

CHURCH CONSTITUTION
of
LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH,
416 LOUISE AVE., LINCOLNTON, N.C.

PREAMBLE

So that things may be done decently and in order in accordance with the Holy Scriptures. We set forth this Constitution in order that we may more readily help each other mature in our Christian service, prevent any errant teaching deviating from any proper interpretation of the Bible, and in addition, to set forth a portion of our beliefs for anyone desiring to join our membership. We, as members of the Liberty Baptist Church in Lincolnton, N.C., establish this constitution which we believe to be proper doctrine and voluntarily adopt it as our church constitution. (1 Co. 14:33,40; Ac. 2:42; Ro. 16:17; 1 Co. 1:10, 11:18; 12:25; Ph. 3:15-17; Ga. 1:6-9)

ARTICLE I
NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION 1- NAME

This congregation of believers shall be known as the LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH,
LINCOLNTON, N.C.

SECTION 2 - PURPOSE

(A) This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the Corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the building, maintaining and operating of the church, schools, camps, and any other ministries that the church may be led of God to establish.

(B) The church shall preach the whole counsel of God as given in the Holy Bible and also ordain and license men to the Gospel ministry; evangelize the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; educate believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Holy Scripture, both in Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education; maintain missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country; and engage in any other ministry that the church may decide, from time to time, to pursue in obedience to the will of God.

ARTICLE II

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND CODE OF CONDUCT

SECTION 1 - STATEMENT OF FAITH

(A) THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed, and therefore are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their natural, literal, grammatical, contextual, comparative, ethnic and or historical meaning. We believe that the Traditional Masoretic Hebrew Text for the Old Testament and the Traditional Received Greek text for the New Testament are the closest to the original manuscripts and along with The King James Version of the Bible shall be the official texts used by the church (2 Ti. 3:16-17; 2 Pe. 1:20-21).

(B) DISPENSATIONALISM

We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. The dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. We believe there are seven discernable dispensations in the Holy Bible. Three of the dispensations, the law, the church, and the kingdom are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture (Gen. 1 :28; 1 Co. 9: 17; II Co. 3:9- 18; Ga. 3:13-25; Ep. 1: 10; 3:2- 10; Col. 1 :24-25, 27; Rev. 20:2-6 II Ti.2:15).

(C) THE TRIUNE GODHEAD

We believe there is one and only one, living and true God, the God of the Holy Bible. He is infinite in power and wisdom. He is omnipresent. He is the Creator and Supreme Ruler of the heavens and earth. He is inexpressibly glorious in His holiness, and worthy of all honor, trust and love. He is eternally existing in the triune Godhead of three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each is co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (Deut. 6:4; Mt. 28:19; II Co. 13:14; Jn.14:10,26; Ex. 20:2,3; 1 Co. 8:6; 11 Co.13:14; Jn. 10:30; Rev. 4:11).

(D) GOD THE FATHER

We believe in God the Father, who has all the attributes of the triune Godhead. The relationship of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy

Spirit has been since eternity past and gives us a glimpse of the unity of the Godhead. God the Father is merciful and gracious in the affairs of men, He hears and answers prayer, and He saves from the sinful death all who will come to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:1; Mt. 7:7-12; Jer. 33:3).

(E) THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST

(1) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, God the Son, was pre-existent with the Father and became man, without ceasing to be God. His incarnation was virgin born, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men through the shedding of His blood on the cross (Is. 7:14; 9:6; Mt. 1:35; Jn. 1:1-2, 14; II Co. 5:19-21; Ga. 4:4-5; Ph. 2:5-8).

(2) We believe that Jesus Christ is sinless in His life whether in heaven or when He was on earth as a man. While a man, He was still 100% God and 100% man. He was tempted as man is but never sinned, therefore, providing God with a sinless, perfect sacrifice for man's only means of redemption. His deity and humanity was witnessed to by God and man.

(3) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through his death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and, that our justification is made irrefutable by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Ac. 2:18-36; Ro. 3:24-25; 1 Pe. 2:24; Ep. 1:7; 1 Pe. 1:3-5).

(4) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven, and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of representative Intercessor, and Advocate (Ac. 1:9-10; He. 9:24; 7:25; Ro. 8:34; 1 Jn. 2:1-2).

