

Constitution of The Alfred Almond Bible Church

Adopted by the membership in 1976.

*Revised by the membership on April 12, 1978, February 27, 1983, April 13, 1983,
December 4, 1996, May 11, 2016, August 23, 2021.*

ARTICLE ONE: Name and Purpose

Section One

The name of this body of believers in Christ shall be:
The Alfred Almond Bible Church, Incorporated thusly and recorded in the County Clerk's Office in Belmont, New York, on July 19, 1976.

Section Two

The purpose of this church shall be to make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20) by:

1. Presenting the gospel to every person in the Alfred-Almond community and surrounding area and by prayer and financial support helping carry the gospel to every person worldwide;
2. Establishing believers in the faith through a teaching ministry and through personal counseling;
3. Providing Christian fellowship and encouragement for all believers in our community who wish to fellowship with us.

ARTICLE TWO: Articles of Faith

The Articles of Faith of AABC does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself is the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and proper conduct of mankind. Therefore, it is the sole and final source of all our beliefs and conduct. For the purposes of AABC, the Elders are the final interpretive authority on the meaning and application of Scripture regarding our faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline (Psalm 19:7-14; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12-13; 2 Peter 1:19-21).

We believe:

1. That God inspired the words of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments (2 Timothy 3:15-17), that they are without error in the original manuscripts (Proverbs 30:5; Psalm 119:160), and that they are the final authority, sufficient for all matters of faith and living (2 Peter 1:3-4).
2. That there is one true God (1 Timothy 2:5), Creator and Ruler of the universe (Genesis 1:1; Colossians 1:15-17), eternally existing as three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—with each person performing different functions while at the same time possessing all divine attributes and divine perfection (2 Corinthians 13:14; Matthew 28:19; John 17:5; Hebrews 9:14; Acts 5:3-4).

3. That the eternal Son of God took on human form as Jesus Christ (John 1:1-18; Romans 9:5), conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38), lived a sinless life (1 Peter 2:22-24) as fully God and fully man (1 Timothy 2:5), died as an atoning sacrifice to pay for sin (Romans 3:25; 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24), rose from the dead on the third day (Luke 24:6-7; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 12-21), ascended to heaven (Acts 1:9), where he sits at the right hand of God the Father (Ephesians 1:20) and intercedes for his people (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24-28); and that he will physically return to the earth in glory (Acts 1:11; Revelation 19:11-16).
4. That the Holy Spirit is a person; that he brings about the new birth (John 3:3-8) and takes up immediate and permanent residence within each believer (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20); that he baptizes each believer into the body of Christ at the moment of conversion (1 Corinthians 12:13); and that he sanctifies and continues to transform believers into the likeness of Jesus (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Peter 1:2).
5. That God created angels as his servants and messengers (Psalms 103:20-21; 104:3-4), but some sinned and abandoned their positions (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6), following the lead of Satan (Matthew 25:41), who was one of these created angelic hosts (Job 1:6); that, after rebelling against God, Satan enticed Adam and Eve to rebel against God as well (Genesis 3:1-7; Revelation 12:9) and ever since has been leading humanity in rebellion against God (Ephesians 2:1-2), blinding their minds to the truth of the gospel (2 Corinthians 4:4), manipulating, tempting, deceiving, afflicting, and even killing them (Luke 13:11, 16; John 8:44; Acts 5:3; 1 Corinthians 7:5; Hebrews 2:14); that Satan continues to harass, threaten, and oppose followers of Jesus (2 Corinthians 11:14-15; 2 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:17); that Jesus has decisively defeated Satan in his death and resurrection (Genesis 3:15; John 12:31; Colossians 2:13-15; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8); and that Satan is doomed to be thrown into hell where he will be tormented night and day forever and ever (Revelation 20:10).
6. That Adam and Eve were created by God in his own image through a special act of creation as the first human beings (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7, 18, 21-23), but, though they were created sinless and upright (Ecclesiastes 7:29a), they willfully disobeyed the one prohibition God had given them and thereby brought sin and death into the world and became alienated from God (Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-24; Romans 5:12); that since then, all people are born unrighteous sinners, enslaved to sin, alienated from God, dead in sin, deserving of God's wrath (Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:18; Romans 3:9-10, 23; 6:17-20), unable to please God (Romans 8:7-8), with hearts prone to self-deception (Jeremiah 17:9); that, in spite of all this, all human life is sacred, created by God in his image (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalms 8:3-8; 139:13-16), and of inestimable worth from conception through natural death, specifically including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition.

