

ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This Constitution will preserve the rights of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches. This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE I. NAME

This body shall be known as the Antioch Baptist Church of Fairfax Station, Virginia.

ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES

To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing his person, and responding in obedience to his leadership.

To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellowship believers.

To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.

To be a church which ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and the world in Jesus' name.

To be a church whose purpose is to be Christlike in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

ARTICLE III. FAITH AND DOCTRINE

SECTION 1. SCRIPTURE.

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us, and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be tried.

SECTION 2. THE TRUE GOD.

We believe the Scriptures teach that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is Jehovah, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

SECTION 3. THE FALL OF MAN.

We believe the Scriptures teach that Man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but by choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse.

SECTION 4. THE WAY OF SALVATION.

We believe that the Scriptures teach that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God which are prophet, priest, and king; who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the divine law by his personal obedience, and by his death made a full atonement for our sins; that having risen from the dead, he is now enthroned in heaven; and uniting in his wonderful person that tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is in every way qualified to be suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.

SECTION 5. JUSTIFICATION.

We believe the Scriptures teach that the great Gospel blessing which Christ secures to those who believe in him is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood; by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

SECTION 6. THE FREENESS OF SALVATION.

We believe that the Scriptures teach that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by cordial, penitent and obedient faith; and nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, but his own determined depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

SECTION 7. REBIRTH.

We believe that the Scriptures teach that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; this consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind that it is affected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith, and newness of life.

SECTION 8. REPENTANCE AND FAITH.

We believe the Scriptures teach that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger and helplessness and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy; at

the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our prophet, priest and king, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior.

SECTION 9. GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE.

We believe the Scriptures teach that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the Gospel; that it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence.

SECTION 10. SANCTIFICATION.

We believe the Scriptures teach that sanctification is the process by which according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means especially the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.

SECTION 11. PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS.

We believe the Scriptures teach that such only are real believers as endure to the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and they are kept by the power of God through Faith unto salvation.

SECTION 12. THE LAW AND GOSPEL.

We believe the Scriptures teach that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy, just and good; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arise entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy Law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the Means of Grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.

SECTION 13. A GOSPEL CHURCH.

We believe the Scriptures teach that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its only scriptural officers are Pastors and Deacons whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, Romans, Corinthians, and Ephesians; and in the Book of Acts.

SECTION 14. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

We believe the Scriptures teach that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost; to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect, in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation; and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together to the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

SECTION 15. THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

We believe the Scriptures teach that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred.

SECTION 16. CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

We believe the Scriptures teach that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interest and good order of human society, and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed; except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the Kings of the earth.

SECTION 17. RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED.

We believe the Scriptures teach that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

SECTION 18. MARRIAGE IN THE CHURCH.

We believe the Scriptures teach that marriage is the union between a man (husband) and a woman (wife) in accordance with Hebrews 13:4 and I Corinthians 7:3. The church is committed to loving those who do not fully embrace these scriptures.

SECTION 19. THE WORLD TO COME.

We believe the Scriptures teach that the end of the world is approaching; that at the last day, Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave for final retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and that the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

ARTICLE IV. DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

From Scripture we believe the following doctrinal affirmation:

1. We believe in the Bible as the inerrant Word of God, verbally inspired, the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice.
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

3. We believe in the Virgin birth, the sinless perfection, the bodily resurrection, and ascension into heaven of Jesus Christ, and in His present life there for us as High Priest and Advocate.
4. We believe man was created in the image of God, that he disobeyed God, and thereby incurred spiritual death, which is separation from God, and also physical death as a consequence; and that all the Adamic race are born in sin and are sinners by nature and practice.
5. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins as a vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified by the basis of His shed blood.
6. We believe in the personal, premillennial, and imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
7. We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God.
8. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting punishment of the lost.
9. We believe the Church is an elect company of believers baptized by the Holy Spirit into one body; its mission is to witness concerning its Head, Jesus Christ, preaching the gospel among all nations; We will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air when he appears to set up his kingdom.
10. We believe the grace of God to be sufficient for the maintenance of a godly walk, and that Christ and not the law is the believer's rule of life.

ARTICLE V. POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership. These members must be in good standing and will exercise the right of control in all of the church affairs.

All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable only to the church, unless otherwise specified and approved by a majority vote of the church taken at a regular business meeting or a special business meeting of the church. This church is subject to control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and holds to the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches.

ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS

Antioch's Constitution may be amended by the membership at any regular or special business meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members voting, provided that the amendment has been distributed in document form or digitally at a previous business meeting. Copies of the proposed amendment(s) shall be provided to members whether participating in the meeting, in-person or virtually. The proposed amendment(s) shall be provided to members at least 14 days prior to the business meeting in which the amendment is to be voted upon. Adopted amendments shall become effective immediately unless specified otherwise.