

Belden
baptist church

New Member Packet

OUR CHURCH STAFF

Shane McGivney, Senior Pastor



I am Shane McGivney, the Senior Pastor here at Belden Baptist Church. I am married to my lovely wife Shelia and we have two adult children, Patrick and Caitlin. The Lord put a passion in my heart to serve Him through the local church. As pastor of BBC, I desire to lead the church to equip believers to make disciples who make disciples. One of my favorite things about ministry is getting to see a believer grow in their relationship with Jesus and begin to lead others to do the same. I began my ministry at BBC in February of 2020. I love spending time with my wife, participating in outdoor pursuits and being on mission around the world.
smcgivney@beldenbaptistchurch.com

David LeCompte, Pastor of Worship



I am David LeCompte, the Worship Pastor here at Belden. I am married to Ashtyn, and we have one child, Lane. My vision for the Worship Ministries is to equip all ages to biblically freely worship, and to develop Christ disciples through worship. We came to Belden in October of 2021, and have loved every second!
dlecompte@beldenbaptistchurch.com

Chris Terry, Pastor of Students



I joined the staff at Belden as Director of Student Ministries in March 2015. My heart is to see each student grow in their personal walk with Jesus. God has blessed me to be able to work with an awesome staff here at Belden. I am excited to see what the Lord has planned as He moves us from ordinary to extraordinary.
christerry12@hotmail.com

Paul Worsham, Pastor of Children and Family Ministries



My wife Donna and I have been married for 23 years and have two daughters, Emma, 15 years old and Susana, 14 years old. I became a Christian when I was 17 years old and was called into ministry as a senior in high school. I received a Bachelor of Arts in Bible at John Wesley College and Master of Arts in Christian Education at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. I have had the privilege of serving at Belden Baptist since January 2018. My responsibilities include providing direction and leadership for ministries to preschoolers, children and their families. I work with the pastoral staff to coordinate church-wide activities, minister to the needs of our church family and reach our community for Christ.
pworsham@beldenbaptistchurch.com

Teddy James, Pastor of Senior Adult Ministries



tjames@beldenbaptistchurch.com

Celisa Russell, Music Administrative Assistant



I am very grateful to be a member of a church family who loves God and loves people. The staff at Belden encourages a relationship with God that helps strengthen relationships with people. I am grateful to be working with such genuine people and eager to see the big plans that God has for His church. I am excited and eager to help serve in any way the Lord leads.

shlilo@dixie.lib.ms.us

Alison Frederick, Financial Administrator



I became the Financial Administrator in May 2019. I have thoroughly enjoyed serving and working behind the scenes to see the Lord provide for the needs of others as well as His church. The Lord continues to amaze me daily as He multiplies our tithes to glorify Him and His work.

afrederick@beldenbaptistchurch.com

WORSHIP MINISTRY

Responsible staff – David LeCompte

Worship Choir

The Worship Choir leads in worship on Sunday, well as, supporting and leading special events: such as Christmas and Easter Worship, Revival opportunities, Mission events, etc. Membership is open to any member wanting to lead His people in worship. We teach and follow the Biblical teaching of the Lord's calling those who do the work of the ministry.

Rehearsals are Wednesday evening beginning at 7:15 PM in the Choir Room. Rehearsals include work on future musical pieces, weekly worship preparation, and Biblical discipleship. Childcare is provided.

Instrumental Ministry

The Instrumental ministry is a growing ministry based upon the giftedness and calling of those who have the skill, desire, and ability to use their instrument for worship leading and support.

We rehearse Sunday mornings at 8:30 AM. Special instrumental rehearsals for events are scheduled as needed.

(If you play an instrument and are called to use it for worship please contact Pastor David.)

Student Choir

Belden has a vibrant student choir. This choir is specifically for students grades 6 thru 3rd year of college (21 yrs old).

Weekly rehearsal is Sunday afternoon at 4:00 PM.

We attend Heartsong Camp (music camp presented by Mississippi Baptist) in late June. (Except for years that students focus on mission opportunities.)

This Choir in conjunction with Heartsong Camp prepare students for the Opportunity to Audition for Mississippi Baptist All-State Choir.

Kidz/Preschool Choirs

Kidz/Preschool Choirs meets ***Wednesdays at 5:30 PM during school year.***

We strive to develop music skills, knowledge, and understand of worship through singing, use of instruments, and presentation opportunities. We are striving to develop curriculum, beginning with Kindergarten, that encourages and presents opportunities for continual, intentional musical development through 6th grade.

Belden Kidz

Belden Kidz Arts meets ***Wednesday 6:00 PM during the summer months*** as an extension of Belden Kidz Music/Bible. This important ministry utilizes summer-time to teach instrumental instruction, or work on a musical presentation.

TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY

Responsible Staff – Chris Terry

Belden Baptist Church owns two vehicles: one 45 passenger bus and one 15 passenger van. There is a continuous need for available drivers for these vehicles.

Requirements to drive the 45 passenger bus:

- The driver must have at least Class B CDL license with airbrake and passenger endorsements and the required medical certificate.
- The driver must have a personal driving record free from any current legal issues (unpaid tickets, charges of a serious nature, etc.)
- The driver must be placed on the church vehicle insurance (this is accomplished through the church office).

Requirements to drive the 15 passenger van:

- The driver must have at least a Class D (personal vehicle) license.
- The driver must have a personal driving record free from any current legal issues (unpaid tickets, charges of a serious nature, etc.)
- The driver must be placed on the church vehicle insurance (this is accomplished through the church office).

DISASTER RELIEF MINISTRY

Team Leader—Sammy Green

Our Disaster Relief team is made up of men and women who attend a MBCB DR training class and receive credentials to serve during times of disaster. These trainings are offered by the MBCB each Spring. Individuals may be trained for Chainsaw, Flood recovery, Chaplaincy, or Mass Feeding. These teams are made up of men and women who help remove debris and clean homes and yards after hurricanes, tornadoes and other disasters.

Our teams have served locally and nationally to help those who are hurting. They work together with other SBC DR teams from all over the nation to minister in times of disaster.

STUDENT MINISTRY (Grades 7 through College)

Responsible Staff – Chris Terry

There are several adult opportunities to serve in the student ministry. All of these opportunities are based upon the Biblical teaching of developing Godly relationships with students and modeling the Christ-life through those opportunities.