7. That salvation from sin, death, and the wrath of God (John 11:25; Romans 5:9; 6:17-18) is a free and everlasting gift of God, entirely of grace and apart from anything a person can do to either earn or keep it (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9); that eternal life is received by trusting Jesus for his crucifixion and resurrection on the sinner's behalf (John 1:12-13; 10:28; Romans 3:25; 4:24-25) and turning away from sin (Acts 11:18); that salvation includes every necessary provision for godly living (2 Peter 1:3) and that everyone who trusts Jesus shows evidence of having been born of the Spirit (1 John 5:1), growing to live a life of love and good deeds (1 John 4:7; Ephesians 2:10), as the Spirit produces fruit in their lives (Galatians 5:22-23); that all true believers are kept eternally secure by the power of God through the new birth, the indwelling and sealing of the Holy Spirit, and the intercession of Jesus (John 6:37-40; 10:28-29; 1 Peter 1:5; Romans 8:34-39; Ephesians 4:30; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 7:25); and that when a person who has been saved dies, the spirit or soul of that person lives on, apart from the body, free from sin, sorrow, pain, and impurity, in heaven with Jesus (Luke 23:42-43; Philippians 1:20-23; 2 Corinthians 5:8).
8. That at conversion each believer is immediately united to the Church by the Holy Spirit, which is known as the body and bride of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-20; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18; Revelation 19:7; 21:9); that God's plan for the normal training, worship, and ministry of believers is the local church (Ephesians 4:11-16); that it is the responsibility of all believers to remember the work of the Lord through the local church in prayer and to support it with their means as the Lord has prospered them (1 Corinthians 9:8-14; Galatians 6:6); and that it is the responsibility of each believer, motivated by the love of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, to witness for Christ and to live sacrificially for the proclamation of the gospel to all the world (Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-48; 2 Corinthians 8-9).
9. That the Lord Jesus instituted two ordinances for the local church to practice until his return: the baptism of believers by immersion into water, as a symbolic act that vividly depicts how a believer has been united to Jesus in his death and resurrection (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:41; Romans 6:3-5), and the Lord's Supper, a symbolic act whereby believers vividly depict their faith in Jesus by gathering together to eat bread, representing Jesus's broken body, and drink the cup, representing Jesus's shed blood in his sacrificial death (1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 6:50-51, 53-58).
10. That Jesus will physically return to the earth (Acts 1:11) to wrap up history (Revelation 19:11-21) and to reign with his transformed people in the Millennium (Revelation 20:1-6); that he will bring about the bodily resurrection of all humanity (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15), including the unrighteous unbelieving dead who will face final judgment at the Great White Throne and be sentenced to endless punishment in hell (Revelation 14:9-11; 20:11-15); and that the final state of believers will be to live forever in the New Heaven and the New

Earth, experiencing everlasting joy in God's presence (Psalm 16:11; Revelation 21:3; 22:1-5).

ARTICLE THREE: Marriage, Sexuality, and Gender Identity

We believe that God wonderfully, permanently, and physically creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders work together to reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image and nature of God within that person and is sinful and offensive to God. Therefore, all references to man and woman in this statement refer to the biological sex given by God from conception.

We believe that God is the originator of marriage and that marriage is the single, exclusive union of one man and one woman as God intended from the beginning of creation (Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 10:6-9). Therefore, AABC will only recognize marriages between one man and one woman. Further, the Pastor(s) of AABC shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of AABC shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.

