

CHURCH COVENANT

Believing it to be the teaching of God's Word that where a company of baptized believers meet together regularly in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, they should be organized into a local church, we, as members of His Body, do hereby band ourselves together as a local church and do solemnly enter into the following covenant, endeavoring by the grace of God to:

- (1) Strive for the advancement of this church in holiness, knowledge of the Word, and in its testimony before the world.
- (2) Give to it sacred pre-eminence over all institutions of human origin, and to attend its services regularly, unless prevented from so doing by reasons acceptable to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- (3) Contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expense of the church, and its missionary program throughout the world.
- (4) Maintain, as far as possible, family and personal devotions, and to seek to instill in our children a reverence and love for, and devotion to, the church, as being the one institution through which our Lord works in the edifying of believers and the evangelizing of the world.
- (5) Separate ourselves from all questionable amusements and all personal habits which war against the soul.
- (6) Labor and walk together in Christian love, and to manifest the Spirit of Christ in all our dealings with one another, and to refrain from all gossiping and backbiting, and to watch over one another in brotherly love, and to aid each other in sickness and distress.
- (7) Give to the work of the church such a place in our lives that should we move from this city, we will, at the first opportunity, unite with some other church of "like precious faith" in the community to which we move; where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant, and the teachings of God's Holy Word.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

Whereas:

- (1) We believe that, under God, this group of believers has been called together for the definite task of maintaining in the city of Bradenton, Florida, a testimony to the saving and keeping power of Jesus Christ:
- (2) We believe that God would be pleased to have this body of believers stand out in this community, as being independent of all outside organizational influences, ecclesiastical or otherwise:
- (3) We believe that as we are faithful about living for the Lord and striving to do His will, that He will guide and sustain this group of believers, as promised in the Great Commission, "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the age,":
- (4) We believe it is our duty to work in harmony with, on a volunteer basis, our sister churches of like "precious faith" in carrying out the overall commission to the church:

Therefore, be it resolved:

- (1) That we, by the grace of God, do now assume the responsibility of carrying on a work of evangelism; of teaching the Word of God; of assembling ourselves together; of administering the ordinances of the church; and of pursuing all other means for spiritual growth which our Lord has provided "for the perfection of the saints, for the work of the ministry and for the edifying of the body of Christ." Furthermore, inasmuch as God has called the church to a life of separation from the world, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, (Titus 2:12) manifesting before the world our readiness for the coming again of our Lord and Savior.
- (2) That this body of believers shall, from this day forth, be known and designated as the Calvary Baptist Church of Bradenton, Inc., of Florida.
- (3) That we do now adopt the following statement of Faith and of Doctrine, to which all persons uniting with our fellowship shall heartily agree.

I. Regarding the Scriptures we believe

That the Holy Bible (66 books) as originally written was verbally inspired and the product of Spirit-controlled and Spirit-guided men; and therefore it is true without any admixture of error for its matter. We believe the Bible to be the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried. II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:19-21.

II. Regarding the True God we believe

- (1) That there is one, and only one, living and true God. Deuteronomy 6:4
- (2) That He is an infinite and intelligent Spirit, the Maker and the Supreme Ruler of Heaven and Earth. Nehemiah 9:6; John 4:24; I Corinthians 8:6.
- (3) That He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, and confidence and love. Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:11.
- (4) That in the Godhead there are three (3) persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious

offices in the great work of redemption. John 5:17-18; 8:53-59; 10:30-33; 14:16-17 & 26; II Corinthians 13:14.

III. Regarding the Holy Spirit we believe

- (1) That the Holy Spirit is a divine person. John 14:16-17; 15:26; Ephesians 1:14; Acts 28:25 with Isaiah 6:1-13.
- (2) That He is equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature. Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35.
- (3) That He was active in the creation. Genesis 1:1-3; Job 33:4
- (4) That in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled. II Thessalonians 2:7.
- (5) That He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. John 16:8-11.
- (6) That He is the agent of the new birth. John 3:5-6.
- (7) That He is the instrument in sealing the believer. Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; II Corinthians 1:22.
- (8) That He is the instrument that baptizes the believer. Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16; I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:5.
- (9) That He endues the believer with power. Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8.
- (10) That He guides the believer. John 16:13; Romans 8:14.
- (11) That He teaches the believer. John 14:26.
- (12) That He witnesses to the believer. Romans 8:16.
- (13) That He sanctifies the believer. II Thessalonians 2:13; I Peter 1:2.
- (14) That He intercedes for the believer. Romans 8:26-27.

