

# FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH CONSTITUTION



FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH

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*Experiencing Jesus, Transforming Lives*

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Fellowship Bible Church  
Longview, Texas  
Constitution

## **Article I: Name**

The name of this church shall be the *Fellowship Bible Church* of Longview, Texas.

## **Article II: Mission**

The Lord Jesus came to earth to call mankind into relationship with Himself.

*"This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."*  
(John 17:3).

*"God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."*  
(1 Corinthians 1:9)

Therefore, the mission of *Fellowship Bible Church* is to help *individuals* come into a vital and growing relationship with the Lord Jesus. *"Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."* (2 Corinthians 5:20). This is what we desire for ourselves and for others as well.

We believe that the Lord has called us to focus our primary efforts on those in Longview, Texas, and its near vicinities, while simultaneously seeking to carry out our mission throughout the world.

In our mission to help individuals come into a vital and growing relationship with the Lord Jesus, we have made it our goal to help each one....

1. **To Know Him** - by initially responding to the good news (John 17:3) and growing in the Word of God (Acts 2:41-42) and in one's walk with God (Philippians 3:10)
2. **To Love Him** - through joyful expression in worship (Ephesians 5:19-20) and intimate fellowship with His body, the Church (Mark 12:30-31; John 14:19; Acts 2:24-47; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 John 4:19)
3. **To Serve Him** - by providing the opportunity for each one to exercise spiritual gifts in this local body (Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:11-13; Colossians 3:23-24; 1 Peter 4:10)
4. **To Share Him** - by demonstrating the reality of this relationship with the Lord in our character (1 Timothy 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12; 3:15); in our love for one another and those outside of our body (John 13:35); and by inviting others to come into relationship with Christ (Acts 5:42).

### **Article III: Statement of Doctrine**

#### **Purpose**

This doctrinal statement expresses the beliefs of *Fellowship Bible Church* and is the basis for theological qualifications of Elders, Deacons, staff members, teachers, missionaries, and men seeking ordination.

#### **The Bible**

We believe that the words of the Old and New Testaments are verbally inspired by God and without error in the original manuscripts. We believe the Bible is to be interpreted in a normal and literal way and that it is understood as the believer is guided by the Holy Spirit of God. (Matthew 5:18; John 10:35; 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:14-16)

#### **God**

1. We believe in one God eternally existing in three equal persons — Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:18-19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)
2. We believe that God the Son became flesh in Jesus Christ. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary and is both God and man. (Matthew 1:1; 8:25; 26:38-41; John 1:14; 11:33; Hebrews 4:14-15)
3. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person possessing all the distinctively divine attributes. He is God. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He regenerates, seals, and sets apart the believer to a holy life. At regeneration He baptizes the believer into the body of Christ and comes to indwell him permanently. (Psalm 139:7; John 3:5-7; 14:16-17; 16:8; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; 12:11, 13; Ephesians 1:13; Titus 3:5)

#### **Man**

1. We believe that the first man and woman were created in the image of God and thus have great value in God's sight. But man sinned and consequently experienced not only physical death but also spiritual death (separation from God). The consequences of this sin affect the entire human race. All human beings are born with a sinful nature and, in the case of those who reach the age of moral responsibility, commit willful acts of sin. (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:17; 3:6; Jeremiah 17:9; Mark 7:20-23; Romans 3:23; 5:12-19; 6:23)
2. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men. Believers will be resurrected to be judged for their service with a view to rewards and to enjoy eternal life with God. Unbelievers will be resurrected to experience judgment for their sin with certain condemnation and then eternal suffering apart from God. (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; 15:52; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 20:4-6; 12-15; 21:1-8)

### The Past, Present, and Future Work Of Christ

1. We believe that Jesus Christ died for the sins of all humanity as a substitutionary sacrifice and that all who believe in Him are declared righteous on the basis of His shed blood. (Mark 10:45; Romans 3:24-26; 5:8-9; 10:9-10; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 3:18; 1 John 2:1-2)
2. We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ and in His ascension into heaven. Jesus now serves as high priest, intercessor, and advocate on our behalf with the Father. (Mark 16:19; John 20:25-27; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Hebrews 7:25-27; 1 John 2:1)
3. We believe in the personal, bodily return of Jesus Christ, in the glory of His Father, to set up on earth a kingdom in which He shall reign in righteousness and peace. (Isaiah 9:6,17; 11:2-5; Matthew 24:30; Acts 1:11; Revelation 20:4-6)

