

COVENANT

STATEMENT OF FAITH

CONSTITUTION

HANOVER BAPTIST CHURCH
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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, and of the Son, and of 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 a sacred pre-eminence over all institutions of human origin; and 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 further covenant to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred 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, and 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.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as verbally inspired of God and inerrant in the original writings and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life. 2Pe 1.21; 2Ti 3.16-17
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Gen 1.1; Joh 10.30; Mat 28.19; Act 5.3-4
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, was born of the virgin Mary and is true God and true man. Isa 7:14; Mat 1:18-25; Col 2:9
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God and that he sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death but also the spiritual death which is separation from God and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature and are sinners by birth and by choice, positively inclined to evil and are ruined without defense or excuse. Gen 1.26-27; Gen 2.17; Psa 51.5; Psa 58.3; Rom 1.12-21; Rom. 5.12-21; 1Co 2.14
5. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice and that all who believe in Him are justified by His shed blood. 1Co 15.1-4; 2Co 5.21; 1Pe 2.24; Rom 5:9; 1Pe 1.18-19
6. We believe in the bodily resurrection of our Lord, His bodily ascension into Heaven, and His bodily presence there for us as High Priest and Advocate. 1Co 15.1-4, 15.10-15; Act 1.9-11; Heb 7:25; 1Jo 2.1
7. We believe in "the blessed hope," the personal, bodily, pretribulation, premillennial, and imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2Th 2; Joh 14.1-3; Mat 24.44
8. We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit and are thereby children of God and are eternally saved. Joh 3.3; Gal 3.24-26; 1Jo 5.1
9. We believe that Satan is literal and personal, the agent of the fall, the prince and power of this world, and that he shall be judged and eternally punished. Rev 20.1-10; Eph 2.1-4
10. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust, the eternal conscious punishment of the lost, and the eternal joy of the saved. Rev 20.1-10; 1Th 4.16-18
11. We believe that immersion is the only form of baptism revealed and commanded in the Scriptures; that it has no saving power, that it is only for those who are already saved; and that the new birth, which comes through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is the scriptural prerequisite to baptism. Therefore, only those who are old enough to believe for themselves should be baptized. Act 2.38; Act 8.35-38

12. We believe that the local church has two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, and that both should be exercised through the ministry of the church. Mat 28.19-20; 1Co 11.23-32
13. We believe that the Bible teaches that the following offices of the church should be held by men only: pastor and deacon. 1Ti 3.2,12
14. We believe that a New Testament church is a body of baptized believers, assembled for worship, service, and the spread of the Gospel to all the world. Act 2; Act 1.8; Mat 28.19-20
15. We believe that all the saved are called into a life of separation from all worldly and sinful practices. Rom 12.1-2; Jam 4.4; 1Jo 2.15-17

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I: PURPOSE

The church shall have as its objective full obedience to the will of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Founder and Head of the church.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of regeneration, and accepting both the statement of faith and the covenant held by this church may, upon baptism, be received into its membership.

Section 2: Members from other churches of the same faith and order, may be received by letter of recommendation and dismissal from their respective churches.

Section 3: Those who have been Scripturally baptized, and who accept the view of faith and practice as adopted by this church, may be received by virtue of their experience.

Section 4: Expelled members may, by a majority vote, be restored to membership on confession of their error, and by giving evidence of their repentance.

Section 5: The candidate for membership shall appear before the pastor or deacons for advice and instructions before his name is presented for membership.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP RULES

Section 1: Active Members. All those who show their interest in the welfare of the church by regular attendance and financial support shall be classified as active members providing their names are on the roll of the church. All those who because of sickness or infirmities are unable to attend shall be classified as active members providing their names are on the roll of the church.

Section 2: Non-Resident Members. All those who live too far from the church to remain active, but who prefer to remain as members and keep in touch with the church by advising the secretary of their address and sending an offering at least once a year, shall be classified as non-resident members.

Section 3: Inactive Members. All those who do not classify as non-resident members who, without reasonable excuse, do not attend regular services of the church for a period of three months, shall be placed on the inactive list. Names of the inactive members shall not be counted on any of the statistical reports. Any members on the inactive list shall automatically become active upon their resumption of regular attendance and financial support for a period of not less than thirty days. Inactive members do not have the right to vote.