(5) We believe in the personal imminent, pre-tribulational rapture of the church at the Lord's coming in the air. After a seven year period called the tribulation, He will return to the earth to set up His literal 1000 year reign. (I Th. 4:16-17; Ep. 1:14-18; Rev. 19:11-21:1).

(F) THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(1) We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and, that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ upon their receiving Christ Jesus as their Savior; there is not a second baptism. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. This is when He comes to live in our lives. Indwelling and sealing us unto the day of redemption, and enabling us to serve God during our Christian life (Jn. 16:8-11; Ro. 8:9; 1 Co. 12:12-14; II Co. 3:6; Ep. 1:13-14).

(2) We believe that He is the Divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit (Ep. 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 Jn. 2:20, 27).

(3) We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry (Ro. 12:3-8; 1 Co. 12:4-11, 28; Ep. 4:7-12).

(4) We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit and that ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing (1 Co. 1:22; 13:8-10; 14:21-22).

(5) The Holy Spirit bears witness to the truth. He testifies concerning Jesus Christ and never leads anyone at any time contrary to the teaching of the Bible (Jn. 14:26; Jn. 16:13).

(G) MAN

We believe that all men are sinners, both by nature and by choice; but that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. We believe, therefore, that all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior will rejoice forever in God's presence, and those who refuse to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior will be forever separated from God in the lake of fire. Man was created in the image of God, but he sinned and thereby incurred not only spiritual death which is separation from God, but also physical death. We believe that all human beings are born with a depraved sinful nature, and in the case of those who reach moral responsibility, become sinners in thought, word, and deed. (Ro. 3:23; Ro. 5:12; 1 Jn. 1:8,10; Jn. 3:16; Ph. 1:21-23; Ps. 51:5; Ep. 2:1-3, 4:17-19; Re 20:14-15).

(H) SALVATION

(1) We believe that, in eternity past, God foreknew the sin of man and ordained a plan whereby man could escape the penalty of his sin, God demanded that blood be shed in payment for sin. (He. 9:22; Ex. 12:13; Re. 13:8).

(2) God provided sufficient payment for man's sin through the blood of Christ. God the Father sent God the Son to shed His blood and be the perfect and complete sacrifice for man's sin. It is faith in Christ's shed blood at Calvary that reconciles man to God, thus saving him from eternal punishment. (Ep. 1:7; Ac. 20:28; 1 Pe 1:18,19; Ro. 5:8-9; I Jn. 4:9-10; He. 9:12; 10:10-12; Ep. 2:14; Jn. 3:18)

(3) We believe that salvation is the gift of God given to men because of His grace and mercy. The gift of salvation is received through faith which also is a gift of God. When faith in Christ is accepted by the individual's will it brings about an acceptance of the Biblical knowledge of God and Christ's work of bearing the punishment for our sins in order for us to have salvation. Salvation given by God brings about a change of attitude about God, His holiness and mercy, and also guilt about one's own sinfulness. Since salvation is a gift, man cannot earn it by any good works

whatsoever (not by baptism, church membership, speaking in tongues, etc) and it is not kept by any good works. (Ep. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5; Is. 64:6; Mk. 1:15; 2 Ti. 2:25; Ac. 20:21; Is. 55:6).

(I) THE ETERNAL SECURITY AND ASSURANCE OF BELIEVERS

(1) We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. We believe in the eternal security of every true believing Christian. No believer need fear the loss of the salvation that God has provided to each individual who accepts Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Since God has planned man's salvation from beginning to end, the believer's security rests in the faithfulness of God not their own ability to work and keep it. (Jn. 5:24; 10:27-30; Ro. 8:1, 28-39; 9:16; Jn. 1:12; 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Ac. 16:31; 1 Co. 1:4-8; 1 Pe. 1:4-5; 1 Jn. 5:13).

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

(J) THE CHURCH

(1) We believe that the local church is God's institution of ministry in the world for this present age. Christ's universal church is composed of people who trust Jesus Christ as their Savior and been scripturally baptized (immersed) as a testimony of their being brought to new life in Christ's salvation. We believe that the local church is a testimony of Christ before the world in its unity on matters of Bible doctrine and scripturally based standards of living, worship, evangelism, and fellowship as revealed throughout the New Testament. We believe that there were two ordinances instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ to be carried on only by the local churches -- Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that the local church is autonomous, being free of any external authority or control, and that its only officers are pastors and deacons. We believe the pastor for the local New Testament church must only be a man. There can be more than one deacon. (Mt. 28:19-20; Ac. 2:41-47; 11:23-26; 13:1-4; 14:27; 15:19-31; 18:18; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Ti. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:5-11; 1 Co. 12:12-14; II Co. 11:2; Ep. 1:22-23; 5:25-27; Ph. 1:1; Ro. 16:1, 4; 1 Co. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pe. 5:1-4).

