

# Watson's Grove FWB Church Constitution

## **PREAMBLE**

So that things may be done decently and in order and we may more readily help each other in our Christian service, we hereby establish this Constitution as members of Watson's Grove Free Will Baptist Church. To maintain unity and promote a greater understanding of the Lord's work, we voluntarily submit ourselves to this Constitution.

# **Watson's Grove FWB Church Constitution**

## **ARTICLE I NAME AND PURPOSE**

### ***SECTION 1 - Name***

This congregation of believers shall be known as the Watson's Grove FWB Church.

### ***SECTION 2 - PURPOSE***

Watson's Grove FWB Church is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes, including, but not limited to, the establishment and maintenance of religious worship, building maintenance, operation of the church, and any other ministries that God may lead the church to establish.

The church shall also hold the authority to license and ordain men to the to the Gospel ministry to evangelize the unsaved by the proclaiming of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; to educate believers on Christianity in a manner consistent to the Holy Scriptures.

The Watson's Grove FWB Church Constitution, Covenant, and By-laws are intended to an understanding of the church's beliefs, practices, and operational procedures

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**ARTICLE II**  
**STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT**

***SECTION 1- STATEMENT OF FAITH***

**Article 1. Doctrine of God**

We believe there is only one living, true, and eternal God.

**God the Father:**

We believe in the Father by whom are all things, from everlasting to everlasting, glorious and unchanging in all His attributes.<sup>1</sup> He is the only proper object of worship.<sup>2</sup> The mode of His existence is a subject far beyond human understanding.<sup>3</sup> There is nothing in all of creation that can adequately represent Him.<sup>4</sup> He is the source of all existence<sup>5</sup>, and the Scriptures teach that He is Spirit,<sup>6</sup> present everywhere,<sup>7</sup> all-knowing,<sup>8</sup> all-powerful,<sup>9</sup> independent,<sup>10</sup> good,<sup>11</sup> wise,<sup>12</sup> holy,<sup>13</sup> just,<sup>14</sup> merciful,<sup>15</sup> Redeemer,<sup>16</sup> Savior,<sup>17</sup> Sanctifier,<sup>18</sup> Judge of mankind,<sup>19</sup> and all other attributes ascribed to Him in the Scriptures.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus 3:14; Isaiah 46:9; I Corinthians 8:4-6

<sup>2</sup> Exodus 34:14; Matthew 4:10; Exodus 20:3-5a 9

<sup>3</sup> Job 11:7, 38-41; Romans 11:33-35; Isaiah 55:8-9

<sup>4</sup> Exodus 20:1-5, 23; Psalm 89:5-37; Acts 17:29

<sup>5</sup> Genesis 1:1; John 1:1-14; Exodus 20:11

<sup>6</sup> John 4:24; 2 Corinthians 3:17

<sup>7</sup> 1 Kings 8:27; Acts 17:24; Psalm 139:7-10

<sup>8</sup> 1 Chronicles 28:9; Acts 15:18; Acts 1:24

<sup>9</sup> Job 42:2; Matthew 19:26; Revelation 19:6

<sup>10</sup> Daniel 4:35; Romans 11:33-36; Ephesians 4:6

<sup>11</sup> Matthew 19:17; Psalm 25:8; Psalm 106:1

<sup>12</sup> Daniel 2:20; Romans 16:27; Jude 25

<sup>13</sup> Leviticus 19:2; Job 6:10; Isaiah 6:3

<sup>14</sup> Zephaniah 3:5; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 92:15

<sup>15</sup> Psalm 100:5; Ephesians 2:4; Nehemiah 9:17

<sup>16</sup> Galatians 3:3, 4:5; Isaiah 41:14

<sup>17</sup> Ephesians 5:23; Acts 13:23; Luke 1:47

<sup>18</sup> Exodus 31:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:23

<sup>19</sup> Hebrews 12:23; Genesis 18:25; 2 Timothy 4:8

**God the Son:**

We believe there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things. He is the only begotten Son of God, born of the virgin Mary, and is truly God and truly man. God freely sent Christ Jesus into this world because of the great love wherewith He loved mankind, and Christ freely gave Himself a ransom for all, tasting death for every person. He was

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buried, rose again the third day, and ascended into Heaven. He will come a second time in the clouds of Heaven to judge both the living and the dead. We further believe that the Scriptures ascribe to Christ all the attributes of God.<sup>21</sup>

Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35; John 1:1-14; John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

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 so that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2,14; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-8)

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through his death on the cross as a representative, the substituted sacrifice, and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:18-36; Rom. 3:24-25; 1 Peter 2:24; Eph. 1:7; 1 Peter 1:3-5).