Furthermore, we believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). Intimate sexual activity of all kinds outside of this marriage relationship constitutes sexual immorality and is therefore sinful and offensive to God (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10). We believe that this includes all forms of sexual immorality including homosexual behavior, pre-marital sex, adultery, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, and the use or production of pornography.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all sinners, including the sexually immoral, who confess their sin, forsake it, and seek mercy and forgiveness through the person and work of Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). We believe that all people, despite their sin, should be shown love, compassion, kindness, respect, and dignity at all times (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual is to be repudiated and is not in accord with Scripture nor the beliefs and conduct of AABC.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of AABC as the local body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to our attendees and to the community, it is imperative that all members, employees, and volunteers (those who participate in our ministries and have signed the "Non-Member Participation" policy) of AABC agree with and abide by this statement on marriage, sexuality, and gender identity (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

ARTICLE FOUR: Church Covenant

Having been led by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior; and upon profession of our faith in Him, having been baptized according to the Scriptures; we do now in the presence of God and each other, most solemnly and joyfully enter into a covenant with one another, as one body in Christ, to endeavor to please God in every way, pursuing a manner of life consistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of the Church; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of this church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions, and to educate our children in spiritual things; to actively pray for and witness to our unsaved relatives and acquaintances; to be just, faithful, and exemplary in our dealings, realizing we are new creations in Christ and completely responsible to God for all our actions, being fully convinced of what is right in our own minds, but being careful to neither judge a brother in matters of personal conviction, nor cause a fellow Christian to stumble.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to be slow to take offense, always ready for reconciliation, and eager to secure it without delay.

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

ARTICLE FIVE: Membership

Section One – Eligibility

Any person shall be eligible for membership who meets the following (1 Corinthians 1:10):

1. who has expressed faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation (Acts 16:30-31);
2. who has been baptized after professing faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38, 41);
3. whose works display faith in Jesus (James 2:14-18);
4. who agrees to submit to the loving leadership of the Elders of this church (Hebrews 13:17);
5. and who unites with this body under the terms of the Constitution of this church.

Section Two – Procedure for Accepting New Members

The following procedure shall be followed for accepting new members into AABC:

1. Any person wishing to become a member of this church shall inform an Elder, and the Elder will provide the applicant with a Membership Application and a copy of this Constitution.
2. The applicant must return the completed application to an Elder and then coordinate with the Elders to take the membership class in its entirety.
3. After completing the membership class, the applicant shall be interviewed by at least two Elders, who will answer questions about this church as well as ask a series of questions to learn more about the applicant's eligibility for membership, doctrinal beliefs, history of church involvement, and seriousness of intent to actively support this church. Married applicants and their children may be interviewed together. (If the applicant has previously attended another church, an Elder may contact that church for references.)
4. The interviewing Elders shall make a recommendation to the Board of Elders regarding the applicant's eligibility.
5. The Board of Elders shall inform the body of eligible applicants in the church bulletin for two consecutive Sundays. During this time period, members are encouraged to provide feedback to the Elders regarding the applicant.
6. Having considered all the feedback, and being satisfied as to the applicant's eligibility, the Elders shall welcome the applicant into membership at a Sunday morning service, and this will be documented on the application, which will be kept on file in the church office.
7. If the Elders are not satisfied with the applicant's eligibility at any point in the process, the applicant's membership will be delayed. The Elders will recommend a plan for further encouragement and teaching that will take place with the hope of moving the applicant forward. If no progress can be made, membership will not be granted, and this will be documented on the application, which will be kept on file in the church office.

Section Three – Voting Eligibility

Upon reaching age eighteen (18), all members shall be eligible to vote.

Section Four – Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated by the following means:

1. death of the member;

2. written request of the member;
(The Elders will inform the body when a member requests that their membership be withdrawn.)
3. disciplinary removal;
(A member may be removed from membership as a result of any of the disciplinary actions described in Article Six.)
4. erasure.
(A member who is habitually absent from the services of the church for six months without due cause will be considered continually negligent of spiritual duties. The Elders will dismiss said individual at their discretion after having exercised due effort to restore them. An exception to this would be a member who is absent for an extended period due to Christian service, military service, education, obvious medical reasons, and other circumstances similar to the above. The names of those who have been dismissed will be mentioned to the membership at the next business meeting.)