(2) We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Ac. 14:27; 20:17, 28-32;

1 Ti. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:5-11).

(3) We believe in the heavenly assembly of the departed saints as spoken of as part of the church, the figure of believers being baptized into one body in Christ and He being the head, and the future eternal assembly of all believers of all ages. (He. 12:23; 2:12; Ep. 1:10-12; 2:16-22; 5:25-33 Ro. 6:3; 12:4-5).

(K) SEPARATION

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and, that separation from all sin whether in one's own personal life or sin from association is the responsibility of all Christians. A Christian is to separate from sin to godliness. Personal separation is from worldliness and ecclesiastical separation is on religious grounds. We are to separate from apostate organizations, those who will not separate from apostate organizations, false teachers, unrepentant disobedient brethren, and the charismatic movement who err in their emphasis of the done away with sign gifts. (Is. 52:11; Ro. 12:1-2; 14:13; I Co. 13:8-10; II Co. 6:14-7:1; II Ti. 3: 1-5; 1 Jn. 2: 15-17; II Jn. 9-11; Rev. 18:4).

(L) LAST THINGS

(1) We believe that the next event in God's prophetic time line for man will be the Rapture of the church, when Christ descends from heaven calling all true believers out of this wicked world. This clears the way for the outpouring of God's wrath in the seven-year Tribulation period. The Rapture may happen at any moment. With the church gone, God can vent His wrath upon unbelieving Israel and unbelieving Gentiles. With the church gone, the Satanic-empowered Antichrist can set up his world economy, government, and religion. (I Th. 1:9-10,4:16-17; Ep. 1:14-18; Jer. 30:7; Is. 34:1,2; Mt. 24:21,22; II Th. 2:3-12; Rev. 13:1-18).

(2) We believe that, at the end of the Tribulation, Christ will return, destroy the forces of Antichrist, bind Satan, and set up an earthly kingdom for a thousand years. At His return, Christ will come to earth with His saints and win the Battle of Armageddon. Satan will be chained and cast into the bottomless pit to remain there for the thousand years. In the Millennial Kingdom, Christ will personally reign, and the curse will be lifted from the earth. (Rev. 19:11-20; 8; Zech. 12:10; 20:1-3; 20:4; Mt. 1:32,33; Is. 32:1; 35:1-9; 65-25).

(3) We believe that the Millennial Kingdom will be followed by a brief rebellion, when Satan will be loosed for a short season and will gather an army from the unregenerates living on earth at the end of the Millennium only to suffer final defeat. Next the final judgment, The Great White Throne judgement, will result in the casting of all unbelievers into the lake of fire. Finally the everlasting state will begin. There will be a new heaven and a new earth, lasting forever without the existence of evil. (Rev. 20:7-21: 5; 20:7-10; 20:11-15; 21:1,4).

(M) THE ETERNAL STATE

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

(2) We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are

reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (Mt. 23:43; II Co. 5:8; Ph. 1:23; 3:21; I Th. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6).

(3) We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment (Mt. 25:41-46; Mk. 9:43-48; Mt. 16:19-26; II Th. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15).

(N) SATAN

We believe in the reality of Satan as a distinct personality, who, having been perfectly created, fell from his exalted state through pride which prompted his rebellion against God. He then led a multitude of the angelic host in his revolt against God. He, therefore, is the arch-enemy of God, purposing to subvert the purpose of God. He is the author of sin and the cause of the fall of man. He is the prince of this world, and the god of this age; that he is the king over the realm of demons as indicated by the name Beelzebub; that he is the adversary of believers and the accuser of the brethren; that he shall be barred from all access to Heaven during the great tribulation, at the end of which he is to be bound in the abyss for a thousand years; that he shall be loosed for a little season at the close of the millennium to provoke the final rebellion of mankind against God, after which he is to be cast forever into hell, the lake of fire as the execution of his sentence of judgment from Calvary. (Job 1:6-12; Job 2:1-7; Eze. 28:12-18; Is. 14:12-14; 1 Ti. 3:6; Rev. 12:3-4; Mt. 4:1-11; II Co. 11:13-15; Jn. 12:31; 2 Co. 4:3-4; Mt. 12:21-30; 1 Pe. 5:8; Rev. 12:3-4; Rev. 20:1-3,7-9; Jn. 16:11).