Adult opportunities to serve:

- Discipleship leaders
- Chaperones for camps / retreats / fun trips / mission trips / etc.
- Assist with counseling
- Assisting with event set-up (fundraisers / church fellowships / banquets)
- Advise the Student Minister of events and/or issues in the lives of students and their families
- Be actively involved with student's lives through prayer
- Participate in milestone events such as "Senior Recognition Day."
- Help in planning and implementing fellowships
- Help in the Wednesday evening Student Worship Time with games / testimonies / teaching in the absence of the Student Minister

Student opportunities:

- Sunday School – 9:45 AM Sundays
- Sunday Evening Discipleship – 5:00 PM Sundays -20 weeks a year, the youth are strongly encouraged to participate in **Student Choir**. This Music Ministry opportunity is a valuable opportunity to equip students with tools for ministry in our community and missions in general. The balance of the year we meet together with the church body to worship and be taught by the pastor.
- Student Worship – Wednesdays 6:00 PM – this is time for the students to worship in a youth style led by the youth praise band, *Voices of Grace*, otherwise known as VOG, and *Voices of Mercy*, otherwise known as VOM. Bible teaching by the Student Minister or discipleship led by adults is presented throughout the year.
- Voices of Grace and Voices of Mercy is the youth praise band that leads worship on Wednesdays, as well as having opportunities to occasionally lead worship in the sanctuary, for children's retreats, youth retreats, and even on mission trips. This group requires a high commitment to practice, live the Christ-life as a leader, show respect to all adult authorities in their life, and to show love and patience with other band members. Entrance into VOG and VOM is by audition with Bro. Gary.
- We have a unique approach to developing Youth for service through camps. Our Six year rotation is:
 - Year 1 - Evangelism camp
 - Year 2 - Discipleship camp
 - Year 3 - Mission trip
 - Year 4 - Evangelism camp
 - Year 5 - Discipleship camp
 - Year 6 - Mission trip.

The intention is to develop a large world view in our students and the adults who assist with these camps and trips. Across the six years we are projected to go to six different areas of the country / world in preparation for the day that these students will be the adult leaders in mission trips.

MISSION MINISTRY

Responsible Staff – Chris Terry

In the Bible, Jesus says in Matthew 28:19 . . . *Go make disciples of all nations* . . . To this end; Belden Baptist Church is striving to be obedient to this command. The church body has shaped the budget to reflect this desire.

Belden International Mission Fund. The purpose of this fund is to assist the members of Belden Baptist Church to go on short-term mission trips internationally and to support our North American mission efforts.

Requirements to participate in international missions through the **Belden International Mission Fund:**

- Be an active member of Belden Baptist Church
- Obtain / maintain a current U.S. Passport
- Obtain any immunizations required by the host country to which you would be going
- Be faithful to the body-life of the Belden Baptist Church
- Gain approval for the trip through the Belden International Missions Committee and / or Mission Counsel (missions is NOT vacation)
- Understand that each person will be required to give a portion of their own money to go on the mission. (This principle is drawn from I Samuel 24:24)
- Attend all training meetings in specific preparation for a mission trip
- Submit to the leadership of the trip team with understanding that more mature will lead less mature in these matters
- Work with the team to give a report to the church upon return from the mission

Belden North American Mission Fund. The purpose of this fund is to assist the members of Belden Baptist Church to go on short-term mission trips in North America (this includes Tupelo and Mississippi) and to support our North American mission efforts.

Requirements to participate in North American missions through the **Belden North American Mission Fund:**

- Be an active member of Belden Baptist Church
- Be faithful to the body-life of the Belden Baptist Church
- Gain approval for the trip through the Belden North American Missions Committee and / or Mission Counsel (missions is NOT vacation)
- Understand that each person will be required to give a portion of their own money to go on the mission. (This principle is drawn from I Samuel 24:24)
- Attend all training meetings in specific preparation for a mission trip
- Submit to the leadership of the trip team with understanding that more mature will lead less mature in these matters
- Work with the team to give a report to the church upon return from the mission

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Responsible Staff – Paul Worsham

The children's ministry at Belden Baptist Church belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. In order to please Him, we strive to follow His leadership in all that we do. It is our job to plant seeds of the gospel and water those seeds so that in the Lord's timing on the harvest can take place. We strive to build lasting relationships with the children and guide them to see their need for a personal relationship with God in order that they might begin the journey to seek His perfect will for their lives.

- **Children's Sunday School** – We offer Sunday school classes for ages K- 6th grade in our children's department. Our goal is to give each child an awareness of Jesus and the love of God at an early age and to begin teaching them about the relationship they can have with Him as they grow older. We also encourage fellowship and relationships with one another. Sunday school takes place each week from 9:45 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. on Sunday mornings.
- **AWANA**- "Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed" meets Wednesday nights from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. This ministry is based on 2nd Timothy 2:15 which states, "Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth". The goal of this ministry is to reach boys and girls with the gospel of Christ and train them to serve Him. During AWANA, we have large group assembly time where the Word is shared in a devotion period, small group time where verses are learned, to develop music skills, knowledge, and understand of worship through singing, use of instruments, and presentation opportunities, and recited to leaders, and game time for fun and fellowship. Rewards and awards are given based on effort by the children to learn God's Word and hide it in their hearts. AWANA meets on Wednesday evenings from 6:00 PM -7:00 PM during the school year.

AWANA groups include: Puggles-2 yr olds, Cubbies- 3-5 year olds, Sparks- K-2nd Grade, T & T Adventure- 3rd- 4th Grade, and T & T Challenge- 5th - 6th Grade

- **Children's Discipleship** – This is an opportunity for our children to be disciple on Sunday evenings at 5:00 p.m. During our DT semesters, kids are presented a Bible lesson using media, games, crafts, journaling, and Bible study. Each week's lesson guides kids to understand how the entire Bible points to God's perfect plan of redemption through Jesus Christ.
- **Children's Camps and Retreats** – During the summer months, we offer children's camp for those completing 3rd – 6th grade. Some years we offer one camp for 3rd-6th grade and other years we offer 2 camps (one for 3rd-4th graders and one for 5th - 6th graders). Depending on the camp, we may offer the opportunity to those leaving 2nd grade as well.
- **VBS** – This is a church-wide ministry designed to share the gospel of Christ with children and adults. Through a variety of small and whole group rotations, children are presented the gospel in a fun, engaging, and age-appropriate environment. The ministry includes music, Bible study, crafts, and recreation through involvement of entire church ministry.
- **Kids Artz** meets **Wednesday 6:00 p.m. during the summer months** as an extension of AWANA Music. This important ministry utilizes summer time to teach instrumental instruction, or work on a musical presentation.

PRESCHOOL MINISTRY
Responsible Staff – Paul Worsham

Our Preschool Ministry team is comprised of people who feel called to serve in this area of ministry for such a time as this. Our goal is to build relationships with each family who has a child/children in this age group. We desire to offer children a safe, secure, clean and loving environment as they experience the love of Jesus while in our care. All adults who work with children must complete and pass a background check. We desire to offer parents peace of mind and the opportunity to worship the Lord and build lasting relationships with other [adults](#). Several team members are paid church staff members. This allows us to provide consistency for children in that they will see the same welcoming face each week as they come to church.

Sunday morning opportunities include:

SUNDAY SCHOOL – care available from 9:30 a.m.