ARTICLE IV: DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Section 1: It is the duty of all members to read the church covenant at least once each year and strive to adhere to the standards outlined therein.

Section 2: All members should bring themselves to the realization that we are a part of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we are of the household of faith, and that in God's sight we are brothers and sisters. It is therefore our duty to love and pray for our church as our earthly home, and to strive to honor our Lord in all we do and say, while bearing in mind that we are epistles of Christ, known and read by men.

Section 3: Because our church depends upon the tithes and offerings of our members, we assert our conviction that tithing is a distinct and positive command in the Scriptures and pledge ourselves to support the church with 10% of our income as we believe God requires of us according to the principle laid down in Mal 3:8-11 and 1Co 16:2.

ARTICLE V: WITHDRAWAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Membership in this church shall terminate as follows:

- (a) By granting letters of dismissal to another church.
- (b) By granting certificates of standing to members who desire to unite with other fundamental churches.
- (c) By erasure. Members who are known to be deceased or who have joined some other church and those who request that their names be dropped from the membership may be erased from the roll.
- (d) By expulsion for disorderly walk by the majority of the members present at a specially called meeting by the pastor and deacons.

Section 2: Resignation of Members. Any member may resign from the church by delivering a written resignation to the pastor or body of deacons.

Section 3: Discipline. Corrective discipline has for its aim the glory of God, the welfare and purity of the church, and the spiritual growth of the offender. The disciplining of the church shall be formative and corrective. Offenders shall be brought before the pastor and deacons, who will bring such matters before the church when deemed necessary to expel a member from the membership.

ARTICLE VI: RELATION TO OTHER CHURCHES

This church shall be fully autonomous in the government of its own affairs, exercising and retaining sole and complete control of all property, which shall be held in its name by Trustees elected by the voting membership of the church and duly appointed by the court under the laws of the Hanover County Court. True Christian fellowship and cooperation with all genuine believers and congregations of believers shall be diligently sought and cherished. However, control of the affairs or property of the church must never be surrendered to any other church, association, or organization.

ARTICLE VII: OFFICERS

The officers of this church shall be as follows: pastor, deacons, clerk, treasurer, financial secretary, trustees, Sunday school superintendent, and Sunday school teachers. The office of pastor, deacon, treasurer, financial secretary, trustee, and Sunday School superintendent shall be held by men only. All officers of the church and all Sunday school teachers shall: (1) Be loyal to the church programs, (2) Be faithful to all public services of the church, (3) Be separate from worldliness.

ARTICLE VIII: DUTIES AND QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS

Section 1: Duties of the Pastor. The pastor shall be responsible to God and to the people of Hanover Baptist Church for its leadership and direction. He shall be moderator of the church, and an ex-officio member of all committees, special meetings, or bodies who meet in the church's name. He shall have a standing invitation to all activities that represent the church, its membership, its business or its testimony in any way. He may call for special business meetings, committee meetings, or meetings of the church concerning church business. He shall generally oversee and supervise the spiritual lives of the members of the church, the regular church services, and the administration of church ordinances. The pastor shall, by the grace of God, declare the whole council of God, realizing the sacredness of his office, and his responsibility to feed and motivate the flock of God. He shall be treated with love, respect and honor, as outlined in the scripture (Heb 13.7, 17, 24; 1Ti 5.17, 19). He shall devote his time and energies to the welfare of the church. He shall affirm the statement of faith each year at the annual meeting. The pastor shall find proper personnel to fill staff positions as needed.

Section 2: Qualifications of the Pastor. The pastor's qualifications shall be determined by 1Ti 3.1-7.

Section 3: Staff.

- (a) Position of Staff. The staff members will function as an extended arm of the pastor's ministry, directly under the pastor and shall be subject to the pastor in an employer-employee relationship. All personnel salaried by the church and its organizations shall be the pastor's staff.

