

NEW COVENANT BAPTIST CHURCH of State College, Pennsylvania  
CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Adopted March 11, 1987  
Revision (1) May 25, 1988  
Revision (2) October 4, 1989  
Revision (3) May 11, 1994  
Revision (4) November 24, 1996

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches.

I. NAME

This body shall be known as the NEW COVENANT BAPTIST CHURCH of State College, Pennsylvania.

II. STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe in the literal inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible.

We believe God is one in essence, existing in three persons, and is revealed to man as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

We believe that Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, was given as the substitute for the sins of the world on Calvary's cross, was buried, rose bodily on the third day, and has ascended to the Father.

We believe that salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone.

We believe in the individual priesthood of the believer.

We believe in the bodily return of Jesus Christ to establish His kingdom and judge the world.

IV. RELATIONSHIPS

The government of this Church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this Church will cooperate with and support our association, state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention.

V. CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and, on the profession of our faith, 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 fellowship with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit 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; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and, mindful of the example of our Savior, to secure it without delay.

We also engage to maintain personal and family devotions; to spiritually develop our children; to seek the salvation of our family and acquaintances; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct; to proclaim the gospel as ambassadors for Christ; and to be faithful in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

VI. AMENDMENTS

Changes in this Constitution may be made at any regular or special Business Meeting of the Church, provided each proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous regular or special Business Meeting, and

copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments to the Constitution shall be by two-thirds vote of all voting members (as defined in the Bylaws) of the Church present and voting.

## BYLAWS

### I. MEMBERSHIP

#### SECTION I. GENERAL

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of 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. QUALIFICATIONS

The membership of this Church shall consist of such persons who publicly confess Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord and who have fulfilled the conditions of membership as set forth below.

Each candidate shall be received by presenting himself for membership at any worship service, prayer meeting, or business meeting. Prior to the vote on his membership the candidate will be counseled by the Pastor or another church leader with respect to his salvation and baptism and regarding the responsibilities and privileges of membership in this Church.

A three-fourths vote of those Church members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates into membership. Members voting shall be fifteen (15) years of age or older.

Those candidates elected will enter into membership in one of the following ways:

- a. By Baptism, which shall be by immersion of the believer in water, unless health dictates otherwise.
- b. By statement of previous baptism.
- c. By Letter of membership transfer from another church of like faith and order, having been baptized as stated in a. above.
- d. By Restoration. Any person whose membership has been terminated by resignation or disciplinary action may be restored by vote of the Church.

#### SECTION 3. VOTING RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

Only members of the Church who are fifteen (15) years of age or older are voting members. They are entitled to nominate for office, vote in elections, or vote on questions submitted to the Church in Business Meetings. The member must be present to make nominations and to vote. Proxy and absentee nominations and votes are not permitted. Every reference in these Bylaws and the Constitution to members making nominations or voting is to those members who are at least fifteen (15) years old.

Throughout these Bylaws, except when referring to the Pastor or Deacons, the male pronoun is understood to be either male or female.

#### SECTION 4. TERMINATION

a. Membership shall be terminated by death or by one of the following actions of the Church:

(1) Transfer of membership by Letter to another church of like faith and order upon the request of that church. Requests for such Letters of transfer may be acted upon at any worship service, prayer meeting, or business meeting.

(2) The removal from the roll of that person who has united with a church to which this Church does not grant letters, or from which requests for Letters are not received.

(3) Resignation and by vote of the Church to accept it.

(4) The exclusion from membership of a person who is an offense to the Church by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or non-support of or non-contact with the Church. Such action may be taken only after faithful efforts have been made to bring such a member to repentance and amendment.

b. The membership of those who have become non-resident shall automatically cease one year from the date of a letter of notification to the member. Appeals for exceptions for good reasons may be considered by the Church, the

appeal being initiated by the non-resident member. In cases where the member's address is unknown his membership shall cease without notification one year from the date of his becoming nonresident.

