12:20-27), and subject to the discipline of that body or assembly (1 Corinthians 5:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:14 [admonish the unruly], 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14, 1 Timothy 5:20). This of necessity implies more than a loose relationship of a believer or believers to a particular body or assembly. It involves a tie, an involvement, a commitment, responsibility and submission to both the leadership and to each other.

At the time of personal faith in Jesus Christ, the believer is called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Corinthians 1:2, 9, 12:12-13, 20, Col. 1:18), and joined into union with the body of Christ by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Colossians 1:18).

The second aspect of this fellowship into which the believer is joined is the local church. Believers are to seek the fellowship of one another in a local body or assembly of believers to which they are to become responsible (1 Peter 5:2-3, 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1, 2 Thessalonians 1:1).

The Scriptures contain neither a mandate for nor a command against an official membership roll. In Acts, we see that believers were added to the church in Jerusalem; however, this serves primarily to show the growth in the early church (Acts 2:47; 9:31; 16:5). These people were devoting themselves to a local assembly and its leadership for teaching, leadership, fellowship and worship (Acts 2:42). There were also letters of commendation or acceptance written on behalf of both men and women to be welcomed and accepted into the fellowship of various assemblies. These letters commended believers to other assemblies regarding their faithfulness and ministry and thus they were not a transfer of membership by letter (Romans 16:1-2, 1 Corinthians 16:10, Colossians 4:10, 2 Corinthians 3:1, 8:16-24).

The emphasis of these Scriptures is that every believer become identified and committed to a specific local assembly of believers following the leading and direction of God. This commitment is revealed by their attitude, faith, attendance, involvement, giving and submission to that assembly. Thus, a membership roll cannot, in and of itself, serve as the sole means of commitment a believer has to a local body.

Any individual who confesses the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior and who is in agreement with this Constitution is qualified and eligible for membership in Mission Point. The membership of this church shall consist of persons who have accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior and have been baptized by immersion. New members will be accepted into the membership when requesting membership in any of the following ways:

- 1) By profession of faith and having been baptized in this church.
- 2) By letter of transfer from a church of like-faith and order.
- 3) By statement of faith, having been scripturally baptized by another church of like-faith and order.
- 4) By restoration.

Anyone who desires to become a member should contact the pastor and request membership.

Membership can be terminated by:

- 1) Transfer to a Church of like-faith and order (a member will not hold membership in more than one Church at a time).
- 2) Church discipline (which can be restored according to the principle that John the Baptist spoke of in Matthew 3:8, NLT “Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God.”).
- 3) Not attending regular services within a 4 month period (with the exception of special circumstances, i.e. terminally ill, bed ridden, etc.).

SECTION 2 – DUTIES OF A MEMBER

After becoming a member of Mission Point, in addition to the covenant contained in Article II, Section 2, each member further covenants to love, honor, and esteem the pastors (Hebrews 13:17), to pray for them (1 Timothy 2:1-3), and to recognize their authority in spiritual matters of the Church (Hebrews 13:7, 17, Romans 13:1-2), to have a brotherly love for all members (Romans 12:10, 1 John 3:14, 1 Peter 1:22, John 13:34-35), and to support the Church in prayer, tithes, offerings, service and with other financial support through a lifestyle that affirms the beliefs and practices of this Church.

SECTION 3 – PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

The Church functions as a body, under the Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the Pastor as the under shepherd, with the counsel of the Board of Deacons. Membership in this Church does not give those individuals with any property, contract, or civil rights based on the principles of democratic government. The internal affairs of this Church shall be determined exclusively by the Church's own rules and procedures. The Pastor shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this Church. The Board of Deacons shall give counsel and assistance to the Pastor as requested by him. The membership of the Church has certain limitations in exercising a vote; the vote of a member is to confirm or consent in the direction of the Church as determined by the Pastor after consultation with the board.

SECTION 4 – DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER

We believe in the responsibility and necessity of church discipline as clearly outlined in Scripture (Matthew 18:15-20). It is a very difficult area and hard to practice. Nevertheless, church discipline has the divine authority of Scripture and is vital to the purity of the church. In church discipline, the following matters must be carefully understood and applied.

The discipline of the church is first patterned after the fact that the Lord Himself disciplines His children (Hebrews 12:6) and, as a father delegates part of the discipline of the children to the wife, so the Lord has delegated the discipline of the church family to the church itself because the Church is Christ's bride.