### Salvation

1. We believe that all who come to God must come through repentance whereupon the individual turns to God through confessing his or her sin to Him. (Luke 18:13-14; 24:46-47; Romans 3:23; 2 Peter 3:9)
2. We believe that whoever through faith receives Jesus Christ as God and personal Savior is born again and becomes a child of God. This salvation is not the result of any human effort or merit, because the full price of redemption was paid by Jesus' blood, which was shed for us. (John 1:12-13; Ephesians 2:8-9; Hebrews 7:26-27; 9:11-12,28)
3. We believe that all who are born of God are possessors of the Divine nature which is a new creation according to holiness and righteousness. This new life that abides in a believer will oppose fleshly desires and bear fruit which is of the Spirit of God. (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20; 5:17, 22-25).

### Life as a Christian

1. We believe that the power of God through the new birth, the indwelling and sealing of the Holy Spirit, and the intercession of Christ keep all true believers eternally secure. (John 10:28-30; 14:16-17; Romans 8:38-39; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 5:13)
2. We believe that sin continues to plague all believers in this life, but that God has made full provision for believers to resist temptation and to live by faith as children of God through abiding in Christ, growing in knowledge of the Bible which renews one's mind, and walking in the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. (Romans 6:6, 11-12; 8:14-15; 12:2; Galatians: 24-26)

3. We believe that all believers are to make progressive steps of growth toward spiritual maturity. True spiritual growth requires believers to die to self, forsake sin as a way of life, put to death the deeds of the flesh, and allow Christ to live in them for the purpose of being one with Christ and with His body, the church. This growth is fostered by regular, frequent study of God's Word, prayer, fellowship with believers, the exercise of faith and obedience in daily living, and the loving discipline of the Holy Spirit. (Proverbs 28:13; Isaiah 55:7; Galatians 2:20; 5:25-26; Ephesians 2:10; 6:18; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Peter 2:1-2; 1 John 3:8-9)
4. We believe that in order for the church to fulfill its God-ordained mission of edification and evangelism, believers have been given spiritual gifts. God sovereignly bestows these gifts so that each believer employs his or her spiritual gifts for the church to accomplish its mission. (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31; Ephesians 4:11-16)

#### The Church, the Body of Christ

1. We believe that the church in its invisible form is universal, the true body of Christ. All believers from the day of Pentecost until the church is caught up into heaven are members of the universal church, regardless of organizational affiliation. We believe that Christ ordained the observance of believer's water baptism and the Lord's Supper until He returns. (Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:24-26; 12:13; Ephesians 4:4-6; Colossians 1:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17)
2. We believe that the purpose of the church, in addition to building up every member of the body, is to make Christ known to the whole world. Every member of the body shares in this purpose. In relation to the world, believers are sent by Christ to communicate to unsaved people that God reconciles the world to Himself in Christ. (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:12-15; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Ephesians 4:11-16)
3. We believe in the imminent return of Christ for the church. All members of the body of Christ, living or dead, will at that time be caught up to be with the Lord forever. (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
4. We believe that the local church is to be shepherded by Elders having equal authority. The Elders are assisted by Deacons to carry out the ministry. Elders and Deacons are selected according to standards expressed by the New Testament. (Acts 14:23; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9)
5. We believe that members of the church who disgrace the name of Christ through conduct grossly unbecoming of a child of God should be confronted according to biblical procedures with the goal being their repentance and return to a godly lifestyle. (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8)

## Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

1. We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with the Bible nor the doctrines of Fellowship Bible Church.
2. We believe that God wonderfully and immutably oversees the crafting of each individual from the moment of conception including their biological makeup as male or female. (Gen. 2:22-23; Psalm 139:13-14) Therefore, it is imperative that the individual embrace their biological sexual identity as part of God's design.
3. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in the Bible. (Genesis 2:18-25) 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) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman.
4. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matthew 15:18-20; Romans 1:24-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10)
5. We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Fellowship Bible Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the members of Fellowship Bible Church and the community, it is imperative that all person employed by Fellowship Bible Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22)
6. We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21); Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

## Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct

The Statement of Doctrine in this Article III does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning trust, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Fellowship Bible Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Board of Elders is Fellowship Bible Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

## **Article IV: Government**

### **Section 1: Board of Trustees**

The government of this church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, is vested in the Board of Trustees, which shall be comprised jointly of the Board of Elders and the Board of Deacons.