A non-resident member is any member who resides at a distance of more than twenty miles by road from the Church and who does not participate in the life of the Church by attending or giving.

#### SECTION 5. DUTIES

a. Members are expected, first of all, to be faithful in all the studies essential to the Christian life; and also to attend habitually the services of this Church, to give regularly for its support and causes, and to share in its organized work.

b. New Covenant Baptist Church shall take every reasonable measure to assist any troubled member. Redemption, rather than punishment, shall be the guideline which governs the attitude of one member toward another.

#### II. CHURCH OFFICERS

All Church officers shall be members of the Church. The officers of this Church shall be described as below.

##### SECTION I. PASTOR

The Pastor is responsible for leading the Church to function as a New Testament Church.

The Pastor is leader of pastoral ministries. As such he will:

- a. Lead the Church in performing its tasks;
- b. Lead the Church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry, and application;
- c. Proclaim the Gospel to believers and unbelievers; and
- d. Care for the Church's members and other persons in the community.

He shall be the administrative head of the Church and a member of all committees.

A Pastor shall be chosen and called by the Church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one weeks public notice shall have been given.

A Pulpit Committee shall be appointed by the Church to seek out a suitable Pastor, and its recommendation will constitute a nomination. Any voting member has the privilege of making other nominations according to the policy established by the Church. The Committee shall bring to the consideration of the Church only one name at a time. Election shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those voting members present and voting being necessary for a choice.

The Pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the Church's request. A three-fourths vote by those voting members present and voting is required to terminate the call of a Pastor. The Pastor is requested to give at least two weeks notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities as Pastor.

##### SECTION 2. MODERATOR AND VICE-MODERATOR

The pastor shall be the Moderator. A Vice-Moderator shall be elected by the Church annually.

##### SECTION 3. CLERK

The Church shall elect a Clerk annually. The Clerk shall keep a suitable record of all the actions of the Church, except as otherwise herein provided. He is responsible for keeping a register of the names of the members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms. He shall issue Letters of dismissal voted by the Church and preserve on file all communications and written official reports. The Church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities.

##### SECTION 4. TREASURER

The Church shall elect a Church Treasurer annually.

a. It shall be his duty to receive, preserve, and pay out all money or things having value to the Church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. Payments of bills for local work and expenses shall be made promptly by check and all funds received for denominational and other causes shall be remitted at least monthly by check.

b. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to present to the Church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of receipts and disbursements for the preceding period.

- c. Within thirty days after the end of each fiscal year the Treasurer shall render to the Church an annual report showing the total amount of receipts and a statement of all disbursements.
- d. All books, records, and accounts kept by the Treasurer shall be considered the property of the Church. These books shall be open to inspection at all times by any member of the Church, and shall be independently audited annually and at other times as deemed necessary by the Trustees.
- e. The Treasurer shall, upon the election of his successor and at the completion of his fiscal report, promptly deliver to the Church all books, records, and accounts in his hands relating to the duties of the office he is relinquishing.

#### SECTION 5. CONTRIBUTIONS SECRETARY

The Church shall elect a Contributions Secretary annually. His duties shall be as described below.

- a. The Contributions Secretary shall have no responsibility for keeping the money of the Church. However, he shall receive each week the empty offering envelopes after the money has been removed and counted by the Counting Committee. From these envelopes he shall record individual contributions in a suitable record system. He will keep the envelopes for reference.
- b. He shall be responsible for preparing and distributing quarterly and yearly contribution statements to all contributing persons who request them. These statements shall be distributed within thirty days after the close of each quarter.
- c. It shall be the duty of the Contributions Secretary to prepare and distribute new offering envelopes.

#### SECTION 6. TRUSTEES

Three Trustees elected by the Church will hold in trust the Church property. The Trustees shall serve on a three-year rotation system, with one elected each year. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the Church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the Trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, or rental of property, or other legal documents where the signatures of Trustees are required. They shall be responsible for securing appropriate insurance coverage for the Church.

