

# **CONSTITUTION OF CASCADES BIBLE CHURCH**

**Potomac Falls, Virginia**

## **ARTICLE I – NAME**

This Church shall be known as Cascades Bible Church, Potomac Falls, Virginia.

## **ARTICLE II – MISSION**

The mission of this Church shall be the promotion and support of the worship of God by the preaching of the Gospel of the Lord JESUS CHRIST at home and abroad and equipping the saints for the work of service and building up of the body of Christ.

## **ARTICLE III – ORGANIZATION**

Cascades Bible Church shall be recognized as a nonprofit religious organization under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The church shall operate exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes within the classification of legal charities.

## **ARTICLE IV – GOVERNMENT**

This organization shall be permanently independent, strictly self-governing in all matters, and shall never be under the control of any denomination or federation of churches. The church shall seek fellowship with other congregations of like faith and practice.

The Elders shall constitute the governing body of the Church, and shall conduct its spiritual and business affairs. Voting authority for all Church matters shall be vested in the Elders.

## **ARTICLE V – COVENANT**

Having been led by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our own personal Savior, and on the public testimony of our faith in Him, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into this covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We purpose, therefore, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its spirituality and prosperity, and to sustain scriptural worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to give the Church sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to give faithfully of time and talent in its activities; to contribute cheerfully as God has prospered us to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations according to the Scripture.

We purpose to maintain family and private devotions; to educate our children according to the Word of God; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our manner of living; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We purpose, by the grace and power of God, that as strangers and pilgrims, we will strive to abstain from all forms of activity which dishonor our Lord Jesus Christ or cause stumbling to a fellow believer; that we will avoid all gossip, backbiting and unrighteous anger, and will be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us.

We purpose to watch over one another in brotherly love; to encourage one another in the blessed hope of our Lord's return; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation.

We moreover purpose that should we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with another church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the teaching of God's Word. In the event there is no such church, we shall seek, with the Lord's help, to establish one.

## **ARTICLE VI – ARTICLES OF FAITH**

**WE BELIEVE** that the Bible is the inspired, infallible and inerrant Word of God, our only rule for faith and practice. (II Tim.3:16-17; II Peter 1:21)

**WE BELIEVE** in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; each of whom is equal in being, power and glory. (Matt. 28:19; John 6:27; Heb. 1:8; Acts 5:3-4)

**WE BELIEVE** that God created the heavens and the earth, including all life, "each after its own kind," by direct act and not by the process of evolution. (Gen. 1, 2; Col. 1:16-17; John 1:3)

**WE BELIEVE** in the distinct personality of Satan, and that he is the "god of this age," author of all the powers of darkness and sin, and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire. (Matt. 4:1-3; 2Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:10)

**WE BELIEVE** that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sin nature, and became alienated from God; and that man is totally depraved and, of himself, totally unable to remedy his lost condition. (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:22-23; 5:10-19; Eph. 2:1-3, 12)

**WE BELIEVE** in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God's only begotten Son, His virgin birth, sinless life, sacrificial atoning death for our sins, His bodily resurrection, and His personal, literal imminent return. (John 1:1-3, 29; 3:16; Luke 24:36-43; John 14:1-3)

**WE BELIEVE** in salvation by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and that salvation delivers the believer in Christ from the penalty and power of sin, and ultimately from the very presence of sin. (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8-9; John 10:27-28; I John 5:13)

**WE BELIEVE** that all who take Christ as their Savior are born from above by action of the Holy Spirit and are eternally secure in Christ. (John 10:28-29; Rom. 8:35-39; Phil.1:6)

**WE BELIEVE** in the Church which is the body and bride of Jesus Christ, whose purpose is to worship, pray, fellowship, teach, witness of Christ, and observe the ordinances of her Lord which are baptism of believers by immersion and the observance of the Lord's Supper. (Eph. 5:25-32; Matt. 28:20; I Cor. 11:23-24)

**WE BELIEVE** that the pattern seen in the "Church which is His Body" should be duplicated or manifested in the local Church, the local assemblies of believers, called together by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of working together to accomplish God's will in a given locality. (Acts 2:41-47; Rom. 16:5)

**WE BELIEVE** that the Holy Spirit seals, baptizes, indwells and regenerates all believing sinners at the moment of conversion. We believe that He sovereignly gives every Christian at least one spiritual gift for service. Further that these gifts are for the edification of the body and not the individual. While we hold to the teaching that God can and still does perform miracles such as healing, we do not believe that He still gifts individuals with the sign gifts (speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, healings, miracles) as He did in the apostolic age. (1Cor. 12:13; I Pet. 4:10; Eph. 1:13; John 3:1-8; Titus 3:5; 1Cor. 14:22; Heb. 2:4)

**WE BELIEVE** in the bodily, personal, imminent, pre-millennial return of Jesus Christ; that He will come before the seven-year tribulation period to catch away His Church, coming only into the air, and that He will come again with His Church at the close of the tribulation to judge the living nations and to set up His kingdom. (1Thess. 4:13-18; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 19:11-21)

We acknowledge that the above articles of faith in no way exhaust the content of our faith which is the entire Word of God. Furthermore, the verses given are listed only as illustrative and should not be construed as proof texts or as exhaustive in nature. We do believe that these articles are a true representation of the sound doctrine taught in the Scriptures.