#### **A. Selection of Elders and Deacons to serve on the Board of Trustees.**

1. Elder and Deacon nominees shall be generated by the current Trustees and reviewed by the Elders according to established procedures as well as the qualifications outlined in Article IV Sections 2 and 3.
2. Upon a unanimous consent of the Board of Trustees, the nominee shall be invited to be examined privately by the Board of Elders as to his desire and biblical qualifications to serve as an Elder or Deacon.
3. Candidates approved by the interviewing Elders shall be presented to the church verbally and in writing for a period of two weeks to solicit and encourage congregational input on each candidate's qualification for the office of Elder or Deacon.
4. Upon completion of the two-week period, the candidate may be elected to the board with a unanimous vote from the Board of Elders.
5. This process shall be applied to all nominees, including previous members of the board of Elders or Deacons.

#### **B. Officers**

The officers of the Board of Trustees shall be as follows:

1. The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall serve as Chairman of the Board of Trustees. He shall be responsible for setting agendas, as well as calling and presiding over meetings. Reasonable attempts shall be made to contact every member when a meeting is called.
2. The Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall serve as the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Trustees. He shall preside over meetings in the absence of the chairman.
3. The Secretary of the Board of Deacons shall serve as Secretary of the Board of Trustees. He shall be responsible for the corporate records and the dispensing of minutes to all board members and making them available to the church.
4. The Treasurer of the Board of Deacons shall serve as Treasurer of the Board of Trustees. He shall be responsible for the accounting of all corporate funds.

### C. Duties

The Board of Trustees shall meet yearly or as often as necessary to accomplish the following responsibilities:

1. Evaluate the ministries and operations of the church.
2. Establish long and short-range plans for future ministries and operations of the church.
3. Evaluate the ministries of the pastoral staff.
4. Authorize staff additions or dismissals.
5. Approve and amend the annual budget.
6. Approve any real property transactions and/or the incurrence of debt.
7. Approve any amendments to the Constitution of the corporation (See ARTICLE IX).
8. Approve pastoral staff job descriptions, policies, compensation and benefits.

### D. Conduct of Meetings

Meetings shall be conducted according to biblical principles of love and order along with sound business practices. A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the membership of the board. Reasonable attempts shall be made to resolve all differences and reach a unanimous decision; however, final decisions shall require approval by a minimum of three-fourths of those present.

### E. Resignation of a Trustee

An Elder or Deacon may step down from his position with submission of a letter of resignation and acceptance of the resignation by the necessary vote of the Board of Trustees.

## Section 2. Board of Elders

The Elders (non-vocational pastors), together with the Lead Pastor, make up the Board of Elders. These men are the spiritual overseers of the church. They shall be responsible under God for the spiritual welfare of the church.

### A. Selection of Elders

A Board of Elders shall be established to consist of a minimum of two men in addition to the Lead Pastor. The number will be based on the availability of qualified, willing men and the current need. Any man in the church, with the exception of the Associate Pastor(s), may be considered to serve as an Elder if he:

1. Has been a member in good standing for at least one year
2. Has demonstrated a pastor's heart
3. Is considered sufficiently mature
4. Meets the biblical requirements for spiritual leaders as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

Associate Pastors of the church are expected to serve as non-voting members of the Board of Elders. The procedure for selecting Elders is outlined in Section 1: Board of Trustees.

### B. Terms of Office for Elders

The term of office shall normally be for three years. Adjustments of one year either way can be agreed upon for the sake of staggering the completion of terms of office. At the end of an Elder's term, he will automatically be considered inactive unless re-nominated for the board.

When an Elder has served his term of office and has rotated off the administrative board he is still encouraged to continue his personal ministry of discipleship and spiritual oversight by:

1. Continuing his ministry of mentoring the small group leaders
2. Providing watch-care over the flock
3. Offering consultation to the Board on matters of significant consequence.

### C. Officers

The Board of Elders shall elect the officers of the Board of Elders to a term of one year. The officers shall consist of the following:

1. The Chairman shall preside over the meeting of the Board of Elders and shall serve as Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The Lead Pastor will not be eligible to serve in this office.
2. The Vice-Chairman shall preside in the absence of the Chairman. The Lead Pastor will not be eligible to serve in this office.
3. The Secretary shall maintain accurate records of the minutes of the Board of Elders meetings. He shall distribute copies of the minutes to all members of the Board of Trustees and make copies available for the church.