(O) CREATION

We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of the origin of the universe. (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11).

(P) CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home; 2) the church; and 3) the state. Every person is subject to The authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. God directs us to pray for our authorities, to honor them, and to obey except only in those things opposed to the will of God. (Ro. 13:1-7; Ep. 5:22-24; He. 13:17; 1 Pe. 2:13-14; 2:17; Ac. 5:28,29; Ex. 18:21,22; 2 Sam. 23:3; Ps. 72:11; Mt. 10:28; 22:21; 23:10; Ac. 4:19; 5:20; 23:5; Phil. 2:10,11; Tit. 3:1).

(Q) HUMAN SEXUALITY

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in, outside of the marriage. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Ro. 1: 26-29; 1 Co. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Th. 4:1-8; He. 13:4).

(R) DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

We believe that God hates divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage to anyone other than to that spouse is regarded as adultery. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, we believe they may not be considered for the office of pastor or deacon. (Mal. 2: 14-17; Mt. 19:3-12; Ro. 7:1-3; 1 Ti. 3:2, 12; Tit 1:6).

(S) ABORTION

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of an unborn human life. Abortion is murder and any abortion is unacceptable. (Jb 3:16; Ps 51:5; 139:14-16; Is. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Lu 1:44).

(T) MISSIONS

We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to every race, nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group in order that they may believe and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. As ambassadors of Christ, we must use all available means to go to the untold people and not wait for them to come to us. We must not neglect our responsibility that God has given us to go to the world around us. When we are not able to go to a distant field, it is our responsibility, when God directs us as a local church or as individuals, to support those called of God. We believe the Bible recognizes church support and Faith Promise Giving. It is our belief that we should only support those who are of like faith and practice as we are. (Mt.28:19-20; Mk 16:15; Lu 24:46-48; Jn 20:21; Ac. 1:8; II Co. 5:20; 8;9;10).

(U) LAWSUITS BETWEEN BELIEVERS

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians, or the church, to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander (1 Co. 6:1-8; Ep. 4:31-32).

(V) GIVING

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, its mission, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the tithe or offering once the gift has been made (Gen. 14:20; Pr. 3:9-10; Ac. 4:34-37; 1 Co. 16:2; II Co. 9:6-7; Ga. 6:6; Ep. 4:28; 1 Ti. 5:17-18; 1 Jn 3:17).

(W) MUSIC

We believe the purpose of the music program of any part of the church be to the glory of God in worship and not to entertain the audience. Therefore, Biblical guidelines are to be followed in all aspects of the music program. Not only the ability of the musician(s) are to be considered but the character along with the music text (which must be doctrinally correct), the melody, rhythm, and the style are equal importance. A dirty vessel bearing a clean offering is unclean. The pastor or song leader, which answers to the pastor, are responsible to God for the leadership of worship service and therefore, are to approve participants and music for the worship services. Those ministering in music need to be instructed and rehearsed. God has put a new song in our hearts, not Biblical words to the music of the world. The style must not create feelings, ideas, thoughts, or moods that are like the unchanged way of life. The accompaniment of songs must be from the talents God has given us in order to encourage the further development of the talents. Amen, Hallelujah or Praise the Lord, etc., are appropriate responses to music numbers not applause which reflects the world's entertainment system and can lead the musicians to become prideful. (1 Co. 10:31; 1 Chron. 16:41; 25:2; II Chron. 23:13; II Co. 5:17; 1 Co. 1:31)

SECTION 2 - AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. A practical understanding of the Word of God should be the basis for any believer's life. We do believe, however, that the foregoing statement of faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible, and therefore, is binding upon all members.