(b) Procedure of Staff Employment. When it becomes necessary to bring in additional salaried personnel, the following method will be pursued:

- (1) A request will be made to the church in a duly called business meeting for the filling of a specific position. A job description, qualification list, and projected salary shall be submitted at that time. The congregation shall then vote upon the position and responsibilities.
- (2) The pastor shall then make a search for candidates, acquainting them with the responsibilities incumbent to the position. Then he shall secure from the candidate a full biographical resume. These papers shall then be open to congregational inspection.
- (3) The pastor shall then declare a period of time when both pastor and congregation will pray concerning the right decision. During this time the pastor will be open to any further information concerning a candidate. A special meeting will be held to allow the church to either accept or reject the candidate.
- (4) The pastor shall then approach the prospective candidate, whom he has decided upon, with a copy of the statement of faith. The candidate must be willing to sign the statement of faith without qualification. At no time shall the job description or salary be changed without the congregation having the opportunity to vote on the changes.
- (5) Terms of severance are as follows:

If the pastor considers the work of the staff member unsatisfactory, he may terminate the staff member's services in one of two ways. First, with the approval of the church membership, by submitting in writing that the staff member's services will no longer be needed, and his time of service will be up in thirty days. If so, he will work for thirty days, and receive two weeks termination pay, in addition to his regular month's wages. Any housing provided by the church will need to be vacated within sixty days of termination notice. Secondly, in case of serious problems the staff member may be dismissed immediately by the pastor according to the following procedure. His termination must be presented to him in writing by the pastor (or if the church is without a pastor, the chairman of the deacons) before two witnesses. At such time, his services shall be terminated at once. He shall be issued thirty days severance pay to be paid at regular pay periods. All housing must be vacated within a thirty-day period.

Termination may be desired by the staff member. If so, he shall submit written notice of his resignation at least three months before his intended time of termination.

Section 4: Duties of the Deacons. The deacons shall serve as the pastor's cabinet. There shall be a pastor and deacons' meeting once each month and the church finances shall be reviewed at this meeting. The pastor and deacons shall examine questionable applicants for membership. All matters of discipline shall be referred to the pastor and deacons. The information received through investigation shall be kept in strictest confidence. It shall be the duty of the deacons to

seek out such members of the church as need their relief, to visit the sick, to prepare and distribute elements of the Lord's Supper, to promote the spiritual interest as delegated by the pastor, and to cooperate and assist the pastor in the performance of his duties. Specific areas of responsibility may be assigned by the pastor to the deacons. When the deacon or deacons are assigned to these specific areas of responsibility, they shall give their report at the monthly pastor and deacon's meeting.

Section 5: Qualifications of Deacons. The qualifications of deacons shall be determined by 1Ti 3.8-13.

Section 6: Chairman of Deacons. The deacons will appoint a member to serve as the chairman of deacons. The chairman shall keep a record of the minutes and proceedings of all meetings. The chairman shall act as moderator of the church in the absence of the pastor provided the pastor has been notified of the meeting. He will serve as moderator of business meetings if the pastor is absent and coordinate the activities of the deacons. His appointment shall be for one year. He may be reappointed for a second and third term. His appointment shall be by secret ballot.

Section 7: Number of Deacons. The church should have one deacon for every fifty members, if there are enough qualified men in the church. If not, the deacons will operate with those who are qualified at a greater ratio until sufficient qualified candidates become available.

Section 8: Clerk. The clerk shall keep a complete record of all the official acts of the church. He shall certify all documents upon the order of the church. He shall keep a complete and accurate registry of the active, inactive and deceased membership. The clerk shall perform other duties as deemed necessary by the pastor. The clerk shall be elected annually to a one year term.

Section 9: Treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to pay out all monies deemed necessary to meet the budgetary obligations of the church. He shall give a monthly financial statement to the church that shall be kept on file. No designated special fund shall be differed from its original purpose except by a church vote. The treasurer must be bonded to the projected amount of the monthly budget. The treasurer shall be elected annually to a one year term.

Section 10: Financial Secretary. It shall be the duty of the financial secretary to receive all monies from the ushers. He shall keep an accurate account of the total monies received. The financial secretary must be bonded to the projected amount of the monthly budget. The financial secretary shall be elected annually to a one year term.