Discipline is further based on the Holy character of God (1 Peter 1:16, Hebrews 12:11). The pattern of God's holiness, His desire for the church to be holy, set apart unto Him, is an important reason for the necessity of church discipline. The church is therefore to clean out the influence of malice and wickedness from within itself (1 Corinthians 5:6-8). A failure to discipline in a church today bares evidence to a lack of awareness of the holiness of God. Church discipline must be patterned after and based on the divine commands of Scripture. We have numerous passages which both command and give us biblical directives on the how, when and where of church discipline. Again, a failure to exercise this responsibility demonstrates a lack of obedience and belief in the authority of the Bible (1 Corinthians 5:1-13, Matthew 18:17-18, Titus 3:10; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 5:20; Galatians 6:1).

A final basis for the necessity of church discipline is the testimony of the church in the world. The world observes the behavior and life of the church. When the church acts no differently than the world, it loses its credibility and authenticity (1 Peter 2:11-18, 3:8-16; 4:1-4).

The purposes of church discipline include:

- 1) Concern for the glory of God and the testimony of the flock.
- 2) The restoration and building up of the sinning believer.

- 3) The winning of a soul to Christ (if only a professing Christian).
- 4) The purity of the local body and its protection from moral and doctrinally impure influences, knowing a little leaven can leaven the entire lump (1 Corinthians 5:6-7).

Such goals automatically govern the spirit in which all disciplinary action is to be given. Thus:

- 1) It must be done in the spirit of humility, gentleness and patience, examining yourself for fear that you too may be tempted (Galatians 6:1-2, 2 Timothy 2:24-25).
- 2) Those who walk disorderly are to be admonished, warned, and appealed to in love (1 Thessalonians 5:14-15, 1 Timothy 5:1-2, Ephesians 4:15, 2 Timothy 4:2). This admonishing, etc., is not restricted to the leaders but may be done by any member (1 Thessalonians 5:14).
- 3) If there is no response in repentance and obedience (by that we mean, according to the principle in Matthew 3:8, NLT "Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God."), then members are to withhold intimate fellowship until there is obedience (2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14). This is to indicate to the offender that his action has caused a rupture in the harmony of the body. Its goal is restoration, and the person is still to be counted as a brother (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15).
- 4) If the person persists after admonition and withdrawal of intimate fellowship, the final step is removal of membership (Titus 3:10; Matthew 18:17b), accompanied by public rebuke before all (1 Timothy 5:20). Examples of church discipline are found in Scripture. The Corinthian believers were to be "gathered together" in order to take action against the offending brother (1 Corinthians 2:6). We also find that it was the whole church in Rome and in Thessalonica who were to take action with regard to the unruly and divisive, and not just a few persons (2 Thess. 3:6-15; Rom. 16:17).
- 5) Finally, discipline in the name of our Lord always includes a readiness to forgive. Those who discipline must also be ready and eager to forgive, comfort, and reaffirm their love to the sinning person (2 Corinthians 2:6-8).

Great care must be exercised here. Scripture does not warrant the exercise of church discipline for an individual or a church's pet taboos or peeves. According to Scripture, there are five categories which warrant church discipline. These are:

- 1) Difficulties between members (Matthew 18:15-17).
- 2) Divisiveness. People causing divisions in the church (Romans 16:17-18; Titus 3:9-11).
- 3) Disorderly conduct. Conduct clearly out of line with the prescribed commands of Scripture (2 Thessalonians 3:6-15).
- 4) Sins of the type mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5: incest, immorality, covetousness, idolatry, abusive speech, drunkenness, and swindling (1 Corinthians 5:1, 11).
- 5) False teaching. Erroneous teaching and views which concern the fundamentals of the faith, not lesser differences of interpretation (1 Timothy 1:20, 2 Timothy 2:17-18, also implied in Revelation 2:14-16, Philippians 3:2-3, 15-19, Romans 16:17-18).

The key concerns here are: (a) the holy character of God, (b) the testimony of the flock, (c) the effect upon the unity and purity of the flock, and (d) the edification and restoration of the individual.

Scriptural procedure here is clear and specific steps are prescribed. They are as follows:

1) Recognize the offense. Caution—one must be sure it is an offense which calls for discipline. Again, the Word is our criterion.