SECTION 3 - CODE OF CONDUCT

Having been led by the Spirit of God, I have received Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord, I have, according to the scriptures (Jn 1:12) been born again through the Holy Spirit and have publicly confessed my faith by word (Ro 10:8-10) and in baptism (Ro 6:3-5). I subscribe to the Doctrinal statement of my church as one body in Christ (1 Co. 12:13). I believe that God directs me in His Word to live by the following standards found in the Bible. (Phil. 4:13):

1. To walk lovingly (Jn 13:34,35) and humbly with my brethren (I Pe 5:6) to pray for them (Ja. 5:16) to separate myself from worldliness and unchristian practices (Tit. 2:12).

2. To pray (Ja. 1:5,6) for the advancement of my church in knowledge, spirituality and fruitfulness (Jn 15:8,16); to uphold its program of worship, training and teaching; to observe its ordinances (Mat. 28:19,20; 1 Co. 11:24-27); and affirm its doctrines (I Pe 3:15, Ju 3).
3. To give regularly and cheerfully, as God prospers, for the support of an evangelistic ministry among us (II Co. 9:7, I Co. 16:2); for the relief of the needy (Mk. 14:7, Pr. 19:17); and for the spread of the gospel over the earth (Mt. 28:19,20).
4. To serve faithfully in some activity of the Church (Ja. 1:22-24; 2:18); taking care to assume only such duties as can be effectively performed (1 Co. 4:2); to improve my abilities in service by prayerful study of God's Word (II Ti. 2:15).
5. To maintain family worship, encourage family prayer, Bible study and Christian nurture for any under my care (Ep. 6:4; Pr. 22:6).
6. To endeavor by example (Mt. 5:16) and effort (Mt. 28:19,20) to win souls to Christ (Ja. 5:20), and to enlist unchurched believers for membership in the local church (Ac. 2:47).
7. To follow the New Testament as my rule of faith and practice (2 Ti. 3:16,17).

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 - QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Upon a majority vote of the members present at any church service or meeting, membership shall be extended to any desiring membership who have had, and whose lives evidence a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior; who renounce sin; who endeavor to live a consecrated life unto the Lord; who fully subscribe to the statement of faith contained herein and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions, A, B, C, D, prior to the vote of the body for their membership they verbally agree with the church constitution and by-laws as being doctrinally correct to the best of their knowledge of the Bible. This affirmation will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If at any time any member feels any statement of our constitution is incorrect, it is their responsibility to contact the Pastor. (Ac. 2:41-42; Ro 16:17; 1 Co 1.10, 11.18, 12.25; Ph. 3.15-17)

(A) By baptism (immersion) as a true believer in Christ Jesus as personal Savior;

(B) By letter of transfer from another Bible believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith;

(C) By testimony of faith, having been baptized by immersion; or

(D) By restoration, if having been removed from membership, upon majority vote of the congregation after confession is made publicly before the church membership of the sin or sins involved, and

satisfactorily evidencing repentance to the pastor (or the board of deacons if the office of pastor is vacant).

SECTION 2 - DUTIES OF A MEMBER

On becoming a member of this church, in addition to the code of conduct contained in Article II, Section 3, each one further endeavors to love, honor, and esteem the pastor; to pray for him; and to recognize his authority in spiritual affairs of the church; to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the church; to support the church in prayer, tithe, offerings and with other financial support as the Lord enables; and in accordance with Biblical commands to support through a life-style walk affirmation of the beliefs and practices of the church. (1 Th 5.13; Ph 2.3; 1 Co 4.1, 9:7-11)

SECTION 3 - PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

This congregation functions, not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the undershepherd with the counsel of the board of deacons. Membership in this church does not afford those individuals with any property, contract, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Determination of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The pastor shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this church. The board of deacons shall give counsel and assistance to the pastor as requested by him. The membership of the church has certain limited areas of exercising a vote. Members may not vote to initiate any church action without bringing the matter to the Pastor or Deacons prior to the church administration meeting for prayer and discussion. The roll of the membership is to discuss the recommendation, make a motion and to second the motion to bring the motion to the membership for a vote. This motion is passed or failed by the membership.

SECTION 4 - DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER

(A) There shall be a discipline committee consisting of the pastor and the board of deacons. The men shall have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the statement of faith. If the pastor or a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the discipline committee. He shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.

(B) Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and testimony, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.

(C) If reconciliation is not reached, a second member, either a deacon or the pastor is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination, and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.