Bed Babies – after first round of immunizations until walking stably – babies receive loving care in a Godly atmosphere.

Toddlers – walking stably until potty training begins – an age appropriate Sunday school lesson is taught.

Potty training – potty training until 3 years old and completely potty trained – an age appropriate Sunday school lesson is taught.

3 year old class – 3 years and completely potty trained – an age appropriate Sunday school lesson is taught.

4 year old class – begins the month of June after the child turns 4 – an age appropriate Sunday school lesson is taught. From this class onward, children will be promoted annually according to their school grade.

WORSHIP SERVICE – care available from 9:45 a.m.

Nursery for Bed Babies – for ages see above

Nursery for Toddlers – for ages see above

Nursery for Potty training – for ages see above

Children's Church – 3 years old and completely potty trained through Kindergarten

Children's Church is a time of worship for our children to prepare them for "Big Church". The children are presented with a Bible story, they see it applied through a puppet skit, make a craft emphasizing the truth they learned, eat a snack and build relationships with one another through games.

Wednesday night opportunities include: care available from 5:45 p.m.

NURSERY for Bed Babies until walking stably

NURSERY for walkers until age 2

AWANA – "Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed" is based on the theme verse II Timothy 2:15 which states, "Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth." This is a ministry that seeks to encourage children of all ages to hide God's word in their hearts and to have fun while doing it.

Puggles class – 2 year olds

Cubbies class – 3-5 year olds

*Child care is available during Adult Choir Practice beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Discipleship Groups

Responsible Staff – Pastor Shane

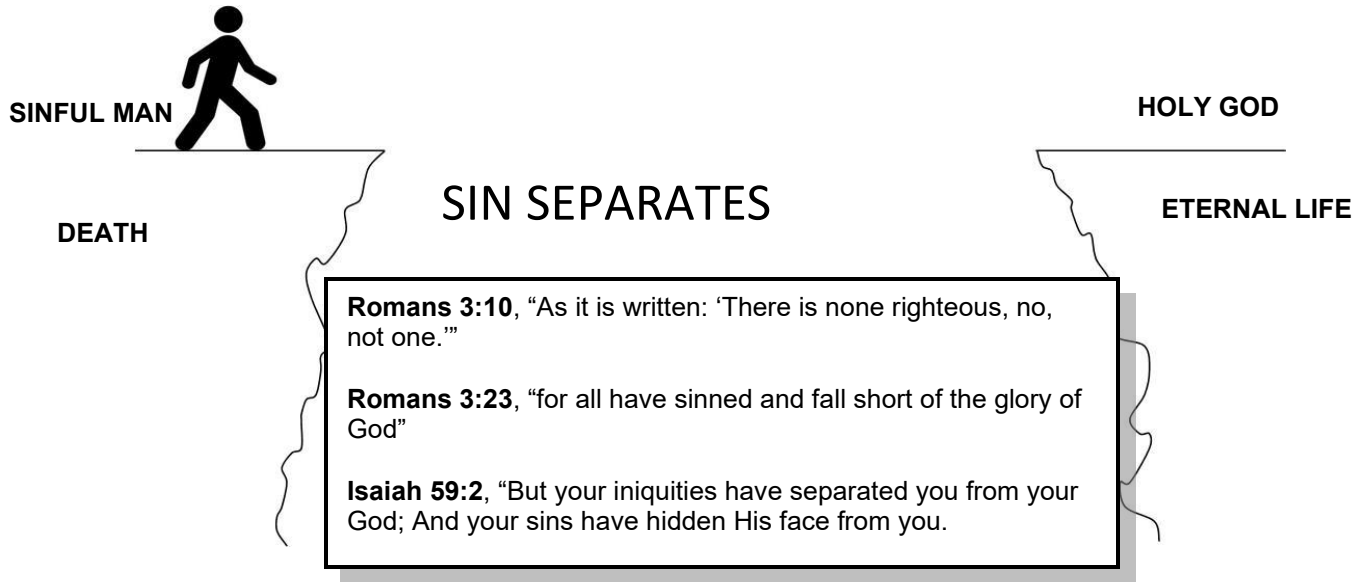
BBC utilizes D-Groups for intentional relational discipleship. A D-Group is a gender-specific closed group of 3 to 5 believers (including the leader) who meet together weekly for the purpose of accelerated spiritual transformation. The time period to meet is normally about 12-18 months. Each group is led by a person who has been specifically trained and disciplined to disciple others. These groups meet on different days throughout the week. If you would like more information on how to join a D-group please contact Pastor Shane or any of the pastoral staff.

BELDEN BAPTIST CHURCH

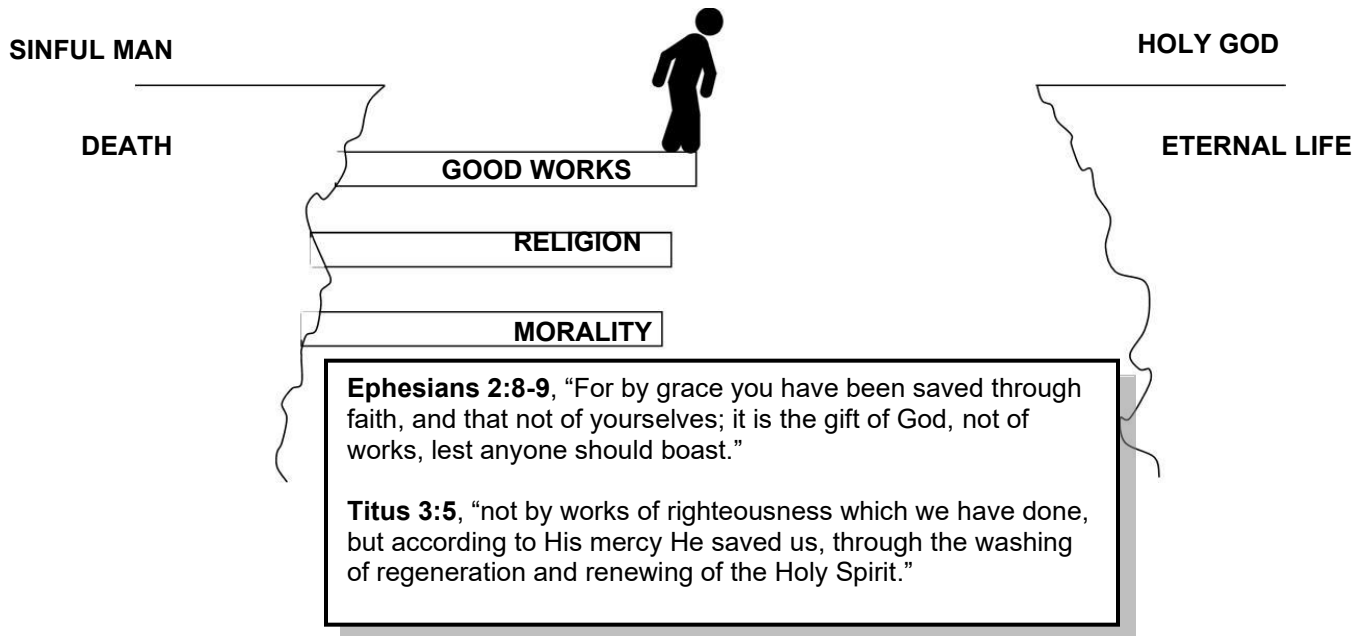
What's It All About?