#### D. Conduct of Meetings

The Board of Elders shall meet at least once a month, or more often as needed. Reasonable attempts shall be made to notify all Elders in advance of any regular or called meetings. Meetings shall be conducted according to biblical principles of love and order along with sound business practices. A quorum shall consist of at least 51 %, or no fewer than three members of the Board of Elders. Reasonable attempts shall be made to resolve all differences and reach a unanimous decision; however, final decisions shall require a unanimous vote of those present, less one.

#### E. Duties

It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders to:

1. Shepherd and care for the flock.
  - a. By praying regularly for the general needs of the church ministry and individuals in the body, including the anointing of the sick with oil.
  - b. By attending to the personal needs of the congregation such as visiting, counseling, and comforting those in the church as need arises.
  - c. By providing spiritual oversight for each member of *Fellowship Bible Church* through the mentoring of small group leaders who will in turn provide the hands-on care for the members of their small group.
  - d. By providing watch-care for the broader congregation by building relationships and encouraging each one onto greater participation in the ministry of the church.
2. Oversee the ministry of the church.
  - a. By overseeing the admission of new members.
  - b. By discipling and keeping open communication with the congregation, including scheduling at least one congregational meeting annually.
  - c. By overseeing but not necessarily executing the business affairs and all the programs of the church.
  - d. By overseeing the missions committee including the approval of missionaries and missions policies.
  - e. By developing and reviewing pastoral staff job descriptions for approval by the Board of Trustees.
3. Teach and guard the truth.
  - a. By being able and available to teach or preach.
  - b. By supervising the activities and teachings of the various ministries of the church.
  - c. By establishing and periodically evaluating goals and objectives for the various educational ministries of the church.

#### F. Removal of an Elder

No accusation against an Elder shall be addressed except two or more witnesses accompany it. Upon the event that an Elder is found to be unqualified for his position by both of the two other Elders (in the case of a minimum board) or by a unanimous, less one, vote of the rest of the Board of Elders, a meeting of the Board of Trustees must be called. The Elder may be removed from his office only by the necessary vote of the entire Board of Trustees.

### Section 3. Board of Deacons

The Board of Deacons shall be responsible for the physical welfare of the church.

#### A. Selection of Deacons

The Board of Deacons shall consist of a Chairman plus not less than four Deacons. The number will be based on the availability of qualified, willing men and the current need. Any man in the church may be considered to serve as a Deacon if he has been a member in good standing for at least one year, has demonstrated a servant's heart, and meets the scriptural qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13. The procedure for selecting Deacons is outlined in Section 1: Board of Trustees.

#### B. Terms of Office for Deacons

The term of office shall normally be for three years. Adjustments of one year either way can be agreed upon for the sake of staggering the completion of terms of office. At the end of a Deacon's term, he will automatically be considered inactive unless re-nominated for the board.

#### C. Officers

The Board of Deacons shall elect the officers of the Board of Deacons to a term of one year at a time. The officers shall consist of the following:

1. The Chairman shall preside over the meeting of the Board of Deacons and shall serve as Vice-Chairman of the Board of Trustees.
2. The Vice-Chairman shall preside in the absence of the Chairman.
3. The Secretary shall maintain accurate records of the minutes of the Board of Deacons meetings. He shall distribute copies of the minutes to all Board of Trustees members and make copies available for the church. He shall serve as Secretary of the Board of Trustees.
4. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the accounting of all money received by the church. He shall oversee payment of all bills and keep accurate records of all transactions. The Board of Elders must approve the Treasurer.

#### D. Conduct of Meetings

The Board of Deacons shall meet at least once a month or more often as needed. Reasonable attempts shall be made to notify all Deacons in advance of any regular or called meetings. Meetings shall be conducted according to biblical principles of love and order along with sound business practices. A quorum shall consist of 51% of the Board of Deacons. Reasonable attempts shall be made to resolve all differences and reach a unanimous decision; however, final decisions shall require approval by a minimum of three-fourths of those present.

