



# ***CONSTITUTION***

AS AMENDED ON MAY 20, 2018

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## ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be Friendship Baptist Church, commonly known as Friendship Church. All references to Friendship Church, in this Constitution and Bylaws, as well as all other communications originated by this organization, should be construed as the collective worship family of all locations, facilities and assemblies.

## ARTICLE II – STATEMENT OF FAITH

### A. FIRST THINGS

We believe that God-eternal spoke all of creation into perfect existence in six literal days, and that this work of creation was accomplished through Jesus Christ, who holds all things together. We believe that Adam and Eve were perfectly created in the image of God on day six, and that all humanity are direct descendants of this first created man and woman.

- Genesis 1:1-2:25, 11:10-30; Matthew 19:4-6; Colossians 1:15-17

### B. THE WORD OF GOD

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, which consists of sixty-six canonical books. We believe it was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit without error in the original manuscripts and has supreme and final authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

- II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21

### C. THE TRINITY

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons - the Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. We believe they are equal in every divine perfection and execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, redemption, truth, and judgment.

- Genesis 1:1, 26; Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 25:31-32, 28:19; John 1:1-13, 14:16-17, 25-26, 16:13-15; Acts 1:7-8; Romans 8:26-30; Ephesians 4:5-6; Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 1:15-19; Hebrews 1:8, 9:27

### D. GOD THE FATHER

We believe in God the Father, an infinite personal spirit perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayers, and that He saves from sin, spiritual death, and eternal punishment all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

- Matthew 6:6,8, 23:9; John 3:16, 4:23-24, 6:27; Luke 10:21-22; Romans 10:9-13; I Timothy 2:5-6; I Peter 1:3

### E. JESUS CHRIST

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into Heaven, unending intercession for His people, and personal, visible return to earth. We believe that it is only through Jesus Christ that a person can be born-again.

- Matthew 1:18-25; John 3:16, 14:6; Acts 1:1-11, 4:12; Romans 5:6-8, 6:9-10; I Corinthians 15:3-5; II Corinthians 5:18-21; Ephesians 1:18-23; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:1-4, 7:25; Revelation 19:11-16

#### F. THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and the Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment as well as to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit dwells within every believer in Jesus Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide.

- John 14:16-17, 26, 15:26-27, 16:8-14; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 3:16, 6:11, 19; Galatians 5:22-26; Ephesians 5:18-21

#### G. REGENERATION

We believe that God created man in His own image. By sin man was separated from his Creator and condemned to death. We believe that those who repent and forsake their sin by believing solely on Jesus Christ as their Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit and become new creatures, delivered from condemnation, and are recipients of eternal life. We believe that there is salvation in no other name but Jesus Christ, and that we are saved by grace through faith in Him.

- Genesis 1:26, 2:17, 3:19; John 1:12-14, 3:16-18, 5:24, 30; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:19, 23-26, 5:19, 6:23, 8:1; II Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; I John 2:2

#### H. THE CHURCH

We believe the Church is a living spiritual body of which Jesus Christ is the head and all believers are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a body of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work, and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of giving the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost world.

- Matthew 28:17-20; I Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 4:4-6, 5:19-21; Colossians 1:18, I Timothy 3:15

#### I. CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

We believe that believers in Jesus Christ should live for the glory of God and the well-being of all people, and that their conduct should be blameless before the world. Believers should be faithful stewards of all they have been given, and that they should seek to realize, for themselves as well as others, the full stature of maturity and discipleship in Jesus Christ.

- Matthew 5:2-16; Romans 12:1-2, 9-13; I Corinthians 2:14-3:3, 6:20; Ephesians 4:14-32; Colossians 1:13-14; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 6:1-2

#### J. FINAL AUTHORITY FOR MATTERS OF FAITH AND CONDUCT

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. For purposes of Friendship Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy and discipline, our Council of Elders is the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

- 1 Peter 5:1-5; Acts 20:17

## K. MARRIAGE GENDER AND SEXUALITY

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

- Genesis 1:26-27

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 Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged outside of the marriage between a man and woman.

- Genesis 2:18-25; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4

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

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Friendship Church as the local Body of Christ and to provide a biblical role model to Friendship Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Friendship Church in any capacity or who serve as volunteers agree to and abide by this Statement of Marriage, Gender and Sexuality.

- Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; Thessalonians 5:22

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

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accordance with Scripture nor the doctrines of Friendship Church.

- Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31

## L. THE ORDINANCES

We believe that Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the Triune God. We believe that Jesus Christ instituted the Lord's Supper for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of Jesus Christ.

- Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 11:23-29

## M. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

We believe that every human being has direct relations with God and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith. Each church is independent and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority and, therefore, Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the other.

- Romans 14:7-9, 12; I Peter 2:5, 9

N. THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

We believe all human life begins at conception, is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition.

- Genesis 2:7; Acts 17:25

O. CHURCH COOPERATION

We believe that the local church can promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with other like-minded churches or organizations.

- Acts 15:3; I Corinthians 16:1; Ephesians 4:3-6

P. LAST THINGS

We believe in the personal and visible return of Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the endless suffering of the wicked, and the eternal life of the righteous.