2) Seek private correction and/or reconciliation with the offender (Matthew 18:15). This is when the problem involves two believers. The one offended or the one who recognizes the offense is to go privately and try to rectify the problem. If this fails, he is to take witnesses, preferably spiritual leaders, so that if it has to be brought before the whole church, it can be firmly proven or established (Matthew 18:16-17).

3) Seek reconciliation through the spiritual leadership if the problem involves an offense that is against the whole body, or is a threat to its unity. Initiatory action following the concept of Galatians 6:1 should be taken by the mature spiritual leaders of the church rather than by just one person. "You who are spiritual" in Galatians 6:1 is plural meaning literally, "you, the spiritual ones ..." These initial contacts provide opportunity for loving admonition, correction and forgiveness. On the other hand, if these first steps are not heeded, it constitutes a warning that further action will be taken and gives occasion for serious rebuke (2 Timothy 4:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14, Titus 2:15; 3:10).

4) Seek reconciliation through the whole body. If further action is necessary, it is to be taken before the whole church (Matthew 18:17). This action would consist of a minimum of a loss of voting privileges, inability to partake of the Lord's Supper, removal from any teaching or leadership position, but may result in more severe action. Any action taken before the Church will be by prayerful consideration from the pastor and majority approval of the deacons, resulting in the offender's membership being removed.

In essence then, this is the action of the Lord carrying out discipline through the action of the whole body through the leadership of the pastor or the spiritually mature (1 Corinthians 5:4 "in the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled... with the power of our Lord Jesus ..."). Similar heavenly authority is seen in the carrying out of this disciplinary action as spelled out in Matthew 18:18-20.

ARTICLE IV

OFFICERS

SECTION 1 – CHURCH OFFICERS

The men who hold a Church office are: Pastor (see Article V, Section 1), Deacon (see Article V, Section 2), Trustee (see Article V, Section 3), Treasurer (see Article V, Section 4). One person may hold two or more offices, except the pastoral staff. The pastor may, from time to time, appoint other Church officers subject to a congregational vote.

SECTION 2 – DESIGNATION OF CORPORATE OFFICERS

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the Church, the pastor shall serve as president of the corporation; the chairman of the board of deacons shall serve as vice-president of the corporation; the treasurer shall serve as finance director or treasurer of the corporation; and the person appointed as recorder will serve as the secretary of the board of the corporation.

SECTION 3 – ELIGIBILITY FOR CONTINUANCE IN OFFICE

- A. All Church officers shall affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith (as set forth in Article II) annually in the presence of each other.
- B. All Church officers must be approved initially and thereafter annually by the Pastor in order for them to continue in their offices.
- C. Only Church members are eligible for election or appointment to any Church office or position.

SECTION 4 – TERMS OF OFFICE

The length of terms of office shall be as follows:

- A. The relationship between the pastor and the Church shall be permanent unless the pastor resigns, retires or the church performs disciplinary action upon him. The separation of the Church and pastor in a disciplinary manner will be at a church meeting upon giving at least a one week's notice of meeting. A three-fourths majority vote of the members present shall be required to decide the matter. Disciplinary removal of Pastor from office automatically removes his membership. If he desires to come back and be a member after disciplinary action, he will be subject to the requirements of Article III Section 4.
- B. Deacons may serve a 1-year term, and then may be re-elected for 3 terms of 2 years each. They will then take a sabbatical for 1 year. The term of service for trustees and all other offices and positions shall be 2 years, at the expiration of which they may be re-elected or re-appointed.
- C. A vacancy occurring in any office or board, except in the case of the Pastor, may be filled at any regular Church administration meeting, by a recommendation of officers and upon approval of the pastor.
- D. All elected and appointed officers shall serve in their respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed, except in the case of church discipline (see Article III Section 4).

SECTION 5 – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The annual election of officers by the Church shall occur during the month of January at the annual Church administration meeting. Officer's terms begin on February 1st and end on January 31st of the following year.

SECTION 6 – STAFF

The need for paid staff to assist in meeting the needs of the flock may be recognized by the pastor. The call for this expenditure should be discussed with the church. The decision for additional staff will be made by the pastor after consideration with the board and consultation with the congregation.

All paid pastoral staff will look to the senior pastor for supervision of their duties and for periodic reviews of their performance. A written job description should be prepared for all paid pastoral staff members. This description will be prepared by the senior pastor. Removal of any associate pastoral or paid staff shall be directed and carried out by the pastor after prayerful consideration and consultation with the board.