#### E. Duties

It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Deacons to:

1. Oversee church care for the poor, sick, bereaved, or otherwise needy of the church.
2. Assist in church observance of the ordinances of believer's baptism and communion.
3. Oversee the financial and business affairs of the church which include:
  - a. Maintaining all church property, equipment and documentation.
  - b. Providing adequate physical, financial, and legal protection at all times.
  - c. Receiving and disbursing all church funds, maintaining appropriate records, acting as fiscal control for all funds, reporting quarterly financial status to the Board of Elders, and making an official annual financial summary available to the congregation.
  - d. Recommending an annual budget for approval by the Board of Trustees.
  - e. Working with the Lead Pastor to develop appropriate job descriptions, oversee employment, and establish compensation schedules for all non-pastoral staff positions.
  - f. Submitting compensation levels for the pastoral staff to the Board of Trustees for final approval.
  - g. Submitting staff policies and benefits to the Board of Trustees for final approval.
4. Implement /administer any of the Christian education ministries as directed by the Board of Elders.
5. Administer the use of facilities and make recommendations for future needs.
6. Monitor the selection and performance of the greeters and ushers for all services.
7. Oversee the Nursery Committee and establish guidelines for nursery workers and the nursery program.

#### F. Removal of a Deacon

No accusation against a Deacon shall be addressed except two or more witnesses accompany it. Upon the event that a Deacon is found to be unqualified for his position by three-fourths of the rest of the Board, a meeting of the Board of Trustees must be called. The Deacon may be removed from his office only by the necessary vote of the entire Board of Trustees.

## Section 4. Executive Committee

### A. Purpose

1. To augment staff management functions
2. To make decisions when emergency issues arise and time is of the essence

### B. Members

1. Lead Pastor
2. Chairman of the Board of Elders (serves as Chairman of the Executive Committee)
3. Vice-Chairman of the Board of Elders
4. Chairman of the Board of Deacons (serves as Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee)
5. Vice-Chairman of the Board of Deacons
6. Any additional staff as determined by the Board of Trustees

### C. Operational Parameters

1. The Board of Trustees can terminate or amend the decision-making authority of the Executive Committee at any time through a board resolution.
2. The Executive Committee's authority will automatically "sunset" each year unless it is renewed by the Board of Trustees. Each new Board of Trustees (after new members begin their term in November) has the option to reauthorize the committee. Typically, the Executive Committee's authority will sunset each November until the new Board of Trustees votes to reconstitute the Executive Committee.
3. The Executive Committee has no authority to sign contracts, borrow money, or create ongoing financial obligations.
4. The Board of Trustees must review and decide whether to ratify decisions made by the Executive Committee at the Board of Trustees' next regularly scheduled meeting.
5. The Executive Committee will communicate decisions to the Board of Trustees as soon as possible.
6. A quorum consists of at least four members of the Executive Committee. Decision making requires four affirmative votes. (Thus, if only four members are present, the vote must be unanimous.)
7. If issues arise where the Executive Committee is unsure of its authority to act, the Executive Committee will seek authorization by an email vote of the Board of Trustees.

## D. Duties

1. With respect to staff management functions
  - a. Review staff compensation and make recommendations for change
  - b. Coach and discipline staff pursuant to church policy and Board of Trustee direction
  - c. Make recommendations regarding adding/changing/removing staff positions
  - d. Interview job candidates and make hiring recommendations
  - e. Address other personnel and employment issues as needed
  
2. With respect to emergency executive decision making
  - a. The Executive Committee will exercise its decision making authority only when all four of the below conditions are true:
    - 1) Time is of the essence
    - 2) It is either impossible or impractical to convene a quorum of the entire Board of Trustees
    - 3) The nature of the issue requires face-to-face dialogue or discussion rather than email correspondence
    - 4) The executive action is for an emergency or an unusual situation
  - b. The Executive Committee will have authority to make emergency decisions with a financial impact of up to \$25,000.
  - c. Ministry leaders affected by the decisions will be consulted in the decision making process.  
(e.g. Missions director if the issue relates to a mission trip; Youth minister if it relates to a youth trip/event)

## Section 5. Committees

Committees may be established at the discretion of any of the above mentioned boards and become directly responsible to their parent board. It is the responsibility of the establishing board to clearly communicate any responsibilities and authority the committee might have.

## **Article V: Pastoral Staff**

### **Section 1. Lead Pastor**

The Elder designated as Lead Pastor of this church, along with the other Elders, shall have general oversight of the work of the church. He shall have the primary responsibility of ministering the Word of God at the regular public services of the church. He shall spend his time as a servant to the members of the church and shall give leadership to any other pastoral and office staff.