Section 11: Finance Committee. It shall be the duty of the finance committee and financial secretary to receive all offerings, to count the money together, to keep a record of the same, and to deposit the same to the account of the church.

Section 12: Records. The records of all the officers and committees shall be delivered to the properly elected successor and be kept in the church.

Section 13: No member may be considered as a candidate for any elected or appointed office until he has been a member of Hanover Baptist Church for six months prior to his nomination or appointment.

Section 14: Trustees. The trustees shall be appointed by the church membership upon recommendation by the pastor and deacons for an indefinite period of time. Trustees are to sign and represent the church in all legal matters concerning church business. Trustees have no authority outside the legal realm and that invested to them by virtue of the decisions enacted by the church authorizing the trustees to act on their behalf. The church must maintain at least three trustees at all times.

ARTICLE IX: DUTIES AND QUALIFICATIONS OF COMMITTEES

Section 1: Committees. A committee is a group of people chosen to investigate a specific need. Its personnel shall be chosen by the moderator and it should be dissolved when its need has been fulfilled unless the constitution designates it as a standing committee.

Section 2: Standing Committees. The church may establish by a three-fourths vote a standing committee to do a specific investigatory work within the framework of the constitution, as the church deems necessary. Each committee offered as a new standing committee must be submitted as an amendment to the constitution.

- (a) Budget Committee. The budget committee shall consist of two deacons and three members of the church. They shall be appointed by the pastor and deacons before the annual business meeting. They shall be responsible to meet with the pastor and assist in the preparation of the tentative budget for the next year after the annual meeting. They remain in session until the church adopts the budget. Then the committee is dissolved, and a new committee is formed the following year.
- (b) Discipline Committee. The discipline committee shall consist of two deacons and three male members at large, appointed at the annual business meeting. A three-fourths vote of the deacons or pastor and one-third of the deacons shall activate the discipline committee whenever a charge is brought to anyone of them concerning the personal character of a church member. All information received through an investigation shall be kept secret by the committee and is to be reported back to the pastor and deacons for action as they deem necessary.
- (c) Audit Committee. The audit committee shall consist of one deacon and two male members of the church. They shall be appointed by the pastor and deacons. They shall be responsible to meet with the treasurer in the month of January for the purpose of reviewing the financial records from the previous year. They shall make a written report of their findings to be read at the next business meeting.

ARTICLE X: TERM OF OFFICE

Section 1: The pastor. The pastor shall be elected for an indefinite term, which shall terminate upon thirty days written notice by either the pastor or the church. The pastorate shall terminate immediately upon the pastor's refusal to affirm the statement of faith as herein set forth. Upon termination, severance pay shall be extended no more than 30 days at the sum commensurate with the past regular salary.

Section 2: The deacons shall serve a regular term of three years with terms so staggered that one-third shall be elected each year.

ARTICLE XI: GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Section 1: Meetings and Reports.

- (a) Sunday Meetings. The church shall meet regularly every Lord's Day for public worship of Almighty God, and which are namely the Sunday school hour, the morning service, and the evening service.
- (b) Prayer Meeting. The church shall meet at least once during each week for prayer and thanksgiving.
- (c) Lord's Supper Service. The church shall observe the ordinance of our Lord's Supper at the evening service of the first Sunday of each month unless otherwise ordered by the pastor. Provided, however, that our Lord's Supper be observed at least once each month.
- (d) Annual Business Meeting. The annual business meeting shall be on a Sunday night in November, if possible, to be effective January 1, next year.
 - (1) At this meeting, all reports of the previous year's activities shall be submitted from each department within the framework of the church.
 - (2) A budget shall be prepared of all activities within the church for the church's approval.
 - (3) The election of officers shall be at this meeting.
 - (4) A special record of the annual meeting and all reports pertinent thereto shall be compiled and a copy made available to each church member family and to the church archives.
- (e) Special Meetings. All special meetings may be called by the moderator. Notice of such meetings shall be given from the pulpit on the preceding Lord's Day.
- (f) The church shall be given proper notice before action can be taken which involves the expenditures of more than \$500, whenever such expenditure is not clearly provided for in the budget.