## **ARTICLE VII – MEMBERSHIP**

### **SECTION A – Purpose of Membership**

Being led by the Holy Spirit to formally identify with Cascades Bible Church a believer should have the following purposes in mind.

- (1) Growing spiritually in the Lord. (Acts 2:42; Heb. 5:11-6:1; 13:7)
- (2) Being used by God for mutual encouragement and the meeting of specific spiritual, physical and emotional needs of the body. (Acts 2:42-47; Rom. 1:12; Gal. 6:1-2; Heb.10:23-25)

(3) To be used by God to minister to others by developing and exercising God-given spiritual gifts under the spiritual watch care of the Lord's under shepherd, the elders. (Acts 20:28; 1Cor. 12:4-7; Eph. 4; 11-15; Heb. 13:17)

#### SECTION B – Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of each member of the Church to fulfill obligations as set forth in this Constitution and assist fellow members in keeping theirs; to honor and esteem their spiritual leaders; to pray for them, to submit to them in the scriptural exercise of their official authority, and to manifest a proper consideration for their reputation; and, in proportion to one's ability, to contribute toward the Church and its ministry.

#### SECTION C – Categories

(1) Regular – All members received into the membership of the Church except as specified in (2) and (3).

(2) Associate – Special membership provided for those who, because of career, student or other status, believe their residency here will only be temporary, and therefore wish to maintain membership in their home church.

(3) Absentee – Members who are absent for extended periods of time for such reasons as advanced education or missionary service who plan to return periodically or permanently to this area.

#### SECTION D – Admission

(1) The members of this Church shall consist of believers in Christ who have given testimony of the new birth, have been baptized by immersion upon profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, are in agreement with the covenant and Articles of Faith of this church and will abide by its form of government.

(2) All new applications for membership shall be made through the Board of Elders. Upon an affirmative vote by the Board, new members will be presented to the congregation.

#### SECTION E – Dismissal

Shall be by:

(1) Letter of Dismissal

Upon the request or order of any member in good standing, a Letter of Dismissal to another Church of like faith and order shall be granted by vote of the Elders.

(2) Erasure from roll

If a member neglects his membership obligations, the Elders may, after a period of one year, erase his name from the roll. The Elders shall also erase from the roll the name of any member who unites with another Church without requesting absentee membership or securing dismissal from this Church.

### (3) Removal

If a member is teaching doctrine contrary to sound doctrinal statements of this constitution, that will be justification for removal as a member.

### (4) Exclusion

When the Elders have voted to withdraw church fellowship from any member who has been proved unworthy of membership, that membership shall cease immediately.

## **ARTICLE VIII – DISCIPLINE / RESTORATION**

As believers in Jesus Christ and members of His body, the church, we are to exhibit His character through our obedience to God’s Word in every relationship and in every situation. When a fellow believer persists in overt sinful behavior contrary to Scripture, we have a Scriptural responsibility to admonish the sinning believer so that he or she may have an opportunity to repent of the sin and be restored to obedient and fruitful Christian living.

Biblical principles must be followed by individuals and by the church as a body when discipline/restoration is required for a fellow believer who sins. This process is to be exercised with great love and with diligent, fervent prayer.

If, however, a believer persists in his or her sinful behavior, in spite of scripturally based repeated warnings, the individual shall be subject to suspension or removal from the church fellowship or such other action as the Board of Elders may deem proper. The sinning believer will be restored to fellowship when it is determined that repentance has taken place. (1Cor. 5:1-5; Matt. 18:15-18; Gal. 6:1-5). See Article IX of the By-Laws for detailed information on the purpose and policy of church discipline.

## **ARTICLE IX – OFFICERS**

The scriptural officers of this Church are Elders and Deacons, and the By-Laws shall determine their appointment, term and succession.

## **ARTICLE X – MINISTRY LEADERSHIP AND PERSONNEL**

Other leadership positions and personnel may be created and filled by the Elders as deemed necessary. Such positions may include, but are not limited to, Treasurer, Sunday School Superintendent, Home Fellowship Group Leaders, Church Office Manager, etc. See church manual of job descriptions.

## **ARTICLE XI – MEETINGS**

Meetings for worship, prayer, praise, fellowship, business and special purposes shall be held as set forth in the By-Laws.

## **ARTICLE XII- AMENDMENTS**

The Constitution and/or By-Laws of Cascades Bible Church may be amended at a meeting of the Board of Elders, called for that purpose, notice of which has been given to the full Board at least two weeks in advance. A vote to amend shall require a 3/4 affirmative vote of the full board to pass.

## **ARTICLE XIII – EXISTENCE AND DISSOLUTION**

It is confidently expected that the ministry of Cascades Bible Church will continue until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, in order to fulfill all possible legal requirements, it is the expressed wish and desire of this organization that, if the church should bring its work to a conclusion and dissolve its organization, none of its assets remaining after meeting all responsibilities and payment of all just obligations shall insure to the benefit of any individual member of the organization, elder, pastor, or other employee, missionary, or other private individuals. In the event of its dissolution, all such assets, if any, shall be turned over by decision of the Elders to a church, an organization, or organizations which is or are in harmony with the mission as stated in Article II, and is or are in agreement with the doctrinal position as stated in Article VI. Such an organization or organizations also must be recognized by the U.S. Treasury Department as entitled to tax exempt status.

Adopted by Cascades Bible Church on May 1, 2007.