### **Section 2. Associate Pastors**

Additional pastoral staff positions may be created at the discretion of the Board of Trustees. Associate Pastors are ultimately responsible to the Board of Trustees. Associate Pastors share pastoral oversight of the church with the board of Elders. Since Associate Pastors function under the immediate supervision of the Lead Pastor, they may not serve as voting members of the Board of Elders.

### **Section 3. Appointment**

Candidates for pastoral staff positions shall be examined by the Elders for biblical and personal qualifications. With the approval of the Board of Elders, they must be presented to the congregation for a period of two weeks. During this time the Elders should earnestly seek counsel from the congregation. After this period, a candidate may be appointed by the necessary vote of the Board of Trustees.

### **Section 4. Dismissal**

Pastoral staff can be removed from their position only by the necessary vote of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will consider such a vote only upon the recommendation of the Elders. A recommendation of the Elders can only be made after a unanimous vote or a unanimous vote less one.

## **Article VI: Membership**

### **Section 1. Qualification**

Membership, though not mandated by scripture, is an appropriate cultural expression of commitment to a local church. Any person who has personally trusted in and received the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and God (as set forth in John 1:12; 3:16, and Acts 16:31), whose life and conduct give evidence of being born again into the family of God, and who is willing to be governed by this constitution, including its statement of doctrine, is eligible for membership in this church. Membership to *Fellowship Bible Church* shall in no way be communicated as a means of Divine grace or exceptional standing in God's family. However, we at *Fellowship Bible Church* want to be responsible to those who commit themselves to our fellowship. Therefore, membership will be a matter of the Elders and a professing Christian mutually committing themselves to the following covenant:

A. The member agrees to support the work God has given to *Fellowship Bible Church* through:

1. Regular attendance in the worship services.
2. Regular prayer and personal Bible study.
3. Regular responsible giving.
4. Regular participation in Christian service.
5. Regular attendance in a supportive small group fellowship.

B. The church, as represented by the Elders, agrees to support the member through:

1. Providing for the teaching of God's word.
2. Spiritual oversight by both the Elders and a specific small group leader.
3. Regular communication regarding major decisions on the part of the boards.
4. Direction and training in Christian service.
5. Help in time of genuine physical or financial need.

C. All potential members will be interviewed by at least two Elders for the purposes of hearing the candidate's testimony of faith in Christ and commitment to the above covenant. Believer's water baptism shall be considered a prerequisite for membership in *Fellowship Bible Church*.

### **Section 2. Categories**

There shall be two categories of members.

A. Regular Members: This category is for residents of Longview and the vicinity.

B. Associate Members: This category is for members who, because of special circumstances, are either members of a church in another city but are temporarily located near Fellowship Bible Church Longview or are Regular Members temporarily located away from Fellowship Bible Church Longview.

### Section 3. Termination of Membership or Discipline

Members who cease to attend and support the church may be removed from church membership by the necessary vote of the Board of Elders. Any member whose conduct or attitude is a reproach to Christ shall be counseled and if necessary disciplined according to biblical principles and may have membership terminated by the necessary vote of the Board of Elders.

## **Article VII: Ordinances**

### Section 1. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper, or Communion, shall be administered as frequently as the Elders shall schedule. All Christians are welcome to partake of the Lord's Supper.

### Section 2. Baptism

All Christians are expected to bear witness to their love for and commitment to Jesus Christ through believer's water baptism.

## **Article VIII: Church Services and Meetings**

The Board of Elders shall establish and publish a schedule of regular worship services. (The services are primarily for the members and friends of the church, but the public is invited and welcome.) All services and meetings of this church are intended for the glory of God and the edification of those who attend.

## **Article IX: Amendments**

The Constitution of this church may be amended at any time by the necessary vote of the Board of Trustees. Before final approval, any amendments shall be presented to the congregation for a period of two weeks for their inspection. After this period a congregational meeting shall be called to discuss the proposed amendments.

## **Article X: Finances and Budget**

The Board of Trustees is vested with the authority to approve the budget. The Board of Deacons in accordance with this Constitution and the Article of Incorporation shall oversee all financial matters. The church Treasurer shall be under the supervision of the Board of Deacons. The Treasurer shall submit his records annually to the Board of Trustees for audit.