The hiring of secretaries, will be planned for and directed by the pastor. Other leaders not listed herein which may be needed in the future to serve the church or its related ministries, shall be called to the service of the church by the pastor after prayer and consultation with the board. If the need arises, due to circumstances, the pastor may hire a family member. That family member may hold a paid position in any area except where finances are involved.

In the absence of a pastor, the Board of Deacons with the aid of an associate (if one is on staff) will oversee the day-to-day operations of the church.

SECTION 7 – WORD OF GOD

The pastor shall choose which translation he desires to use but is not limited to one specific translation and may use others at the discretion of himself and the board of deacons.

ARTICLE V

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1 – PASTOR

The pastor's life should be characterized by the qualities set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He must hold to the doctrinal statement of this Constitution in accord with the statements of Article V, Section 1, and be supportive of the entire Constitution.

The ministry of Mission Point shall be under the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ working in and through the pastor. The pastor will make the primary decisions within the church. However, it is critical that he make decisions based on carefully assembled facts, scriptural insight, the leading of the Holy Spirit, and input from the board of deacons and the Church body (Acts 6:5, 15:6, 22, Hebrews 13:17, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13).

The pastor plays a critical role in the growth, maturity, spirituality, and effectiveness of the church. He is responsible for the quality and content of the teaching and counseling within the flock (Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 Timothy 4:6-16). Mission Point recognizes that the Lord has given spiritual gifts to all believers and therefore does not expect the pastor to provide all the teaching, evangelism and counseling, etc., within the body (Romans 12:3-8, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 1 Peter 4:10-11). Rather, he is to equip the saints "for the serving and the building up of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12).

The pastor will preach regularly and have the freedom to preach the whole counsel of God's Word as the Lord leads him. He shall administer the ordinances of the church (see Article II, Section 1, letter I), unless permission is granted to another such as Associate Pastor, Youth Pastor, Worship Director, Chairman of the Board, etc.

The pastor will act as moderator at all Church meetings, however he may, at his request, ask the chairman of the board to act as moderator. The pastor has the freedom to choose the means and methods by which he performs his ministry that God has given him. He has the power of attorney as the president of the corporation.

SECTION 2 – BOARD OF DEACONS

Deacons shall be men who desire to be servants of the local church body, who are able to serve, who meet the qualifications of Scripture set forth in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-12, and who are wholeheartedly in agreement with the Constitution of this church.

Deacons shall be helpers of the pastor in ministering to the needs of the body, especially the physical needs (such as caring for the building and property), though they may serve in other capacities as their gifts and training allow. Their specific duties will be designated by the elders according to the need of the church and a deacon's particular gifts, capacities and talents.

In the event of the resignation of, or death of a pastor, the deacons will immediately form a pulpit committee to screen resumes, interview candidates and ask candidates to come and speak for further examination. They may consider men for the committee that are not at present officers, but spiritual leaders able to direct toward the calling of a pastor.

SECTION 3 – BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Like deacons, trustees shall be men who desire to be servants of the local church body, who are able to serve, who meet the qualifications of Scripture set forth in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-12, and who are wholeheartedly in agreement with the Constitution of this church.

Trustees shall be helpers of the pastor in ministering to the needs of the body, especially the physical needs (such as caring for the building and property), though they may serve in other capacities as their gifts and training allow. Their specific duties will be designated by the elders according to the need of the church and a deacon's particular gifts, capacities and talents.

SECTION 4 – TREASURER

The treasurer, or minister of finance, will account for all funds distributed to the Church and shall disburse the same as ordered by the Church and under the leadership of the pastor. He will give an itemized disbursement quarterly and make a general report for the year at the annual Church administration meeting.

SECTION 5 – ASSOCIATE PASTORS, YOUTH PASTORS AND WORSHIP DIRECTORS

Under the direction of the pastor, the associate pastor, youth pastor, and/or worship director, will assist the pastor in carrying out the ministries of the Church.

SECTION 6 – DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS

It shall be the responsibility of each officer to faithfully meet with the pastor on a scheduled meeting date to support the administration of the Church activities. Each officer will have the current reports and records that pertain to the Church ministries and finances. These records are the property of the Church and are to be stored in the Church office and surrendered at the end of the officer's term of office. The records or reports are not to be duplicated or distributed without permission from the pastor or board in absence of a pastor.