(D) If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, the discipline committee, as the church representatives biblically responsible for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the hearing before the discipline committee, the committee shall recommend to the members of the church that they, after self-examination, make an effort personally to go to the offending member and seek that member's restoration.

(E) If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B), (C), and (D) have been taken, such members who refuse to repent and be restored are to be removed from the membership of the church upon a majority vote of the membership present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action.

(F) No matter may be heard by the discipline committee or the church unless the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, except in the case of a public offense.

(G) If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the church membership, all contact with him from that point forward must be for the sake of restoration (except family members).

SECTION 5 - TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Members, not under the disciplining process of Section 4, may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church.

SECTION 6 - TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

(A) The membership of any individual member shall be automatically terminated without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church (upon recollection of the Pastor and Deacons) in the preceding three months. Upon good cause being shown to the pastor, this provision for termination may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the pastor.

(B) No member of this church may hold membership in another church. If any member unites in membership with another church, that person is automatically terminated without notice from membership in this church. Except an associate membership is available to a student from a distant area that is living in our area during school terms. They must meet all the qualifications for membership and feel led of God to join our church. They may have the privileges of membership and work in the church, but not hold the elected offices of the church. If at any time a member of our church locates in another area as a student and is unable to attend our church, they may hold membership of a church of like faith and practice in the school area and maintain their membership at Liberty Baptist Church.

We hold the responsibility to practice church discipline over the associate member when there is Biblical or constitutional grounds for discipline and the associate member's church does not act.

(C) A member may resign at any time, but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the pastor.

ARTICLE IV

OFFICERS

SECTION 1- CHURCH OFFICERS

The church officers are pastor (see Article V, Section 1), deacon (see Article V, Section 2), minister of records (see Article V, Section 3), minister of finance (see Article V, Section 4), minister of Sunday School (see Article V, Section 5), and minister of hospitality (see Article V, Section 6). One person may hold two or more offices, except that of pastor. The pastor, from time to time as he deems appropriate, may appoint other church officers, subject to a confirmation vote of the church membership.

SECTION 2 - DESIGNATION OF CORPORATE OFFICERS

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church the pastor shall serve as president of the corporation; the minister of records shall serve as secretary of the corporation; the minister of finances shall serve as treasurer of the corporation; and the chairman of the board of deacons shall serve as vice president of the corporation.

SECTION 3 - ELIGIBILITY FOR CONTINUANCE IN OFFICE

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

SECTION 4 - TERMS OF OFFICE

The length of terms of office shall be as follows:

- (A)** The relationship between the pastor and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of a month's notice, or less by mutual consent. The severance of the relationship between the pastor and the church may be considered at any regular church administration meeting, provided notice to that effect shall have been given from the pulpit to the church two Sundays prior to said regular church administration meeting. A three-fourths majority of the members present and voting shall be required to decide the matter. Disciplinary removal of the pastor from office automatically terminates his membership. A restoration to membership after disciplinary removal will be subject to the requirements of Article II, Section 1(D).
- (B)** The term of service for all offices and positions in the church, except the pastor, shall be one year, at the expiration of which they may be re-elected or re-appointed.

(C) A vacancy occurring in any office or board, except in the case of the pastor, may be filled at any regular church administration meeting.

(D) All elected and appointed officers shall serve in their respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed unless a letter of resignation is accepted by the Pastor or the individual is under church discipline.

SECTION 5 - ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The annual election of officers by the church membership shall occur during the month of January at the annual church administration meeting.

SECTION 6 - PASTORAL OVERSIGHT OF OFFICERS AND STAFF

(A) Subject to the approval of the church membership and on the condition that they shall become a member of the church upon assuming their duties, the pastor may hire associates and assistants to assist the pastor in carrying out his God given responsibilities.

(B) All church staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the pastor who has the sole authority to hire, appoint, or dismiss the same.

ARTICLE V

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1 - THE PASTOR

(A) The pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly and shall be at liberty to preach the whole counsel of the Word of God as the Lord leads him. He shall administer the ordinances of the church, act as moderator at all church meetings for the transaction of church matters, supervise the teaching ministries of the church, and tenderly watch over the spiritual interests of the membership.

(B) The pastor shall appoint the members of the various committees at the annual church administration meeting. He shall serve as the president of the corporation. He shall publicly inform all newly elected officers of the particular function and the responsibilities of their respective offices. He shall extend the right hand of fellowship to all new members on behalf of the church and perform such other duties as generally appertain to such a position. The pastor shall be free to choose the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry that God has given him.