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate (Acts 1:9-10; Heb. 9:24; 7:25; Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1-2).

### **God the Holy Spirit**

We believe there is one Holy Spirit who is the precious gift of the Father through His dear Son. He is the divine presence in our lives who regenerates and sanctifies us and keeps us in perpetual remembrance of the truth of Christ, and from whom we find our help and strength. We further believe that the Scriptures ascribe to the Holy Spirit all the attributes of God.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> 1 John 5:20

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment and that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling, and sealing them unto the day of redemption (John 16:8-11; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13-14).

We believe He is the Divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures, and it is His divine work that all who receive Christ are filled with the Spirit (Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20,27).

We believe He is sovereign in bestowing spiritual gifts to every believer. He uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly to do the ministry's work (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11,28; Eph. 4:7-12).

We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit. We also believe the ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing (1 Cor. 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22).

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### **The Trinity (The Godhead)**

We believe God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are one God,<sup>23</sup> without beginning or end, who is indivisible in His nature or being.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> John 16:7-14; Acts 2:1-4; John 14:16-17

<sup>24</sup> Matthew 28:19; 1 John 5:7; 2 Corinthians 13:13; 1 Peter 1:2

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons - 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 (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; John 14:10,26).

## **Article 2. Doctrine of Creation and Divine Care**

We believe in the beginning; God created the heavens and the earth and all things visible and invisible. God continually works through His creation to sustain and to nurture it.<sup>1</sup>

We believe all things are known by God, and He knows what can or cannot come to pass upon all conditions. His knowledge of these conditions does not in any sense cause them, nor does He decree all the events which He knows will occur.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1:1-2:25; Colossians 1:16, 17

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 42:9

### **Creation**

We believe that God created the universe in six literal 24-hour periods. (Genesis 1-2; Ex. 20: 11).

### **Civil Government**

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three primary institutions: (1) the home, (2) the church, and (3) the state.

Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word.

God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other.

The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb.13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14).

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### **Article 3. Doctrine of Mankind**

We believe God created mankind in His own image. In the beginning, He placed the man and woman in a state of glory and perfection.<sup>3</sup> God has endowed mankind with free will<sup>4</sup> and governs them by moral and divine laws.<sup>5</sup> Mankind was separated from God by sin, which brought upon all people the penalty of death.<sup>6</sup>

We believe that mankind's will is always active and may refuse or accept the call of Christ in His offer of salvation. Those accepting this offer by faith, through the grace of God, are saved.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Genesis 1:24-26; 27

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah 48:18; John 1:1-2; Revelation 3:20

<sup>5</sup> Exodus 20:1-17; Matthew 7:12, 22:37-39

<sup>6</sup> Genesis 2:17; Romans 5:12

<sup>7</sup> John 3:16-18; Ephesians 2:8; Revelation 3:20

#### **The Total Depravity of Man**

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin, the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God, and that man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19).

#### **Human Sexuality**

We believe God commanded no intimate sexual activity outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, transgenderism, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4).

We believe the only legitimate marriage is joining one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God, but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the spiritual leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Gal. 3: 28; Col. 3: 18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)

#### **Divorce and Remarriage**

We believe that God intended marriages to last until one spouse dies. But if one has a right to "put away a spouse" and they divorce and choose to remarry, that person may hold positions of service in the church and be extensively used by God for Christian service. (Mal. 2:14- 17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6).

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### **Abortion**

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion, in most cases, and never as a replacement for birth control, constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life (Job 3:16; Psalms 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24. 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44).

### **Article 4. Doctrine of the Church**

We believe the Church is the body of Christ, all Christians everywhere.

We believe the local church is an organized body of believers in Christ who assemble to worship God, make disciples, and maintain and practice the ordinances of the Gospel.<sup>8</sup> The local church is autonomous and has been given the power of the new testament church that includes the licensing and ordination of men into ministry of the church.