- (g) Such meetings not previously outlined are to be called by the pastor or chairman of the deacons except in the dismissal of the pastor which meeting shall be called by the chairman of the deacons.
- (h) New business shall be submitted to the church in specially called meetings through the monthly pastor and deacon's meeting. A member desiring new business may submit it in writing to the pastor and deacons for consideration and a written report shall be returned to the individual concerning pending action.
- (i) Reports. There will be a yearly audit made available to every member family who requests it. So that the church may be properly informed, there will be a quarterly statistical report of all phases of the church activities, financial, Sunday school statistics, etc.

Section 2: Quorum. In order to transact business at any meeting, a quorum shall be 10% of the active voting membership.

Section 3: Voting

- (a) Only active members 16 years of age and older are eligible to vote on any church matter.
- (b) The vote of a majority of the members present on any matter at a meeting of members at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the members on that matter, unless the vote of a greater number is required by law or by this constitution. Voting on all matters except the election of deacons shall be by voice vote or by showing of hands unless any member present at the meeting shall, prior to the voting on any matter, request a ballot vote on that particular matter.

Section 4: Elections

- (a) The election of officers shall come from the list of names presented by the pastor and deacons.
- (b) The pastor shall be elected as provided for in Article X, Section 1. Upon removal of the pastor, the deacons shall without any unnecessary delay, confer with possible candidates for the office, and from the candidates so conferred with, the deacons shall make their recommendation to the church. No election or dismissal of a pastor shall take place except at a meeting called for that purpose of which public notice has been given by the deacons at least two previous Sundays. A three-fourths vote by ballot of the members present shall be necessary to an election of a pastor and a three-fourths vote of the members present for his removal, due notice having been given on two previous Sundays.

ARTICLE XII: DEPARTMENTS OF THE CHURCH

Section 1: The departments of the church shall be the Sunday school and such supplementary departments to be helpful in this ministry. Sunday school teachers shall be considered by the pastor and Sunday school superintendent to determine where they would best fit. Each Sunday

school teacher shall have an annual review pertinent to his teaching, visitation, testimony, and conduct as a Sunday school teacher.

Section 2: In general, all organizations must be contributory to the purpose of the church and their officers must be chosen with the goal of most effectively contributing thereto.

Section 3: Constitutions of all supplementary organizations of the church shall be consistent with the church constitution.

ARTICLE XIII: ORDER OF BUSINESS

Section 1: The pastor of the church or, in his absence, the chairman of the deacons shall act as moderator in all meetings for the transaction of business.

Section 2: It shall be the duty of the moderator to keep, state and explain propositions.

Section 3: The moderator shall cause the meeting to be opened and closed with prayer.

Section 4: The moderator shall call for the business of the church in the following order:

- (a) Read the minutes of the previous meeting.
- (b) Present candidates for membership at any regular church service.
- (c) Receive letters of dismissal from sister churches.
- (d) New business shall be handled according to Article XI, Section 1,h.

Section 5: All business proceedings of the church shall be governed by basic principles of Robert's Rules of Order unless the constitution states otherwise.

ARTICLE XIV: PERSONAL CONDUCT

Section 1: Regulations concerning personal conduct within the church family.

- (a) Slanderous Gossip Forbidden. Since there is a channel provided for the church to deal with a brother or sister accused of misconduct [Article IX.2(b)], there is, therefore, no reason for critical comments concerning members of the church family. Any person who makes a statement against another church member of a negative critical nature, or any malicious nature, even if true, shall be subject to church discipline, because they have not followed proper church channels concerning derogatory information concerning a fellow church member.
- (b) Circulation of Unauthorized Petitions Forbidden. Unless a petition has either been authorized by the pastor and the deacons, or else submitted to them and its contents approved before circulation, it cannot be accepted as church business. Even petitions approved cannot be submitted as church business without at least a thirty-day cooling off period.

(c) Secret Meetings Forbidden. Any meeting held outside the authorization of the church constitution and/or congregational endorsement shall be declared illegal and its business shall be declared null and void. If the business of the unauthorized meetings was in any way derogatory to the church, its pastor, its deacons, its officers, or its staff, then all involved in the unauthorized meeting are subject to church discipline.

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