At Belden Baptist Church it is ALL about a Relationship and it is about RelationshipS! The first and foremost need every person has is a relationship with the God through Jesus Christ. Let's be reminded of how a person enters a relationship with God.

1. Man is naturally sinful and separated from a personal relationship with God.



2. Human efforts to unite God and man always fail.



3. Man, separated from God, experiences spiritual death, will encounter, physical death, and will eventually face eternal death in hell.

A. SPIRITUAL DEATH

Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Ephesians 2:1-3, "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others."

Ephesians 4:18, "having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."

B. PHYSICAL DEATH

1 Corinthians 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive."

Hebrews 9:27, "And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment."

C. ETERNAL DEATH

Revelation 21:8, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

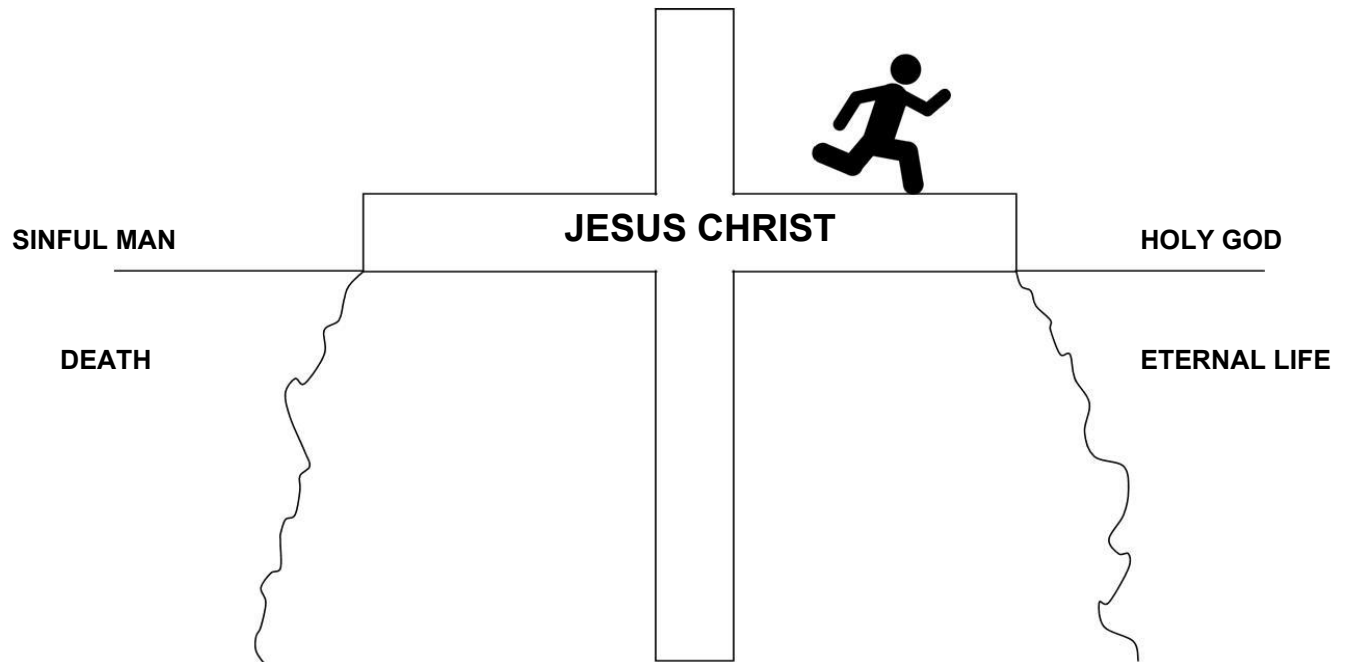
4. God is holy and must punish sin; but because of His love, He provided His own Son to suffer in our place.

John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

1 Peter 3:18, "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit."

5. Man, in faith, must reject all other thoughts of salvation (good works, religion, morality) and receive Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.



Acts 16:31, "So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Romans 10:9-10, "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

John 1:12, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."

6. The new believer as present has eternal life, in the future will not face judgment, and has forever passed from death.

John 5:24, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life."

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

2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

Three Fold Elements for Maturing Believers

- **Encourage**
- **Equip**
- **Evangelize**

Ephesians 4:11-16 says,

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Christ — from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.” (NKJV)

The Staff of Belden seeks to fulfill our highest calling which the Lord defines in the above text. Our goal is to lead you into personally becoming involved in “the work of the ministry” through what we call the “E3” approach. The “E3” approach exists to love you into a growing relationship with Jesus by encouraging, equipping and evangelizing. As you grow in your relationship with Jesus, you will develop close relationships with others where you too will impact their lives to the glory of God by encouraging them, equipping them, and evangelizing them. Several environments exist in our ministry to make this possible.

- Sunday School – a great place to meet other believers and be taught God’s truths.
- Discipleship – intentional development of disciples who make disciples.
- Worship – gathering as the body of Christ to express our adoration to Jesus through prayer, praise, professing, participation, and preaching.
- Fellowship – hanging with other believers, getting to know them, growing to love them, and loving to serve Jesus with them.
- Missions – going to ALL people, in Belden, Mississippi, North America, and the World sharing the good news about Jesus Christ.

The Vision Frame

Missional Mandate—*What are we doing?*

A clear concise statement that describes what the church is ultimately supposed to be doing.

To build relationships that lead people to become passionate followers of Christ.

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make **disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Disciple (Christ Follower)—One who knows Christ, is becoming more like Christ, is on mission with Christ.

Motives (Values)—*Why are we doing it?*

Shared convictions that guide the actions and reveal the strengths of the church.

Instructed by God’s Word—We depend upon the Word to know God and His way.

Devoted to Prayer—Realizing that apart from God we can do nothing.

Pursuing Ministry Excellence—Giving our best to honor God and inspire people.