#### SECTION 7. DEACONS

##### a. Number of Deacons and term of office

(1) There shall be one Deacon for every twenty (20) resident members, or major portion thereof, with a minimum of two Deacons. These numerical requirements shall be subject to the availability of qualified men as determined by the Nominating Committee in Section 7 b. below.

(2) The Deacons shall serve a three year term on a rotation basis. A term of less than three years may be prescribed by the Nominating Committee prior to the election solely for the purpose of ensuring a systematic rotation for the Deacons. Each year an election shall be held to replace Deacons whose terms expire and to elect additional Deacons per the criteria in Section 7 a. (1) above. In case of death, resignation, removal or incapacity to serve, the Church may elect a Deacon to fill the unexpired term. After serving a term of three years, a Deacon shall be eligible for re-election only after the lapse of at least one year. A deacon filling less than one and one half (1-1/2) years of an unexpired term is eligible for re-election without the lapse of one year.

##### b. Election of Deacons

Deacons shall be elected by secret ballot at a special called Business Meeting of the Church on a Sunday morning. After soliciting recommendations from the church body, the Pastor and Deacons will meet with each prospective candidate to discuss the qualifications and the work of Deacons, and determine if the candidate is qualified as set forth in these Bylaws. One week prior to the special Business Meeting the Pastor and Deacons will publish in the Sunday morning bulletin a list of qualified nominees who have agreed to serve if selected. During the special Deacon Election Business Meeting, the candidates receiving the most ballots cast shall be elected to serve as Deacons with the provision that the candidates must have received at least fifty percent (50%) of the ballots cast.

##### c. Qualifications of Deacons

Deacons shall be qualified as set forth in Acts 6: 3 - 8 and in I Timothy 3: 8 - 13. They shall be male members of the Church twenty-one (21) years of age or older and shall have been resident members for at least one year immediately prior to their terms of office.

d. Organization of Deacons

Deacons shall annually elect a chairman and organize themselves as their wisdom may direct.

e. The Work of Deacons

(1) In accordance with the meaning of the word and the practice of the New Testament, Deacons are to be servants of the Church. The task of the Deacon is to serve with the Pastor and staff in performing pastoral ministries tasks: caring for Church members and other persons in the community; leading the Church to engage in a fellowship of work, witness, education, and ministry and leading the Church in performing its tasks.

(2) The Deacons shall serve as a general Pulpit Committee in case of unplanned absences of the pastor due to illness or emergency. In any period when the Church is without a Pastor, unless the Church shall otherwise provide, the Deacons will arrange the temporary ministry, including making recommendations with reference to securing an interim Pastor,

(3) They shall act for the Church in such other matters as the church may delegate to them.

### III. COMMITTEES AND COORDINATING GROUPS

#### SECTION 1. GENERAL

All Church committee members shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee and elected by the church unless otherwise indicated in these Bylaws. The committee members shall serve on a three-year rotation system with one-third to be elected each year. In the case of death, resignation, removal, or incapacity to serve, the Church may elect a member to fill the unexpired term. Committee chairmen shall be recommended annually by the Nominating Committee.

#### SECTION 2. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee coordinates and recommends to the Church the staffing of all Church leadership positions that are filled by volunteers. The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least three members appointed by the Moderator. The Committee shall secure the consent of each nominee before his name is presented to the Church. Nominations from the congregation must be considered by the Nominating Committee before being presented for vote.

#### SECTION 3. BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

This committee is responsible for the physical maintenance of the Church's building(s) and grounds. This committee will consist of at least three members.

#### SECTION 4. STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The Stewardship Committee develops and recommends an overall budget and administers the gifts of the Church members using sound principles of financial management. The Committee shall lead in stewardship development. The Stewardship Committee shall consist of at least three elected members.

#### SECTION 5. COUNTING COMMITTEE

This Committee shall receive, count, and deposit in the bank all moneys given to the Church. This Committee shall record weekly the totals of all receipts received through any channel of church offerings.