<sup>8</sup> Ephesians 2:19; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2, 12:12-13; Colossians 1:18, 24;  
Ephesians 1:22-23; Acts 15:1 ff; Matthew 28:16-20

### **Article 5. Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures**

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plenary-inspired Word of God as written in the original manuscripts. The Holy Scriptures are God's revealed word to mankind and are a sufficient and infallibly true rule and guide to salvation and all Christian life, worship, and service.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> John 5:39; Romans 15:4; Hebrews 1:1-2; 2 Peter 1:18-21; 2 Timothy 3:16

The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible, and God-breathed and, therefore, are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are God's complete and divine revelation to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning. The King James or ***New King James Version*** of the Bible shall be the official translation used by this church. The Pastor and Deacon Board must approve any other versions of the Bible used. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21;)

### **Dispensationalism**

We believe that the Scriptures, interpreted in their natural, literal sense, reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life, which define man's responsibilities in all ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation but are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these dispensations, the law, the church, and the kingdom, are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture. (Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10. 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25,27; Rev. 20:2-6).

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### **Article 6. Doctrine of Salvation**

We believe that salvation is the restoration of mankind to a right relationship with God.

#### **General Provision:**

We believe God, through His Son Jesus Christ, provides salvation for all who repent and believe the Gospel.<sup>1</sup> The grace of God is offered to all through faith in Jesus Christ. It is a gift of God that cannot be earned, nor is it deserved. We believe that sinners are incapable of saving themselves but are drawn to God the Father by the Holy Spirit through Christ, His Son.<sup>2</sup> It is only by accepting God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ that an individual can enter into a relationship with God. Failure to heed the Spirit's call to salvation is one's own choice and results in eternal separation from God in Hell.

We believe that God desires all to come to repentance and the knowledge of the truth that they might be saved and not perish.<sup>3</sup> To this end, Christ has commanded the Gospel to be preached among all nations.<sup>4</sup>

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins (John 1:12; Eph.1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Pet.1:18-19).

<sup>1</sup> John 3:16 & 36

<sup>2</sup> 1 Timothy 2:4; John 14:6; Acts 16:6; John 1:9

<sup>3</sup> 2 Peter 3:9

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 28:19-20

#### **Faith:**

We believe that faith is the response of an individual in total trust and commitment to God's provision in Christ, and by faith alone, we are saved.<sup>5</sup> The power to believe is the gift of God, but believing is an act of the individual, which is required as a condition of salvation.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> John 3:18; Romans 10:9; Hebrews 11:6

<sup>6</sup> Ephesians 2:8; James 2:17

#### **Repentance:**

We believe that the repentance that leads to salvation is a change of one's heart, which includes a deep conviction, a penitential sorrow, a sincere confession, a decided hatred, and a forsaking of all sin.<sup>7</sup> God has commanded all mankind to repent, and without repentance in this life the sinner will perish eternally.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Psalm 32:3-5; Ezekiel 18:30; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Acts 3:19; Luke 13:5

<sup>8</sup> Acts 17:30

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### **Regeneration:**

We believe that regeneration is a person's instantaneous spiritual rebirth by the Holy Spirit, whereby the penitent sinner receives new life and becomes a child of God.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Ezekiel 36:26; John 1:12-13; 3:3; 5:24; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:5-6; Ephesians 2:1

### **Justification:**

We believe justification takes place when a person accepts by faith the atonement of Christ, is pardoned, and absolved from the guilt of sin, and is placed in divine favor before God.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Isaiah 53:11; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:16; Romans 5:1

### **Sanctification:**

We believe sanctification is the setting a part of a believer for continual growth in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ for service to God and to mankind<sup>11</sup> through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Peter 3:18; Galatians 2:20

<sup>12</sup> Acts 1:8

### **Separation:**

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. That separation from all religious apostasy, worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations is commanded by God (Rom. 12:1-2, 14:13; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).

## **Article 7. Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints**

We believe those who abide in Christ and remain faithful and true to Him, through grace, will persevere with the assurance of eternal salvation. Christians, however, retain their free will. If Christians willfully reject the Savior and Lord whom they earlier accepted, the salvation they once knew is no longer theirs. Therefore, they should remain faithful since it is possible for them to turn away from God and be eternally lost, making a shipwreck of their faith.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Chronicles 15:2; Ezekiel 33:18; John 15:6; I Corinthians 10:12; I Timothy 1:19; Hebrews 6:4-6; 2 Peter 1:10; Mark 13:13

We believe that all the redeemed who persevere are kept by the power of God through faith and are secure in Christ as they retain faith in Christ for salvation (Rom. 8:1; Eph. 2:8-10; 1 Pet. 1: 4-5, Mark 13:13).