SECTION 2 - THE BOARD OF DEACONS

(A) The board of deacons shall assist the pastor, in such matters as he shall request, in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church, in conducting the religious services, and in performing all other work of the church. They shall make provision for the observance of the ordinances of the church. They shall, if requested by the pastor, consider applications for church membership. They shall, in cooperation with

the pastor, disburse the benevolence fund. They shall assist the pastor in visitation and all other evangelistic efforts of the church. They shall provide the pulpit supply and act as leaders for church meetings if the office of pastor is vacant. The board of deacons shall assist the pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the church's various ministries as requested by the pastor.

(B) Immediately following the annual church administration meeting, the board of deacons shall assemble and elect, from their own number, a chairman who shall be vice president of the corporation, a vice chairman, and a secretary.

(C) The board of deacons shall constitute the board of trustees of the corporation. The board of trustees shall exercise only the following specific powers:

(1) to purchase, hold, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the church, and to take real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church;

(2) to sell, convey, alienate, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, and to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the church, to borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and the use of the church; to cause to be executed, issued, and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and to secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, or pledges.

(3) to exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church Corporation, if such action is mandated by a vote of the church membership.

SECTION 3 - THE MINISTER OF RECORDS

The minister of records shall keep a record of church proceedings, of the membership roll, of all baptisms, of certificates of ordination, licenses and commissions as directed by the church, and preserve all documents, papers, and letters coming into his hands during his term of office. All records are to be kept in the church office, or those designated to be kept in a bank safe deposit box, and delivered to any successor upon leaving office. He shall keep an account of any special events in the life of the church which are of historical interest and shall give a report at the annual church administration meeting of the status of the church membership roll in the past year. The minister of records shall also serve as the secretary of the corporation.

SECTION 4 - THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The minister of finance shall account for all funds contributed to the church and shall disburse the same as ordered by the church. He shall present a written report of categorized disbursements at the regular quarterly church administration meetings and make a general report for the year at the annual church administration meeting. All expenditures of the church except miscellaneous petty cash disbursements shall be paid by check. The minister of finance shall also serve as treasurer of the corporation.

SECTION 5 - THE MINISTER OF SUNDAY SCHOOL

The minister of Sunday school shall supervise the Sunday school. In consultation with the pastor he shall recommend the appointment of the teachers of the Sunday School. He shall preside at the teachers' meetings, and report on the condition of the Sunday School at the annual church administration meeting. He shall keep records of each members Sunday School attendance and of the other services attendances.

SECTION 6 - THE MINISTER OF HOSPITALITY

The minister of hospitality, in cooperation with the pastor, shall appoint a sufficient number of assistants to care for the work of ushering and extending the official hospitality of the church to its members and visitors.

SECTION 7 - ASSOCIATE PASTORS

Under the direction and guidance of the pastor, the associate pastors of the church shall assist the pastor in carrying out the ministries of the church.

SECTION 8 - DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS

(A) All officers shall prepare a written report of their work for the annual church administration meeting and shall surrender any records in their possession to the minister of records at the close of their term of office to be filed as a permanent record of the work of the church. All records are the property of the church and must be kept in the church office.

(1) The minister of finances may keep his financial records at home but must submit monthly finance reports for the membership no later than 10 days after the beginning of the month except when gone on vacation.

(B) Any officer who neglects his duties as outlined in the constitution for a period of three months may be removed from his office at the discretion of the pastor and another may be appointed by the pastor to serve the unexpired term.

SECTION 9 - INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

A public installation service in which all newly elected officers of the church are to be dedicated to their respective offices and the ordination of newly elected deacons shall be held at a public church service following their election at the annual church administration meeting.

ARTICLE VI

MEETINGS

SECTION 1 - MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Unless otherwise determined by the pastor, the church shall meet each Sunday for public worship both morning and evening and at least once during the week for Bible study and prayer. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at the Pastor's discretion.

SECTION 2 - MEETINGS FOR CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

A quarterly church administration meeting shall be held **on the last Wednesday evening of each quarter (January, April, July, and October)**, at which time the regular church administration shall be considered. A quorum shall consist of the members present. The annual church administration meeting shall be at the January meeting.