IV. Regarding Satan, who is the devil, we believe

- (1) That Satan is a person. Isaiah 14:12-20; Matthew 4:1-3.
- (2) That he is the unholy god of this age. II Corinthians 4:4.
- (3) That he is the prince of the powers of darkness. Acts 26:18; Ephesians 2:2; 6:12.
- (4) That he is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire. Revelation 20:10.

V. Regarding Creation we believe

That the Genesis account of the creation is historically accurate and that all matter, the universe, and all life were created by God from nothing.

That man came by direct creation and has not evolved from some lower form.

Genesis 1:1 through 2:25; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16- 17.

VI. Regarding the Fall of Man we believe

That man was created without defect or deficiency, was bountifully provisioned, and was responsible to the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression, fell from his sinless and happy state, in consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but by choice, and are therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse. Genesis 3:1-6 & 24; Romans 1:18, 20, 32; 3:10-19 & 23; 5:12 & 19; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:1-3.

VII. Regarding the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ we believe

That Jesus Christ was supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit; born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman, and that He is both the Son of God and God the Son, the God-man. Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18- 25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14 & 18; I Timothy 2:5.

VIII. Regarding the Atonement for Sin we believe

That the salvation of sinners is wholly by grace; through the mediatorial work of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

That His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitute of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust; Christ the Lord bearing our sins in His own body on the tree.

That having risen from the dead, the Lord is now enthroned in Heaven, and uniting in His wonderful person, the most tender sympathies with divine perfection, He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and an all-sufficient Savior.

Isaiah 53:4-7 & 11-12; Luke 19:10; John 3:16; 10:18; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24-25; 5:12-19; I Corinthians 15: :3-4 & 20; II Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 1:4; Ephesians 2:8-9; Philippians 2:6-8; I Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 2:14; 9:12-15; 12:2; I Peter 2:24; 3:18; II Peter 2:1; I John 2:1-2; 4:10.

IX. Regarding Grace in the New Creation we believe

That in order to be saved, sinners shall be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God.

That the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel.

That its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith and newness of life.

John 1:12-13; 3:3 & 6-8; Acts 16:30-33; Romans 6:23; II Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 2:1; 5:9; Colossians 2:13; II Peter 1:4; I John 5:1.

X. Regarding Justification we believe

That the great Gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is Justification, whereby His righteousness is imputed to the repentant, believing sinner.

That it includes the pardon of sin and the gift of eternal life.

That it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but that it is appropriated solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood.

Isaiah 53:11; Habakkuk 2:4; Zechariah 13:1; Acts 13:39; Romans 1:17; 4:1-8; 5:1 & 9; 8:1; Galatians 3:11; Titus 3:5-7; Hebrews 10:38.

XI. Regarding Faith and Salvation we believe

That faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, coupled with repentance from sin, is the only condition of Salvation. Acts 2:38; 16:31; Ephesians 2:8-9.

XII. Regarding the Local Churches we believe

That a local church is a congregation of immersed believers, associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges vested in them by His Word.

That its officers are pastors, elders, and deacons whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures.

That the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity.

That the local church has the absolute right to self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations, and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, who leads His church through the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and unity of God's people.

That it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel, but that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation.

That on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, and of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

Acts 2:41-42; 6:1-6; 14:21-23; 15:13-18; 20:17-28; Romans 12:16; 15:5-6; I Corinthians 11:20; 16:1; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:11-12; 5:21-24; Philippians 2:2-3; 3:4; Colossians 1:18; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9.

XIII. Regarding Baptism and the Lord's Supper we believe

That Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem of our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life, and that believer's baptism is a pre-requisite to the privileges of local church membership.

That the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death, until He comes, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination.

Acts 8:36-39; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 2:16; Col. 2:12; I Corinthians 11:23-28.

XIV. Regarding the Security of the Saints we believe

That all who are truly born again are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ.
John 10:28-29; Romans 8:35-39; I John 5:18; Jude 1.

XV. Regarding the Righteous and the Wicked we believe

That there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such as only through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous before God, while all who continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in life and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost.

Genesis 18:23; Malachi 3:18; Proverbs 14:32; Daniel 12:2; Matthew 13:39; 24:34-41; Luke 16:25; John 3:16-18; 5:28-29; 8:21; Acts 24:15; Romans 2:4-8; 6:23; 6:16-18; Galatians 3:10; I John 5:19; Revelation 20:11-15.