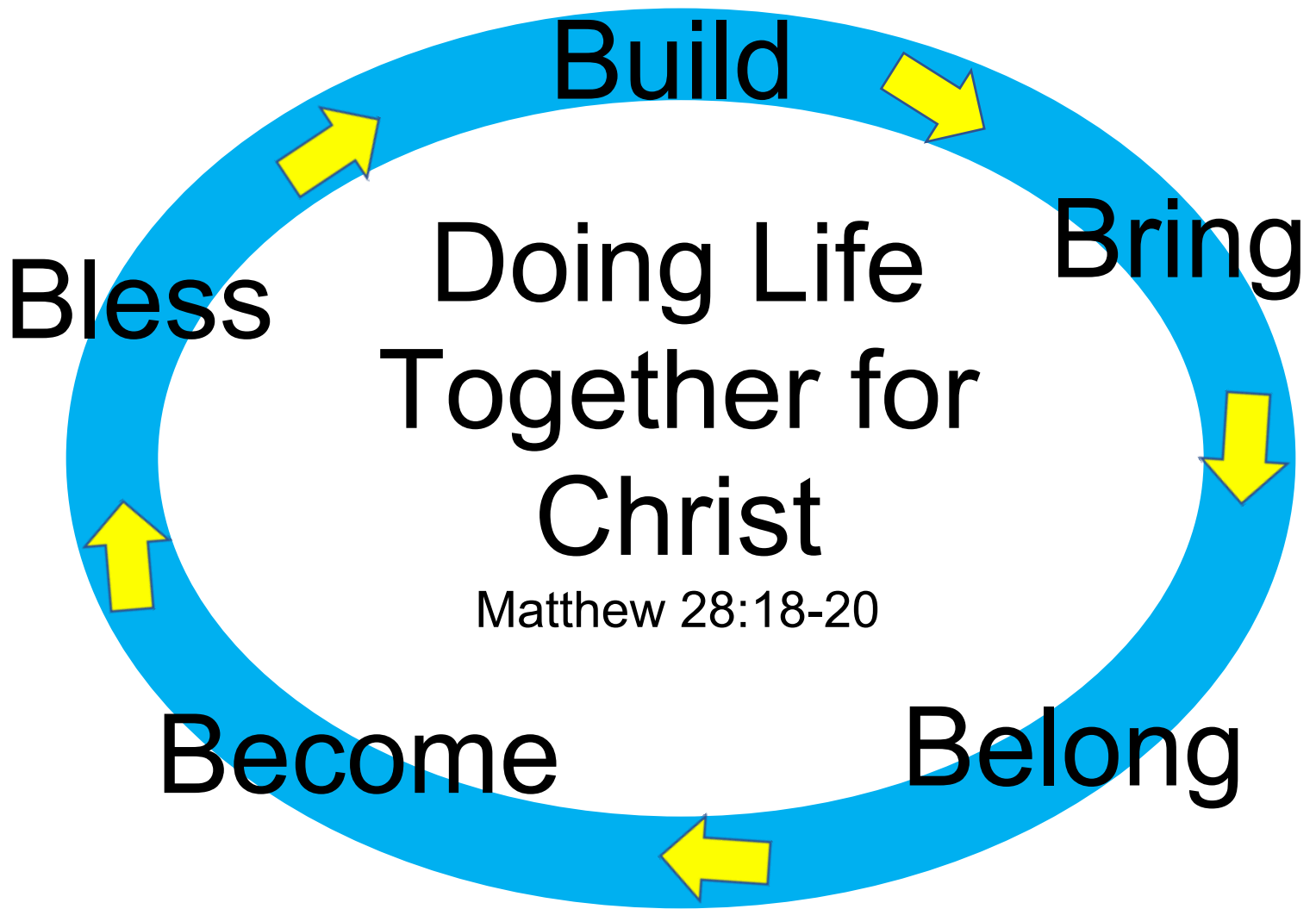
Living in Life-changing Community—Becoming more like Christ through accountable relationships.

People of Compassion—We strive to exhibit God's love to all people.

Intentional Loyalty—Working to protect the unity that Christ sought for His followers.

Messengers of the Gospel—We intentionally seek to share the gospel with all people.

Missional Map—Strategy--*How are we doing it?*
The process or picture that demonstrates how the church will accomplish its mandate on the broadest level.



Build relationships.

Bring yourself and others to worship.

Belong to Sunday School class and other on-campus groups.

Become by engaging in a D-Group and other equipping seminars.

Bless others by living a life of service both inside and outside Belden Baptist Church.

Marks (Measures)—*When are we successful?*

A set of attributes in an individual's life that define or reflect accomplishment of the church's mandate.

Worship

Living with Godly priorities and obedience

Daily attentiveness to the Lord

Active, regular participation at weekend worship

Grow

Applying Scripture to life through personal Bible study and spiritual disciplines

Authentic relationships and accountability

Active, regular participation in a Sunday School Class and/or D-Group

Serve

Using your spiritual gifts within the church

Serving with humility, joy, and sacrifice

Active, regular participation in an area of service

Care

Meeting physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the body

Practicing the ministry of presence

Protecting the "gossip-free zone"

Give

Biblical stewardship (tithe, offering, resources)
Generous giving of time and talents to the body
Living a financially responsible lifestyle

Pray

Personal and daily prayer, confession, thanksgiving and praise
Continual dependence on God for decision making
Praying with and for others

Reach

Local and global outreach to the last, the least, and the lost through church initiatives
Sharing faith and inviting others into the church body
Showing love with people in a practical way

Vision Proper—*Where is God taking us?* Living language that anticipates and illustrates God's better intermediate future.

BBC

Work in Progress

1 Year

3 Year

5-7 Year

WHAT WE BELIEVE

BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE (2000)

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with

mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their

graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39–12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom.

Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. 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, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

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; 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; 1 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; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36, 38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

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

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 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; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

BELDEN BAPTIST CHURCH, INC.

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of the Southern Baptist Churches, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of the church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to the churches of the same faith and order, we do declare and establish this constitution.

ARTICLE I. NAME

This body of believers shall be known as the “Belden Baptist Church, Inc.” of Belden, Mississippi.

ARTICLE II. AFFILIATION

This church shall operate in cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention, the Mississippi Baptist Convention, and the Lee County Baptist Association.

ARTICLE III. ARTICLES OF FAITH

We accept the Holy Bible as the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God and as the ultimate authority in matters of faith, doctrine and Christian living. This church accepts "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention on June 14, 2000, as an affirmation of our basic Christian beliefs and as a general statement of our faith.