ARTICLE SIX: Church Discipline

Section One – General Principle

Because Jesus places such a high value on each member of his body, and because Jesus sees sin as such a dangerous threat to the well-being of his people, he taught his disciples how to deal with sin when it occurs. Church discipline includes both the positive training and instruction of the church on how to live according to the Scriptures, as well as the correction of behavior that does not accord with the Scriptures. The three-fold aim of corrective discipline is the protection of God’s reputation, the purity and welfare of the church, and the spiritual restoration and growth of the individual believer. Every member of AABC is subject to the discipline of this church.

Section Two – Process of Corrective Church Discipline, Restoration, and Removal

1. Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another (1 Corinthians 12:14-26; John 13:34-35). When a member becomes knowledgeable of another member’s sin, he is to go alone to the offending party only after self-examination (Matthew 7:3-5; 18:15-18). As specified in our Church Covenant, each member is to endeavor to make reconciliation quickly (Matthew 5:23-25a; Ephesians 4:29-32).
2. If reconciliation is not reached, a second and/or third member, usually a mature Christian or an Elder, is to accompany after following the same procedure of self-examination and with a spirit of humility and a desire for restoration (Matthew 18:16).

3. If still unresolved, as a matter of wisdom and good order, the members who have lovingly confronted the offending party must report to the Elders. If the matter remains unresolved, the Elders must recommend to the church that all shall participate in prayerful, loving, and fervent effort to restore the offending party (Matthew 18:17a).
4. If, at any point during this process, the offending party admits the sin and repents, either the victim of the offense or the observer of the offense (as the case may be) may extend forgiveness, where needed, and then interact with the brother or sister as though the offense had never taken place and never speak of the matter to anyone again (Luke 17:3-4; Colossians 3:13).
5. However, if the matter remains unresolved after being reported to the Elders, then the Elders shall call for a meeting of the members, as specified in Article Nine. The members present shall hear from all parties involved, as well as the consensus of the Elders, and, if the offending party is in attendance, the members shall be given an opportunity to exhort the offending party to repent from the specific sin under consideration. If the offending party refuses to heed the counsel of this church, the members shall vote to remove the offending party from the membership of this church. A simple majority of the members voting shall be required for removal of membership (Matthew 18:17b; 2 Corinthians 2:6).
6. Once a person has been removed from membership, the rest of the members of this church shall view the party as an outsider of the church and an unbeliever (Matthew 18:17b). Because of the person's rejection of the church's counsel and refusal to repent from known sin, the members of this church must avoid even table fellowship with this individual (1 Corinthians 5:11). However, if a person who has been removed from membership from this church comes to admit the sin and demonstrate the fruit of repentance (Matthew 3:8), the person is to be welcomed back into membership by following the procedure laid out in Article Five above, and the members of this church are to treat such a person with forgiveness, comfort, and love (2 Corinthians 2:6-8).

ARTICLE SEVEN: Leadership

This church acknowledges only the Lord Jesus Christ as its Head (Ephesians 5:23) and the Holy Scriptures as its only infallible guide. Christ has given to the church gospel preachers and pastor-teachers (Ephesians 4:11-12) (who are also called overseers and elders in Acts 20:17-28) who lead and serve the church through preaching, teaching, and applying the whole counsel of God in the Scriptures, building on the foundational instruction of the apostles and prophets (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15). Christ has given the responsibility of authoritative teaching of the church body to qualified men (1 Timothy 2:12-3:7). While this precludes women from serving as elders and teaching the Scriptures to church gatherings that include both women and men, qualified women are encouraged to teach the Scriptures to groups of women, as well as to children and

teens (Titus 2:3-4), to serve alongside their husbands in discipleship efforts (Acts 18:24-26), and to otherwise lead and serve in non-teaching-oriented ministries.

The leadership of this church is conducted by the Board of Elders, with the accountability of the church membership. The members of this church vote to approve revisions to the Constitution, the annual budget(s), excessive financial transactions, the selection of Pastors, and the disciplinary removal of a member(s).

ARTICLE EIGHT: Organization

The officers of this church shall be:

1. Elders
2. Pastor(s) – salaried Elder(s)
3. Deacons
4. Church Treasurer
5. Church Financial Secretary
6. Church Clerk
7. Trustees

Section One – Elders

AABC operates under a plurality of male Elders which functions as a board. Each Elder is equal in authority. Scripturally, the terms elder, shepherd, pastor, and overseer refer to the same office (1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:17-28).