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We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word. However, scripture clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to sin the flesh (Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).

### **Article 8. Doctrine of Individual Accountability**

We believe all people are accountable to God. We believe that a child's or an intellectually disabled person's inability to profess faith in Jesus does not prevent God from saving him or her. We also believe that God, in His compassion and mercy, draws these individuals to Himself in Heaven based on the sacrifice of Christ for all sins.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 18:2-5; Matthew 19:14; Luke 12:48; Romans 14:12

### **Article 9. Doctrine of Christian Service**

We believe it is the Christian's duty to share God's love with all people through compassion and service. Christians are to seek the well-being of the people of God in general, to do justly by all people, and to promote the honor and glory of God.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Zechariah 7:9; Matthew 25:35-40; Acts 20:35; Galatians 6:1-2; 10; Colossians 3:13-14; 1 John 3:17-18; Ephesians 4:12

### **Missions**

We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ, we must use all available means to support home and foreign missions. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20).

### **Article 10. Doctrine of the Lord's Day**

We believe in the sanctity of the first day of the week. According to the Gospel, Sunday is observed in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ. Sunday is to be observed in the corporate and private worship of God as much as possible.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Exodus 20:10-11; Leviticus 23:3; Matthew 28:1-7; Mark 16:1-6; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Revelation 1:10; Acts 20:7

### **Article 11. Doctrine of Worship**

We believe worship is the adoration of God and is required of all His children through praise, prayer, and the reading and preaching of His Word. Every Christian may worship God privately; however, this should never replace the corporate worship of the church.

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We believe, in addition to the ordinances of the Gospel, other practices of worship are valid for use by the local church. Some of these are laying on of hands, anointing the sick with oil, fasting, singing praise to God, corporate affirmation of faith, and corporate prayer.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Psalm 100; 103:1-4; Matthew 6:16-18; Mark 6:13; John 4:23-24;  
Acts 2:46-47; Ephesians 5:19; Philippians 3:3; 1 Timothy 4:14;  
James 5:14; 1 Peter 2:9; Psalm 95:6

### **The Church**

We believe that the local church, which is the body of Christ, is solely made up of born-again persons (1 Cor. 12: 12-14; 2 Cor. 11: 2; Eph.1: 22- 23; 5:25-27)

We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches are clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11).

We recognize water baptism, the Lord's Supper, and foot washing as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age (Matt. 28:19-20; John 13:1-17; Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor.11: 23-26).

## **Article 12. Doctrine of the Ordinances of the Gospel**

We believe our Lord Jesus Christ instituted three sacred ordinances.

### **Christian Baptism:**

We believe baptism is the immersion of believers in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> Baptism symbolizes the burial and resurrection of Christ, the death of Christians to the world, the cleansing of their souls from sin, their rising to newness of life, their commitment to serve God, and their resurrection at the last day.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mark 16:16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38, 10:48; 22:16; Matthew 28:19

<sup>2</sup> Acts 2:41; 8:12,38; 9:18; 16:15; 18:8; 19:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13, 15:29;  
Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:2; 1 Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3-4

### **The Lord's Supper:**

We believe the Lord's Supper is a commemoration of the death of Christ for our sins. Christ used the bread as the symbol of His broken body and the cup as the symbol of His shed blood. In receiving the bread and cup, believers express their communion with and commitment to Christ, their expectation of His return, and their hope of eternal life.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 26:20-29; Mark 14:18-25; Luke 22:14-20; I Corinthians 10:16, 21;  
I Corinthians 11:23-26

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### **Washing the Saints' Feet:**

We believe Washing the Saint's Feet teaches humility, servanthood, and the need for daily cleansing from all sin. This practice was instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ as an example on the night of His Last Supper and betrayal.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> John 13:4-17; 1 Timothy 5:10; John 13:12-15

It is the duty and privilege of every believer to observe these sacred ordinances. We believe these ordinances are open to all believers.