ARTICLE VI

MEETINGS

SECTION 1 – MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Unless otherwise determined by the pastor, the Church will meet each Sunday for public worship, both morning and evening, and at least once during the week for Bible study and prayer. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper will be observed as often as is deemed necessary.

SECTION 2 – MEETINGS FOR CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

A Church administration meeting will be held periodically as the need arises. A minimum of 50 (fifty) members must be present in order to vote, and they must be at least 18 years of age. The Church date for the annual election of Church officers will be in January.

SECTION 3 – SPECIAL MEETINGS

The pastor (or board of deacons in the absence of a pastor, or for disciplinary action against the pastor), may call a special meeting, by giving a notice of the meeting and purpose to which it is called, to the Church from the pulpit at least one (1) Sunday and not less than one week prior to said meeting. A meeting for the election of a pastor may be called by the pulpit committee at any regular Church meeting at least one week in advance.

Bible conferences, missionary conferences, revivals, apologetic conferences, and any other similar ministry events, may be held at the Church as the pastor deems beneficial.

SECTION 4 – FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year shall begin January 1st and end December 31st.

ARTICLE VII

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

SECTION 1 – PURPOSE

The Church believes that it is to provide the members and their children with an education which is based upon and consistent with Biblical teachings. The Church believes that the home is where that Christian education should start (Deuteronomy 6:6-9), and it is the Church's responsibility to continue that Christian education. Where the home is not

teaching biblical principles at all, the Church is responsible to disciple believers and to equip them with the tools necessary for them to grow in knowledge and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

SECTION 2 – CHURCH PARTICIPATION

All educational programs or courses of instruction offered by the Church will be for the benefit of the members of the Church. However, at the discretion of the pastor non-members may participate.

SECTION 3 – LEADER’S MEMBERSHIP

All instructors, teachers, and administrators will be members of this Church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, or preachers for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals or other special meetings on a temporary basis.

SECTION 4 – STATEMENT OF FAITH ACCORD

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the Statement of Faith of this Church.

SECTION 5 – UNITY AND TEACHING

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

SECTION 6 – CHRISTIAN WALK

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

ARTICLE VIII

UNAUTHORIZED EXPENDITURES

Expenditures not authorized in the regular annual budget must be authorized by Church vote depending on the amount of money involved. The pastor may make a financial decision by himself on any non-budgeted item(s) per week (up to \$1,000.00), or the Board

of Deacons may be consulted in the decision (up to \$10,000.00), or the congregation must make the decision (above 10,000.00).

ARTICLE IX

ORDINATION

SECTION 1 – ORDINATION QUALIFICATIONS

Any member of this church or its mission churches, who gives evidence of a genuine call of God into the full-time work of the ministry and possesses the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, may be ordained as a minister of the Gospel.

SECTION 2 – ORDINATION PROCEDURE

Upon a conference with the pastor and after the pastor has approved the candidate for ordination, the pastor shall call a council to examine the candidate to affirm his genuineness and calling by God. The ordination council shall consist of ordained ministers of like faith invited to participate in the examination of the candidate.

The pastor shall arrange and moderate the ordination council as well as the ordination service.

ARTICLE X

TAX EXEMPT PROVISIONS

SECTION 1 – PRIVATE INUREMENT

No part of the net earnings of the Church shall be for the benefit of or distribution to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the Church shall be authorized to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article 1 Section 2.

SECTION 2 – POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

No part of the activities of the Church shall be for the purpose of endorsing a specific candidate. The Church shall not participate in or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. However biblical principles can and should be taught in order to confirm the Lord's position on specific and general issues.

SECTION 3 – DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the Church, the trustees shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the Church, dispose of all the assets of the Church to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to organizations which agree with the Church’s Statement of Faith.

SECTION 4 – RACIAL NONDISCRIMINATION

The Church shall have a racial non-discrimination policy and therefore shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin.

ARTICLE XI

DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS

From time to time the Church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Contributors may suggest uses for their contributions, but all suggestions shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. All contributions made to specific funds or otherwise designated shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the Church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Article I.

ARTICLE XII

AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be revised or amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, at any regular Church business meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing and announced from the pulpit fourteen (14) days before the vote is to be taken.