- Matthew 16:27, 24:30, 25:31-46; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 4:16-17; II Timothy 4:1; Revelation 1:7, 19:11-16

## ARTICLE III – MISSION STATEMENT AND PURPOSES

A. MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Friendship Church is to Love, Live, and Serve like Jesus.

B. VALUES

1. Loving God and people (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Matthew 22:37-40; James 1:26-27).
2. Living biblical truth (Matthew 7: 24-29; John 8:31-32; James 1:22-27).
3. A missional lifestyle (Genesis 12:1-3; Acts 1:8; Philippians 1:3-6).
4. Relentless prayer (Matthew 21:13; Acts 2:42; Ephesians 6:18-20).
5. Building families (Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Ephesians 5:22-6:4; Acts 16:29-34).
6. Peacemaking (Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 5:9; 18:15-35; Galatians 6:1-4).
7. Team Ministry (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Matthew 22:37-40; James 1:26-27).

B. MARKS

Because devotion to Christ is about relationships, we are therefore committed to the following...

1. Upward – With our Father that is personal and daily.

- To relentless prayer, Bible study and memorization (Ephesians 6:18-20; 2 Timothy 2:15; Psalm 119:11).
  - To constantly abide in Christ thus producing the fruit of the Spirit (Exodus 24:18; John 15:1-15; Galatians 5:22-23).
  - To a lifestyle of worship that includes regular corporate times (1 Corinthians 10:31; Romans 12:1-2; Hebrews 10:25).
  - To a life of service and sacrifice (Genesis 22:1-8; Exodus 21:1-6; Mark 8:34).
2. Inward – With our spiritual family that is connected and caring.
- To small group ministry (Mark 9:1-8; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 16:1-5).
  - To gift-oriented ministry (Jeremiah 18:1-6; Romans 12:4-8; 1 Peter 4:9-12).
  - To a lifestyle of generosity (Luke 21:1-4; Matthew 25:14-30; 2 Corinthians 8:2; 9:11-13).
  - To spiritual accountability (2 Timothy 3:16; Galatians 2:11-21; 2 Samuel 12:1-13).
3. Outward – With our world including our neighbors and the nations.
- To actively sharing Jesus (Matthew 9:35-38; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:8-17).
  - To a lifestyle of hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Romans 12:13; 1 Peter 4:9).
  - To engaging as a partner in missions (Luke 10:1-7; Philippians 1:3-6; 2 Corinthians 9:1-2).
  - To spiritual multiplication (Mark 3:13-16; John 21:15-18; Acts 13:1-4).

## ARTICLE IV – AFFILIATION AND RELATIONSHIPS

This church shall be affiliated with the Minnesota Baptist Conference and Converge (formerly known as the Baptist General Conference of America).

## ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

Friendship Church is an autonomous and democratic church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership possesses the right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church, and reserves the right to determine who shall be members of the church and the conditions of such membership.

The qualification requirements of membership are:

- A statement of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; (I John 4:15; Romans 10:9,10)
- Baptism by immersion; (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16)
- An understanding and agreement with the Mission and Doctrinal beliefs of Friendship Church; (Ephesians 4: 2-6, Acts 2:42) and
- A minimum age of eighteen (18) years.

## ARTICLE VI – BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The general conduct and management of the affairs of this corporation shall be vested in a Board of Trustees of the church, consisting of a minimum number of members, defined in the Bylaws of the corporation.

## ARTICLE VII – ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of Friendship Church shall be held each fiscal year, and as specifically determined by the Board of Trustees in compliance with the Friendship Church Bylaws. The agenda of the annual meeting shall include the affirmation of Trustees, approval of the annual budget, and any other matters as determined by the Board of Trustees and the Bylaws.

A minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the annual meeting, members shall be provided written reports pertaining to the financial condition of Friendship Church, the annual budget, and any other key reports as deemed appropriate by the Board of Trustees.

The annual meeting shall be open to voting members and non-voting attendees.

## ARTICLE VIII – FISCAL AND ELECTIVE YEAR

The fiscal and elective year of the church shall be determined at the discretion of the Board of Trustees according to the authority granted under the Bylaws of the corporation.

## ARTICLE IX – ACQUISITION, DISPOSITION, AND ENCUMBRANCE OF REAL PROPERTY

- A. All property, real or chattel, shall be taken, held, sold, transferred, or conveyed in the name of Friendship Baptist Church.
- B. No real or chattel property of the church shall be sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated without the same being authorized by at least two-thirds majority vote of a quorum of the membership.
- C. The President and Corporate Secretary shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage that the same has been duly authorized by a vote of the Board of Trustees. Such certificate shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof.
- D. Should the church cease to function as a church body, such property, real or personal, shall be donated by the Board of Trustees to a worthy non-profit religious institution according to the Articles of Incorporation as amended. The organization designated for donation must be of similar purpose and also apply the essential tenets of the Christian faith.



## ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at a business meeting if at least fifty percent (50%) of the membership votes on the proposed amendment(s) and at least two-thirds of these same voting members approve of the amendment(s). The original wording and proposed changes must be provided to the membership at least sixty (60) days prior to the meeting, using all reasonable communication formats. Public announcement must be made a minimum of three additional times prior to the meeting.