XVI. Regarding Civil Government we believe

That civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society.

That magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed; except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in His Word, who is the only Lord and the coming Lord of lords and King of kings.

Exodus 18:21-22; II Samuel 23:3-4; Daniel 1:8-11; 3:17-18; Matthew 22:21; Acts 4:19-20; 5:29; 23:5; Romans 3:1-2; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13-14; Revelation 19:16.

XVII. Regarding the Resurrection, the Second Coming of Christ, and thereafter, we believe

That Christ was raised bodily from the deadⁱ and appeared to a great multitude of witnessesⁱⁱ. Christ then ascended into heavenⁱⁱⁱ to return at an unspecified time^{iv}. Currently, our Lord Jesus Christ serves as high priest^v and mediator^{vi} between man and God the Father.

That Christ, at an undisclosed time, will rapture those in Christ, both living and dead^{vii}.

That at the end of the age, Christ will return to the earth personally, physically, and visibly in great power and glory^{viii} to gather His elect^{ix} and establish a millennium of peaceful reign^x. Believers in Christ, having been found righteous because of the atoning blood of Christ^{xi}, will stand before Christ at the Bema seat where they will be judged for rewards in the new kingdom based on their works on earth^{xii}.

That at the end of His 1,000-year earthly reign, Christ will destroy Satan and his host and judge the people of the world^{xiii}. Those found unrighteous in their sin, having failed to accept, believe and trust in God's provision, the atoning of blood of Christ, will stand before Christ, be found guilty at the Great White Throne^{xiv}, and pass into everlasting, conscious punishment in Hell^{xv}. Believers in Christ will then enter into the kingdom of God with everlasting joy and life^{xvi}.

- i Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:6-7, Luke 24:5-6
- ii I Corinthians 15:6
- iii Acts 1:9-11
- iv Matthew 24:36, John 14:3
- v Hebrews 4:14-5:10
- vi I Timothy 2:5
- vii I Thessalonians 4:16-17
- viii Revelation 1:7
- ix Matthew 24:40-41, I Thessalonians 4:17
- x Revelation 20:1-3
- xi Hebrews 13:12
- xii Romans 14:10-12, II Corinthians 5:10
- xiii Revelation 20:7-10
- xiv Revelation 20:11-15
- xv 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10
- xvi John 3:16, Revelation 21:1-4

XVIII. Regarding the Family we believe

That both the man and the woman are created in God's image and are of equal worth before the Creator.

That the family has been ordained by God as the foundational institution of society. It is composed of persons related to one another through marriage, blood, or adoption.

That marriage is the union of one man and one woman through a lifetime commitment. Marriage provides for the man and the woman the framework for intimate companionship.

The marriage relationship models the way Christ relates to His church. A husband is to sacrificially and unconditionally love his wife as Christ loved the church, giving of himself for her benefit. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family, especially in matters of faith. A wife is to assist her husband by submitting to his leadership, even as the church is to submit willingly to the headship of Christ. She is her husband's helpmate.

That children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage of the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage and are to teach their children through a consistent life and loving discipline to fear God, to pursue biblical values, and to relate properly with others. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; I Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; I Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; I Timothy 5:8,14; II Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; I Peter 3:1-7.]

XIX. Regarding Social Issues we believe

That the true disciple of Jesus Christ is biblically obligated to make the will of the Lord supreme in his/her life and to live a Christ-like life in society. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice,

and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, pedophilia, and pornography.

That the believer should help the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. He/she should promote the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death.

That every Christian should express his convictions at the polls and to his/her representative in government, in an effort to promote the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these values, Christians should be ready and willing to work with others of like beliefs in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and biblical principles.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16, 43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35-40; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; I Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; I Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8; I John 3:17.

XX. Regarding Amendments, Revisions, and Revocations

The Church Covenant and these Articles of Faith may be amended, altered, or repealed, only upon recommendation of the voting members of the church membership, which commendation shall be concurred by an eighty percent majority of the voting members of the congregation present at any regular or called business meeting of the church, at which time such business shall be transacted according to the Bylaws. The following procedure shall be followed for amendments, revisions, and deletions to the Church Covenant and these Articles of Faith: A minimum of fourteen (14) days before the official vote on the acceptance or rejection of the same, all recommendations shall be published in the church bulletin or otherwise made available to the membership during the services at least two Sundays preceding the vote.