ARTICLE IV. CHURCH COVENANT

Members Covenant

As a member of Belden Baptist Church, I will fulfill the following expectations:

- 1. I will worship the one true God with other Belden Baptist church members for as long as I am physically able. The goal of my regular weekly worship is to give God glory.*
- 2. I will grow spiritually through regular involvement in groups and classes at Belden Baptist Church in addition to regular personal devotional times. I understand the purpose of these groups and classes is building community with other believers and holding each other accountable.*

3. *I will serve Christ through the mission work of Belden Baptist Church. I am created to serve others through good works. I am commanded by God to make disciples of every nation, tribe, people, and language through the local church. I will support the church's mission to share the gospel from the local neighborhood to the ends of the earth.*
4. *I will give to God abundantly and joyfully, recognizing God as the owner of all things. Giving my tithe and time to God brings me closer to Him.*
5. *I will seek unity with other church members. I recognize God's design for the church is unity in diversity, and I will put the interests of others above my personal preferences. I will guard the reputation of the church and submit to discipline for any sin problems in my life.*
6. *I will pray for and submit to the leadership of Belden Baptist Church. I will pray privately and with the church corporately. I will pray for people to accept Christ, and I will pray for more disciples to grow in their faith.*
7. *I will share the good news of Jesus with others. I will make my attitude that of Christ and, through humility, make the gospel my priority through selfless, good works and evangelism.*

With Christ as my Lord and Savior, being baptized by immersion after my salvation, being led by the Holy Spirit, and being in agreement with Belden Baptist Church's covenant, doctrine, and leadership, I joyfully unite with the church and commit myself to God and the other members.

Pastor's Covenant

I commit as a pastor within the body of Christ to join Belden Baptist Church and to fulfill the expectations of church membership. Additionally, I commit to the following expectations as a pastor:

1. *I will seek God's guidance for Belden Baptist Church in order to steward resources entrusted to the church in a way that gives God glory.*
2. *I will shepherd, care for the church, and lead with grace, truth, and love.*
3. *I will teach all of God's Word at all costs.*
4. *I will equip members of the church for the work of ministry.*
5. *I will protect the doctrine of Belden Baptist, and I will guard the church against false teachers and false teaching.*

6. *I will act in a way that is above reproach, making my family the priority of my ministry. I understand the way I live will affect the church I lead, and I will live in a way that elevates the reputation of Belden Baptist Church.*
7. *I will lead the church in exercising discipline in a way that is gracious and loving, protecting the health of the church as a whole while guiding members towards reconciliation.*

ARTICLE V. CHARACTER

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers (members) who comprise it. This church will be, and is always to be, a sovereign, autonomous Baptist church, self-governing on all matters by a majority of the body of members who comprise it and which recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Southern Baptist Churches. In no way is this to be understood that such co-operation or affiliation shall ever become one of the doctrines and/or tenets of this church.

ARTICLE VI. DOCTRINE

This church receives the scriptures (Holy Bible) as its authority of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of the Southern Baptist churches as indicated in the Articles of Faith referred to in Article III.

ARTICLE VII. MARRIAGE

The Holy Scriptures teach that the word "marriage" means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word "spouse" refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or wife (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-24; Matthew 19:4-5; 1 Corinthians 7:1-3). Those who marry in obedience to the Scriptures obtain favor from the Lord (Proverbs 18:22). Through obedience to the Lord and encouragement to those seeking the favor of the Lord, any marriage inside the parameters of these teachings can be performed by church ministers or on church property. Marriages outside of these parameters will not be performed by church ministers or on church property.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

SECTION 1. GENERAL

This is a sovereign and congregational Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

SECTION 2. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this church shall consist of such persons who confess Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord, and who:

- 1) Publicly profess that faith before the congregation and present themselves for baptism and membership, or
- 2) Having been a member of another church of like faith and order, present themselves to the congregation by promise of transfer of letter from the aforementioned church, or
- 3) Give satisfactory statement of faith and declaration of membership in a church where transfer of letter cannot be obtained, and by submitting to baptism if the aforementioned church is of a different faith and/or order.
- 4) Should there be any question that might require prayer, thought, or study, or if there is any dissent as to any candidate, such question or dissent shall be referred to the Senior Pastor and, at his discretion, to the Church Staff for the making of a recommendation during the next regularly scheduled business meeting.
- 5) The membership of this church shall consist of such persons who confess Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord and who: (1) after due examination by the church as to their Christian experience (New Members Orientation or Pastor's Conference), and if coming from other churches, the receipt of an acceptable letter of recommendation is satisfactory therefore, (2) have been accepted by affirmation of the church affirming vote of $\frac{3}{4}$ of members at a regular quarterly business meeting and have been baptized, (3) enter into this covenant.

SECTION 3. DUTIES

Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life, including consistent attendance of church services, and giving to her support and her causes, and to share in her organized work. adherence to Article IV, Member's Covenant of the BBC Constitution.

SECTION 4. RIGHTS

Such members as described in Article I, Section 3 above, may act and vote on decisions of this church.

SECTION 5. EXCLUSION FROM MEMBERSHIP

This church shall terminate membership in the following ways:

- 1) For reasons of discipline including failure to adhere to Article IV, Member's Covenant of the BBC Constitution, continuing in unrepentant sin, teaching doctrine inconsistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, etc. No grievance against any member shall be brought before the body of this church until this person has been dealt with according to God's Word in Matthew 18:15-17.
- 2) By request to be dismissed from the church roll by the individual (meaning name stricken from roll with no letter granted).
- 3) By request for letter by a sister church.
- 4) Upon learning that a member has united with another church.
- 5) Upon the physical death of the said member.

SECTION 6. RESTORATION

Any person having been dismissed from membership for reasons of church discipline can be restored to membership and fellowship by said person's public repentance in a worship service and a majority $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of members present at a regular or special called business meeting.

SECTION 7. RECORD OF MEMBERSHIP

The church shall keep an accurate roll of all members, and insofar as possible, up-to-date contact information.

ARTICLE II

SECTION 1. GENERAL

The Church is both a spiritual body and a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Mississippi. The Church is subject to the authority of Scripture in all matters and subject to the rules of duly constituted public authority (Romans 13:1-7). The church organization is to provide the mechanism for the orderly activity of the church body.

SECTION 2. CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS

A quarterly business meeting will be held during the month of August, November, February, and May. Notice of exact date and time of quarterly business meetings shall be given by public announcement at any two of the worship services preceding the meeting. Monthly financial statements will be made available for all members of the congregation. Any member seeking to present new business must fill out a **Quarterly Business Meeting Agenda Request Form (available in the church office)** and said form must be

turned in to the church office by the Monday preceding the quarterly business meeting. Motions should be introduced through the appropriate committees or Senior Pastor and evaluated by the financial committee if finances are involved in the motions.

Notice of any special called business meeting shall be given by public announcement at any two of the worship services preceding the special called meeting. The nature and purpose of such called meetings shall be stated in above-mentioned announcements and only those items may be decided in the meeting. Said notice shall constitute sufficient notice for all purposes. The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern the church in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the church may adopt.

The Senior Pastor shall serve as the moderator of all church business meetings or he may appoint another member in cases where he is absent or feels there may be a conflict of interest. In case the church is without a Senior Pastor the Chairman of Deacons shall serve as moderator or appoint another member at his discretion.

Twenty members present shall be considered sufficient to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Should a quorum not be present, the members present shall adjourn to such future time as shall be agreed upon by a majority of them until such time as a quorum be present.