SECTION 3 - SPECIAL MEETINGS

(A) The pastor (or deacons if the office of pastor is vacant or the pastor is the subject of possible disciplinary action) may call a special meeting at any regular attended service with at least 50 % of the membership present. A meeting for election of a pastor may be called by the pulpit committee at any regular church service when announced at least two weeks in advance.

(B) Bible conferences, missionary conferences, and revivals may be held as the pastor deems beneficial.

SECTION 4 - FISCAL YEAR

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

ARTICLE VII

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

SECTION 1- PURPOSE

The church believes that it is to provide the members' children with an education which is based upon and consistent with Biblical teachings. The church believes that the home and church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education. To this end, the church shall engage in ministries in education in keeping with the following dictates:

SECTION 2 - CHURCH PARTICIPATION

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the church; however, the pastor may permit non-church members to participate in church educational programs or courses of instruction if he deems it in the best interest of the church.

SECTION 3 - STAFF MEMBERSHIP

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

SECTION 4 - STATEMENT OF FAITH ACCORD

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the statement of faith of the church.

SECTION 5 - UNITY

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the church.

SECTION 6 - TEACHING

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

SECTION 7 - CHRISTIAN WALK

All administrators, instructors, and teachers shall continue or adopt a life-style consistent with the precepts which they teach, whether in or out of the classroom.

ARTICLE VIII

UNAUTHORIZED EXPENDITURES

Any expenditures in excess of \$100 and not authorized in the regular annual budget must be authorized by the pastor and or the board of deacons if the office of pastor is vacant.

ARTICLE IX

ORDINATION

SECTION 1- ORDINATION QUALIFICATIONS

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

SECTION 2 - ORDINATION PROCEDURE

(A) Upon a conference with the pastor and after the pastor has approved the candidate for ordination, the pastor shall call a council to examine and pass on the qualification of the candidate. The ordination council shall consist of ordained ministers and deacons of like faith invited to participate in the examination of the candidate.

(B) If the candidate is found worthy of the ordination by the council, the ordination council may recommend ordination of the candidate to the church.

(C) The church determines whether or not to accept the recommendation of the council and proceed to ordain the candidate.

(D) The pastor and the chairman of the deacons shall arrange for the ordination service.

ARTICLE X

TAX-EXEMPT PROVISIONS

SECTION 1 - PRIVATE INUREMENT

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

SECTION 2 - POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

SECTION 3 - DISSOLUTION

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

SECTION 4 - RACIAL NONDISCRIMINATION

The church shall have a racially nondiscriminatory policy and therefore shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin.

ARTICLE XI DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS

From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. They are to be from the general fund, special contributions or special offerings. The funds are not to be funded by the tithe of individuals which belongs in the general fund. The funds are to be kept in an interest bearing account, with the interest being divided proportionately to the special funds. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Article I, Section 2.

ARTICLE XII AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be revised or amended by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any regular or special church administration meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing and announced from the pulpit fourteen (14) days before the vote is taken.

ADOPTION

This constitution was adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present.

This constitution and bylaws supersedes any other constitutions and/or bylaws of Liberty Baptist Church of Lincolnton, N.C. (416 Louise Ave. 28092)

PASTOR _____ WITNESS

DATE _____ MINISTER OF Records

CHURCH BYLAWS

NUMBER 1

Each member of the church shall be entitled to vote on all matters except those pertaining to the disciplining of members, the purchase or sale of real property, and the dismissal or calling of a pastor, in which matters, only members at least sixteen years of age shall be entitled to vote.

NUMBER 2

All church administration meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer for divine guidance and blessing.

NUMBER 3

All services for public worship and Bible study and the arrangements thereof including time and place and the use of the property belonging to the church for purposes other than the stated services shall be under the control of the pastor.

NUMBER 4

The date of the annual church administration meeting shall be in January of each year.

NUMBER 5

All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the statement of faith.

NUMBER 6

The following order shall be observed at the regular church administration meetings:

- (a) Devotions & prayer
- (b) Reading of minutes
- (c) Reception of members
- (d) Dismissal of members
- (e) Report of officers
- (f) Reports of standing committees
- (g) Reports of special committees
- (h) Unfinished matters
- (i) Election of officers
- (j) New matters
- (k) Adjournment
- (l) Benediction