## **Article 13. Doctrine of Christian Stewardship**

We believe the earth and everything in it is the Lord's. Christian stewardship is the godly management of all God's creation.

The Christian's life glorifies God by the proper use of His provision of time, talents, and resources.

The Scriptures teach tithing as God's financial plan for the support of His Church and its evangelistic mission. Furthermore, Christians are required to be faithful and generous in the use of their finances for the expansion of the mission of Christ in the world.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Ecclesiastes 3:1-18, 17; Malachi 3:8-10; Matthew 25:12-30; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8; Ephesians 5:16; 1 Peter 4:10-11

### **Giving**

As a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, we believe that every Christian is obligated to support his local church financially.

We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for forgiving. Every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the church's support, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel.

We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the tithe or offering once the gift has been made (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9- 10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17).

### **Lawsuits between Believers**

We believe Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes involving the church. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members in all church-related issues. (1 Cor. 6:1- 8; Eph. 4:31-32).

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### **Article 14. Doctrine of Death and Immortality**

We believe, as a result of sin, every person is subject to death of the body. However, the soul does not die with the body but immediately after death enters into either eternal life or eternal damnation, according to the individual's relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>6</sup> We believe there is much mystery associated with the act or fact of dying; therefore, no living person can completely understand it. However, the Bible assures us that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, changed death from the destroying scourge to the doorway to Heaven to all who exercise saving faith in Him.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 10:28; Luke 23:43; Ecclesiastes 12:7

<sup>7</sup> Romans 14:8; Philippians 1:21; 2 Corinthians 5:6-9

#### **The First Man is the origin of our sin:**

We believe that Adam, while in the Garden of Eden in a state of innocence and in the image of God,<sup>1</sup> was commanded by God not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and if he did, he would surely die. As a result, Adam was liable or subject to death,<sup>2</sup> but not under the result or penalty of it. However, when he disobeyed and rebelled against the command of God, he passed under the result and penalty of death, and as Adam represented all the human race, death passed upon all men.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1:26,27, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

<sup>2</sup> Genesis 2:16,17; Proverbs 8:36; Romans 6:23;8:6; James 1:15; 5:20; Revelation 21:8; Ezekiel 18:20, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

<sup>3</sup> Psalm 49:10; 89:48; Ecclesiastes 8:8; 1 Corinthians 15:21,22; Romans 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

<sup>4</sup> Psalm 116:15; Proverbs 14:32; Luke 16:22; 23:43; Romans 14:8; 2 Corinthians 5:1; Philippians 1:21; Hebrews 11:13; Revelation 6:9; 14:13; 2 Corinthians 5:6-9, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."

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### **Article 15. Doctrine of the Resurrection**

We believe in the resurrection of the body<sup>8</sup>: the Christian to eternal life in Heaven with a glorified body like Jesus and the non-Christian to eternal damnation in the lake of fire.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:49-57

<sup>9</sup> John 5: 28-29

#### **The Eternal State**

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28,29; 11: 25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13).

We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss, they await the rapture of the Church, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; I Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6).

We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until their soul and body are reunited at the Great White Throne Judgment and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, where they shall suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark. 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15).

### **Article 16. Doctrine of Last Things**

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father. He will come again to glorify His saints, to judge the world, to complete His Eternal Kingdom, and to establish a new heaven and a new earth.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 24:26-27 & 44, 25:31-32, 26:64; Mark 14:62; Luke 12:37-40; Acts 1:11; 1 Corinthians 1:7; Philippians 4:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-5:6, 23; 1 Timothy 4:1 & 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:28; 10:37; James 5:8; Jude 14-15; Revelation 1:7, 3:11, 16:15, 22:20

#### **The Second Advent of Christ**

We believe in that "blessed hope," the personal, imminent return of Christ, who will rapture His Church prior to the seven-year tribulation. At the end of the seven years, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom, which was promised to the nation of Israel (Ps. 89:3-4; Dan. 2:31-45; Zech. 14:4-11; I Thess. 1:10; 1Thess. 4; 13-18; Titus 2:13; Rev. 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6).