SECTION 3. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Senior Pastor shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the corporation and shall have general and active management of the operation of the corporation. He shall be responsible for the administration of the corporation, including general supervision of the policies of the corporation.

SECTION 4. TRUSTEES

The Trustees shall consist of five persons elected from the church membership and shall operate under the corporate name of the "Belden Baptist Church, Inc."

A regular term of office for a Trustee shall be five years. After serving a five-year term, at least one year must elapse before a Trustee is eligible for re-election.

Vacancies occurring in the Trustees for any reason shall be reported to the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall then recommend to the church a suitable person to fill such vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term. A Trustee is not required to be a Deacon.

The duties of the Trustees are as follows:

1) The Trustees shall be legal representatives of the Church and as such they are given authority to execute deeds, debentures, mortgages, liens, and other legal documents for the church, but shall have no authority or privileges to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, etc. any property of the Church without approval of the Church.

2) The Trustees shall have supervision and maintain any deeds, bonds, insurance policies and important papers of the Church. They are further authorized to receive and disburse monies in accordance with terms of wills, bequests, and special instruments wherein the church is named beneficiary.

3) The Trustees shall make a written report to the Church as needed and said report may be incorporated in any annual report.

SECTION 5. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee is a six-member committee of church members elected by the church in business meeting. The function of the Nominating Committee is to work with the Senior Pastor and Church Staff to examine and propose nominations for vacancies in Trustees, Sunday School Teachers and Committees. The Nominating Committee is to submit their recommended proposals to the Church in a business meeting as deemed appropriate by the committee and with approval of the Senior Pastor.

The church will establish a system of standing and special committees to help carry out the work of the ministry. The standing committees of the church will follow a rotational system, which will be determined by the number of persons on a given committee. The overall design of the structure is that members serve for three years with one or more rotating service each year. Each Committee will have the responsibility of electing its own chairperson, who will schedule meetings and preside over them and make necessary reports and recommendations to the Church in a business meeting. Special Committees may be established by the church for specific purposes and specific times. These committees will bring recommendation to the Church in a business meeting.

SECTION 6. DEACONS

1) Functional Role: In accordance with the meaning of the word "deacon" as practiced in the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the Church. The function of the deacon is to serve with the Senior Pastor in performing the tasks of the Church of worshipping, proclaiming, discipling, and ministering.

2) Number of Active Deacons in Service: The number of deacons shall be based on the needs of the Church as recommended by the Senior Pastor. The needs of the Church in regard to the number of deacons for the next term shall be determined by the current year's Chairman of the Deacons with input from the current year's active deacon body and presented to the Senior Pastor as a recommendation.

3) Selection of Deacons: It is essential to note the nature of the selection procedure for our Church. It shall be a procedure in which men are reviewed and possibly selected for deacon service through a process of encouragement and spiritual discernment and not be judgmental or fault focused. We desire to encourage and exhort men into service as deacons.

On or before the third (3rd) Sunday in June of each year, men to be considered for the office of Deacon shall be nominated by Church members through an open ballot. Any man receiving a single nomination will be considered to have his name placed on the final Deacon Election Ballot. Nominations are received by the Deacon Body. The Deacon Body shall compile a list of all the nominees.

The Chairman of the Deacon Body will assign names of every nominee to members of the Deacon Body. A Deacon will contact each nominee assigned to him to advise him of the nomination to determine whether or not he senses the call of God before proceeding further. If so, the Deacon Chairman is notified, and the nominee is sent a **Deacon Nomination Packet** to read, complete, and sign. This packet includes the biblical qualifications, the expectation of deacons, and a covenant agreement. After the nominee agrees to proceed with placement of his name on the Deacon Ballot, the Deacon Body will schedule a personal interview with the nominee to determine his qualifications and agreement to serve as a Deacon of Belden Baptist Church upon election by the church body. The Pastor will provide guidelines for content to be covered during these interviews. Each interview will be conducted by a minimum of two deacons and a member of our Ministerial Staff.

After the nominees have been interviewed by the Deacon Body, those found to be biblically qualified according to Acts 6:1-7 and I Timothy 3:8-13 (For added clarification-*Based on these verses we do not believe that divorce is an automatic disqualification*)-and agreeing to serve under the covenant agreement, will have their names placed on the final Deacon Election Ballot for the church body to select the number of deacons equal to the number of deacon positions to be filled. The Deacon Body will provide the approved nominees to the Church Secretary for election ballot preparation no later than the first Sunday in August.

4) Deacon Term of Service: The deacon body shall serve on a rotational basis. On the 31st day of August of each year, the term of office for those rotating off shall expire and the newly affirmed deacons shall begin service. After serving a term of three years, no deacon shall be eligible for re-election at the end of such term until a lapse of at least one year. Deacons who are elected to fill incomplete terms of other deacons will be immediately eligible for nomination for a full three-year term.

5) Eligibility Requirements: Any male, age twenty-one or over, with at least one year of membership in “Belden Baptist Church, Inc.”, as of June 1, is eligible to be nominated as a deacon.

SECTION 7. FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee is comprised of six members. The primary function of the Finance Committee is to continuously review the financial affairs of the Church to provide a level of stewardship accountability for the Church staff to the Church membership. This committee meets as needed (or as required by its Chairman) to review the financial statements prepared by the Financial Administrator, to examine prior approved disbursements for propriety, to consider the accounting and financial systems of the Church, to measure actual financial operations to budgeted amounts, and to advise the Church Staff of any action needed by the body in the financial area. The Finance Committee meets annually to develop a proposed budget for the next Church fiscal year. Through budget requests of Church Staff and assigned Committees, the Finance Committee formulates a proposed budget, which is then presented to the Church in business meeting for church membership approval. The Finance Committee is to submit desired revisions in the current budget to the Church in business meeting as deemed appropriate by the committee and with approval of the Senior Pastor.

The Financial Administrator is a non-voting member of the Finance Committee. Members of this committee serve for a three-year term and each year the Nominating Committee proposes to the Church in business meeting nominations to fill the two vacancies, which will occur during that year.

SECTION 8. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee is a six-member committee whose function is to assist the Senior Pastor in determining the staffing and compensation levels of the Church, and with the consultation of the Senior Pastor or his designee, to propose staffing and compensation changes within the Finance Committee guidelines.

The Personnel Committee members are to serve for a three-year term and two positions are to become vacant for Nominating Committee action each year.

Additionally, the Personnel Committee will advise and counsel the Senior Pastor in interviews of prospective staff members and other personnel related matters. If a staff issue arises and after meeting with the Senior Pastor and having not found resolution, any staff member may ask for a meeting with the Personnel Committee to address concerns. All exiting staff members will be given opportunity for an exit interview with the Personnel Committee. Annually the Personnel Committee may provide an opportunity for each staff member to meet with said committee.