In this Constitution, a Pastor shall be defined as an Elder employed by the church. All Elders, whether employed by the church or not, are to be regarded as equal and worthy of the support, respect, and submission of the whole church.

The qualifications for an Elder shall be those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. There shall be no set number of Elders. Elder candidates shall be selected and appointed by the following procedure:

- 1) A candidate may be identified and submitted to the Elders by a member of the congregation.
- 2) The Elders will review the men and present those with scriptural qualifications as candidates to the congregation.
- 3) The Elders will allow a minimum period of two weeks for congregational response. During this period, members will be reminded of their responsibility to present any objections or concerns to the Elders.
- 4) If no objections are raised or remain after investigation and counseling with the candidate and the objector(s), the candidate shall be appointed by the unanimous affirmation of the Elders and presented to the congregation at a subsequent Sunday morning service.

Elders shall hold office as long as they meet the qualifications. An Elder should resign at any time he does not wish to remain in office. An Elder may be removed from office by both the unanimous consent of the other Elders and the consent of 75% of the total number of members eligible to vote. Charges for the removal of an Elder must be brought

with specific biblical basis or because of teaching contrary to the Articles of Faith or failing to fulfill the responsibilities summarized in this Constitution. Charges against an Elder shall not be considered on the basis of only one witness (1 Timothy 5:19).

The Elders shall be the spiritual shepherds of the church family (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-2). They shall oversee all the ministries of this church and interview all prospective members. They may delegate any special needs of this church to Deacons, individuals, or committees, which may only be comprised of members of this church. They shall meet together as often as they deem necessary, but no less than once a month.

Section Two – Pastor(s)

It shall be the policy of this church to have at least one Pastor (salaried Elder). No person shall be considered who cannot sign, without mental reservation, a statement accepting the Constitution of this church. The selection of a Pastor shall follow the first three steps of the procedure for the selection and appointment of Elders, and then shall be voted upon by ballot at a duly called meeting, as specified in Article Nine. A minimum of 75% of members submitting an affirming vote and the unanimous consent of the Elders shall be required to call a Pastor.

Section Three – Deacons

AABC also recognizes the biblical office of Deacon (Philippians 1:1). The qualifications for a Deacon shall be those listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-12. Men appointed to serve in this office will serve together as a board.

There shall be no set number of Deacons. Deacon candidates shall be selected and appointed by the following procedure:

- 1) A candidate may be identified and submitted to the Elders by a member of the congregation.
- 2) The Elders will review the men and present those with scriptural qualifications as candidates to the congregation.
- 3) The Elders will allow a minimum period of two weeks for congregational response. During this period, members will be reminded of their responsibility to present any objections or concerns to the Elders.
- 4) If no objections are raised or remain after investigation and counseling with the candidate and the objector(s), the candidate shall be appointed by the unanimous affirmation of the Elders and presented to the congregation at a subsequent Sunday morning service.

Deacons shall hold office as long as they meet the qualifications. A Deacon should resign at any time he does not wish to remain in office. A Deacon may be removed from office by both the unanimous consent of the Elders and the consent of 75% of the total number of members eligible to vote. Charges for the removal of a Deacon must be brought with specific biblical basis or because of teaching contrary to the Articles of Faith or failing to

fulfill the responsibilities summarized in this Constitution. Charges against a Deacon shall not be considered on the basis of only one witness.

The Deacons shall lead or coordinate projects that serve the church and free the Elders to focus on their duties (based on the principle of Acts 6:1-6). They shall meet together as often as they deem necessary, but, at least once a month, they shall meet together with the Elders. The Board of Deacons functions under the supervision of the Board of Elders.

Deacons shall annually select one of their number as a Chairman.

Section Four – Church Treasurer

The Board of Deacons shall annually select one church member to be the Church Treasurer. The Treasurer shall disburse all moneys as directed by the church and shall keep an accurate account of all moneys. The Treasurer's books shall be reviewed by the Annual Budget Committee prior to the Annual Meeting, and the results shall be given to the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders may, at their discretion, request an outside audit of the Church Treasurer's books.