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### Article 17. Doctrine of Angels

We believe angels are created spiritual beings. They are not spirits of the dead, nor are they glorified human beings. Angels are ministering spirits and messengers of God.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> 1 Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:14; Matthew 4:11; Luke 22:43; Psalms 104:4; Genesis 22:11-12, 31:11-13; Judges 13:3-5; Luke 1: 11-24; Matthew 1:20-21

#### The Work of Angels

Angels convey the instructions of God to men, announce special events, protect the faithful, both individually and collectively, and execute punishment on the adversaries of the work of God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nehemiah 9:6; Hebrews 1:14; Psalm 104:4; Hebrews 12:22, 24; Genesis 22:11,12; 31:11; Exodus 3:2; Genesis 16:11; Judges 13:3-5; Luke 1:5-24; 1:26-35; Matthew 1:20,21; Colossians 1:16

### Article 18. Doctrine of Satan

We believe Satan is a created being who fell through pride<sup>3</sup> and was cast out of Heaven<sup>4</sup> and is, therefore, depicted in Scripture as the prince of the power of the air<sup>5</sup> and the ruler of this world.<sup>6</sup> He maliciously hinders Christian endeavors<sup>7</sup> and is essentially the power of darkness,<sup>8</sup> the enemy of the Light<sup>9</sup> and of God, though he sometimes disguises himself as an angel of light.<sup>10</sup> Though Satan is all the above, he was and is defeated by the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:14-19; Luke 10:18

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah 14:15

<sup>5</sup> Ephesians 2:2

<sup>6</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:4

<sup>7</sup> Revelation 2:10

<sup>8</sup> Ephesians 6:12

<sup>9</sup> 1 John 1:5

<sup>10</sup> 2 Corinthians 11:14

<sup>11</sup> Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8

#### The Person of Satan

<sup>1</sup> Names applied to Satan in the Bible are Lucifer, Belial, Beelzebub, the Devil, the Evil One, the Accuser, the enemy, the tempter, the Prince of Demons, the prince of the power of the air, and the Ruler of this world.<sup>2</sup>

In the New Testament, Satan appears as a distinctive personality. He incites people to shut their ears to God's message.<sup>3</sup> He maliciously hinders Christian endeavor<sup>4</sup> and is essentially a power of darkness, the enemy of the Light and of God<sup>5</sup> though he sometimes disguises himself as an angel of light.<sup>6</sup>

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Though Satan is all of the above, man is a free moral agent<sup>7</sup> and is responsible for his own sins and is responsible for his acceptance or rejection of Christ<sup>8</sup> who gives victory over all evil.

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 14:12; 2 Corinthians 6:15; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15, 18-19; 1 Peter 5:8; Matthew 13:19; 1 John 5:18; Revelation 12:10; Matthew 13:39; Luke 10:19; Matthew 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:5; Matthew 9:34; 12:24; Mark 3:22; John 12:31; John 16:11; Ephesians 2:2, "Where in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."

<sup>2</sup> Revelation 2:9; 3:9; Mark 4:15, "And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts."

<sup>3</sup> 1 Thessalonians 2:18; 1 Corinthians 7:5, "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."

<sup>4</sup> Ephesians 6:12, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

<sup>5</sup> 2 Corinthians 11:14, "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

<sup>6</sup> Revelation 22:17, " ... And whosoever will let him take the water of life freely."

<sup>7</sup> Proverbs 8:4; Mark 16:15-16, "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

### **The Personality of Satan**

We believe that Satan is the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of Man, 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; Isa. 14:12- 17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

## ***SECTION 2 -AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH***

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all we believe. However, we believe that the preceding statement of faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members.

# Watson's Grove FWB Church

## Constitution

### ADOPTION

This constitution was adopted by a 100% percent vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present. A copy of this constitution shall be posted in the church office, on the church's website, and given to any existing or new members upon request. This constitution supersedes any other constitutions of the Church.

Date July 08, 2024

Clerk of Records Maegan Williams

### REVISIONS

Date of Revision	Reason for Revision	Notes
	Newly Declared Independent FWB Church	Changes made to stand alone without obligations to a denomination.
July 8, 2024	OFWB Articles of Faith changes from 22 to 18 as approved by the State Convention in May 2024.	This was a major change and affected almost every article. Watson's Grove sites were combined as needed to match these changes. The New King James Version was added as an approved translation to be used in church services.
October 8, 2023	Removed "Original" from the church's name after finding documentation showing the official legal name does not include the word "original".	This does not mean the church is separating from the OFWB denomination but only correcting to be legally correct.
October 2, 2022	Initial Release	