#### SECTION 6. HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

This Committee shall make the necessary arrangements for facilities and/or food for appropriate church activities.

#### SECTION 7. CHURCH USHERS COMMITTEE

The Ushers are to greet people as they enter and leave the church, seat people at the proper time, provide bulletins and/or other materials at the time of seating, prevent interruptions and distractions, receive the offerings, and perform other similar services. The Ushers will be attentive to the needs of the congregation and the Pastor. The Committee shall consist of an elected chairman who will select as many members as deemed necessary.

#### SECTION 8. MISSIONS COMMITTEE

This committee shall recommend funding of mission works to the Stewardship Committee; shall coordinate all mission projects and offerings, and shall serve as a liaison between the church body and the mission works supported. This committee shall consist of at least three elected members.

#### SECTION 9. OTHER COMMITTEES

The Church may, at its discretion, elect any committees deemed essential.

### IV. PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

#### SECTION 1. GENERAL

All organizations of the Church shall be under Church control with all officers being elected by the Church and reporting regularly to the Church. The duties of officers and teachers shall be those ordinarily designated by the approved denominational standards. All teachers and officers shall be members of the Church.

#### SECTION 2. SUNDAY SCHOOL

There shall be a Sunday School, divided into departments and classes for all ages and conducted under the direction of the Bible Study Director for the study of God's word. The tasks of the Sunday School shall be to teach the Biblical revelation, reach persons for Christ and Church membership, perform the functions of the Church within its constituency, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the Church and the denomination.

### V. ORDINANCES

#### SECTION 1. BAPTISM

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, will be considered for Baptism.

- a. Baptism shall be by immersion in water, unless health dictates otherwise.
- b. Baptism shall be administered by the Pastor or whomever the Pastor or Deacons shall authorize.
- c. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during a worship service.
- d. A person may present himself for baptism without presenting himself for membership in the church.

#### SECTION 2. THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper is an act of obedience whereby members of the Body of Christ partake of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine. It symbolizes the broken body and the shed blood of Jesus, commemorates His death, and anticipates His second coming. The Lord's Table is open to all who know Jesus Christ as their Savior.

The Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly as determined by the Pastor.

### VI. CHURCH MEETINGS

#### SECTION 1. WORSHIP SERVICES

The Church shall meet regularly each Sunday and Wednesday for preaching, instruction, evangelism, prayer, and for the worship of Almighty God. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the Church and for all people, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Pastor.

#### SECTION 2. SPECIAL SERVICES

Revival services and any other Church meetings which will be useful in the promotion of the objectives of the Church may be held.

#### SECTION 3. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS

Regular Business Meetings shall be held every other month on a designated Wednesday night.

#### SECTION 4. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

A specially called Business Meeting may be held to consider special matters of significant nature. A one-weeks notice of the subject, date, time, and location must be given for the specially called Business Meeting unless extreme urgency (as defined by the Moderator) renders such notice impractical.

#### SECTION 5. QUORUM

Ten Percent of the resident voting membership or five voting members whichever is larger, shall constitute a quorum. For the call of a Pastor or the termination of a Pastor's call, twenty-five percent of the resident voting membership or ten voting members, whichever is larger, shall be necessary for a quorum.

#### SECTION 6. PARLIAMENTARY RULES

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all Business Meetings of the Church.

## VII. CHURCH FINANCES

### SECTION 1. BUDGET

The Stewardship Committee shall prepare and submit to the Church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amounts needed and sought for all local and world-wide expenses.

It is understood that membership in this Church involves financial obligation to support the Church and its causes with regular, proportionate gifts.

### SECTION 2. ACCOUNTING PROCEDURE

All funds for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the Church Treasurer and shall be properly recorded on the books of the Church. A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the Stewardship Committee.

## VIII. AMENDMENTS

Changes in these Bylaws may be made at any regular or special Business Meeting of the Church, provided each proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous regular or special Business Meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each voting member present. Amendments to these Bylaws shall be by two thirds vote of all voting members of the Church present and voting.