Section Five – Church Financial Secretary

The Deacons shall annually select one of their number to be the Church Financial Secretary. The Financial Secretary shall receive all moneys, keep records of the amounts given by each individual for income tax purposes, record all designations, and make all deposits. He shall inform the Church Treasurer of the amounts given and the designations weekly. The Financial Secretary shall keep accurate records of all moneys received and shall give full reports to the Elders and Deacons at monthly meetings. The Financial Secretary's books shall be reviewed by the Annual Budget Committee prior to the Annual Meeting, and the results shall be given to the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders may, at their discretion, request an outside audit of the Church Financial Secretary's books.

Section Six – Church Clerk

The Board of Deacons shall annually select one church member to be the Church Clerk. It shall be the business of the Church Clerk to keep a record of the proceedings of the church, have charge of all records and all legal papers, keep a register of all members, and perform such other particular duties as shall be prescribed by the church.

Section Seven – Trustees

The Elders shall annually designate three Trustees from among the Board of Elders. The Trustees shall have the legal responsibility for the business affairs of this church in accordance with the laws of the State of New York.

ARTICLE NINE: Business Meetings

The fiscal year shall close June Thirtieth. The annual business meeting of the church shall be in the month of June. Other business meetings may be called by announcement during the Sunday morning services on the two Sundays preceding such meetings. Decisions voted on by the congregation require 50% of the current members voting.

ARTICLE TEN: Ordination

The Board of Elders shall have the authority to call and conduct an Ordination Council for the purpose of examining any man who is a member of AABC who expresses a desire for ordination as a minister of the gospel as relates to his education, Christian experience, reputation, character, doctrinal beliefs, and demonstrated effectiveness in Christian service. Once ordination has been granted, the Board of Elders may discipline any minister ordained by this church, even to the extent of revoking the ordination credentials, if the minister fails to adhere to those doctrines outlined in the Articles of Faith or is living a life inconsistent with clearly defined biblical standards. Such discipline would be exercised in cooperation with any church or service organization with which the minister had been active.

ARTICLE ELEVEN: Finances

The work of this church shall be supported entirely by voluntary offerings.

Before the annual meeting, the budget(s) will be prepared by a committee selected from a joint Elder-Deacon meeting held before March Thirty-First. This committee will include the Church Financial Secretary and the Church Treasurer. The proposed budget(s) will be ready for review by the second Sunday in May, and the Elders and Deacons will review and approve prior to submission to the congregation. This shall be a detailed budget(s) of the proposed expenditures for the coming year and shall be provided to the congregation for review at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting. The congregation will vote for final budget(s) approval at the annual meeting, as specified in Article Nine. A simple majority of affirming votes will be required for approving the annual budget(s).

No officers will sell, purchase, or transfer any real estate, or authorize a loan, except by the express authorization of the church at a duly called business meeting, as specified in Article Nine. A simple majority of affirming votes will be required for approving any such transactions.

No obligation shall be incurred to spend over 8% of the annual general budget, apart from budgeted items or planned capital projects, without a special vote of the congregation. Should such an expenditure be deemed necessary by the Elders or Deacons, a business meeting shall be called, as specified in Article Nine, and a simple majority of affirming votes will be required for approving any such expenditures.

ARTICLE TWELVE: Dissolution

No part of the assets of this corporation shall ever benefit any donor, member, or officer of the corporation, nor shall any private individual be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets. Upon dissolution, any assets of the corporation must be distributed to one or more organizations recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as one organized exclusively for religious or charitable purposes specified by the officers of this corporation. Such a corporation must be in agreement with the letter and spirit of this Constitution.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN: Revisions and Amendments

Revisions and/or amendments of this Constitution may be made only in the following manner:

- 1) The Elders shall unanimously agree upon proposed revisions and/or amendments.
- 2) The proposal shall be presented in written form to the members at least two weeks prior to a duly called business meeting, during which time members may submit comments regarding the proposal to the Elders.
- 3) Revisions and/or amendments to this Constitution shall be voted upon by ballot at a duly called meeting, as specified in Article Nine. A minimum of 75% of members submitting an affirming vote shall be required to adopt proposed revisions and/or amendments.
- 4) The revised version of this Constitution shall be made available to all church members by the church office, with the date of revision noted on the first page.