ARTICLE III

SECTION 1. SENIOR PASTOR

By virtue of his calling and office, the Senior Pastor is the spiritual leader of the Church and Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation. He shall be elected for an indefinite period of time and may terminate his position with the Church by a notice of thirty days, or the Church may terminate his position by the same notice.

In the event of a vacancy in the position of Senior Pastor, a replacement or fill-in shall be considered by a Pastor Search Committee consisting of five (5) persons recommended by the Active Deacon Body and elected by the Church in business meeting. This committee shall consider the scriptural qualifications of potential Pastors. After due consideration, the Pastor Search Committee shall recommend a man to the Church for approval or disapproval by written ballot. Only one name will be considered at a time. Approval by at least a three-fourths (3/4) majority of those members present and voting represents the acknowledgement of God's calling of the Senior Pastor.

The Senior Pastor shall serve as the preacher and senior Bible teacher by virtue of his calling. The Senior Pastor, or his designee, shall be considered an ex-officio member of all committees. The Senior Pastor shall serve as the moderator of all church business meetings or he may appoint another member in cases where he is absent or feels there may be a conflict of interest in accordance with Article II, Section 2 above. The Senior Pastor shall oversee the total ministry of the Church.

The Senior Pastor is responsible for the Ministerial and Support Staff who assume his delegated responsibilities. Each Ministerial and Support Staff member is to serve in cooperation with the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor may remove, replace, or realign existing Ministerial and Support Staff positions, as he deems necessary and appropriate, after consultation with the Personnel Committee. The Senior Pastor will conduct annual staff evaluations on all staff.

SECTION 2. MINISTERIAL STAFF

Ministerial Staff includes, but is not limited to, any ministerial position that oversees ministry for music, children, students, senior adults, discipleship, missions, etc. Every Ministerial Staff person will work under the supervision of the Senior Pastor. When a vacancy occurs in these areas of ministry, the Senior Pastor and the Personnel Committee shall seek out an individual who shall be interviewed for that particular position, and if found favorable by that committee, the recommended individual will be presented to the church for consideration. Election shall be by ballot at the close of a Sunday morning worship service. Approval by at least a three-fourths (3/4) majority of those members present and voting represents the acknowledgement of God's calling of Ministerial Staff.

SECTION 3. SUPPORT STAFF

Support Staff includes, but is not limited to, any Administration Assistant position that assists Church Staff, Financial Assistant, Building Maintenance, Janitorial, Contract Employees, etc. Every Support Staff person will work under the ultimate supervision of the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor may appoint other Ministerial Staff to exercise immediate supervisory responsibilities at his discretion. When a vacancy occurs in these areas of ministry, the Senior Pastor and the Personnel Committee shall seek out an individual who shall be interviewed for that particular position, and if found favorable by that committee, the individual will be hired to perform their assigned duties. When new

positions become necessary, the Senior Pastor and Personnel Committee shall present the need to the church for consideration. Upon approval by the church to establish the new position, the Senior Pastor and the Personnel Committee shall seek out an individual who shall be interviewed for that particular position, and if found favorable by that committee, the individual will be hired to perform their assigned duties.

SECTION 4. CHURCH CLERK

The church clerk shall be elected to a three-year term and upon serving that term shall be eligible for immediate re-election. It shall be the duty of the clerk to keep minutes of all business meetings of the church. In a timely manner, the church clerk will sign and submit a copy of the minutes to the church office for the Senior Pastor to sign and for the church to affirm by a majority vote at the next quarterly business meeting. The church office will keep a digital copy of all minutes and records of church membership.

SECTION 5. CHURCH PARLIAMENTARIAN

The church parliamentarian shall be elected to a three-year term and upon serving that term shall be eligible for immediate re-election. It shall be the duty of the church parliamentarian to be familiar with Robert's Rules of Order and ensure that such rules are followed in all business meetings of the church.

ARTICLE IV. GENERAL

SECTION 1. LICENSING AND ORDINATION

Any person recommended by the Senior Pastor having given evidence that he is called to the work of the ministry, may be licensed to preach. The Senior Pastor shall possess the sole right to convene an Ordination Council to examine the qualifications of a candidate and, in turn, advise the Church as to the propriety of ordination. The final action to ordain such minister shall rest with the Church upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor and an affirming vote of $\frac{3}{4}$ of members present at an ordination service.

SECTION 2. MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY.

1) Marriage: We believe that the term "marriage" is a biblical institution established by God as clearly described in the scriptures. This Church recognizes that marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in an exclusive covenant union for a lifetime.

2) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur 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 in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

3) Human Sexuality: The Bible teaches that legitimate sexual relations are exercised solely within marriage. Hence, this Church opposes all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, transgender, and pornography.

4) Accordingly, we believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, its members, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly. Pastors, staff and members of this church will not participate in same-sex unions, same sex “marriages,” or domestic partnership ceremonies nor shall any of its property or resources be used for such purposes.

5) We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. 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 accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church.

SECTION 3. ADOPTION OF CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

This Constitution and the Bylaws, shall be considered adopted and will become effective upon affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the members present at a business meeting. The adoption shall affect a repeal of all previously adopted rules in conflict herewith.

SECTION 4. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any regular or called business meeting by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of those members present and voting, by giving at least a ten-day notice to the membership through an announcement during the two regularly scheduled worship service.

A copy of this Constitution and Bylaws shall, at all times, be kept in the church office along with amendments to or revisions thereof. Up-to-date copies shall also be maintained in the church offices and made available to any church member upon request.

SECTION 5. EVALUATION

Evaluation of the Constitution and Bylaws shall take place every five (5) years during the years ending with 0 and 5. The Deacon Body Nominating Committee shall appoint an ad hoc committee of three people to perform the evaluation. If need for amendment is found necessary, the committee shall make recommendation to the church in the same manner as is set forth in Article IV, Section 4 above.

Approved November 23, 2025

THREE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES IN GIVING

1. Tithing is for the ongoing ministry of the local church.

Leviticus 27:30-31, “And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's. It is holy to the LORD.”

Genesis 28:22, “And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You.”

Malachi 3:10, “Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this,’ Says the LORD of hosts, ‘If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.’”

Matthew 23:23, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.”

2. Giving beyond the tithe for the ongoing needs for world mission

2 Corinthians 9:1-8, “Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you; for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up the majority. Yet I have sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this respect, that, as I said, you may be ready; lest if some Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to mention you!) should be ashamed of this confident boasting. Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation. But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.”

3. Giving beyond the tithe for special needs

1 Chronicles 29:3-5, “Moreover, because I have set my affection on the house of my God, I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, my own special treasure of gold and silver: three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses; the gold for things of gold and the silver for things of silver, and for all kinds of work to be done by the hands of craftsmen. Who then is willing to consecrate himself this day to the LORD?”