



# Catawba Springs

## CHRISTIAN CHURCH

*“Striving together for the faith of the gospel”*

# CHURCH CONSTITUTION

## *Articles of Faith & Practice*

## I. Article 1 – Name and Location

The name of the church shall be Catawba Springs Christian Church, Inc., located on Ten-Ten Road in Wake County, North Carolina.

## II. Article 2 – Purpose

Our purpose is to glorify God by conducting a self-supporting independent local church in accordance with the Word of God - seeking to win the lost to Christ; assembling for prayer, spiritual fellowship, and worship; preaching and teaching the whole counsel of God; administering the ordinances; maintaining a testimony of godliness and good works in the community; carrying on a worldwide missionary program; standing for the Biblical faith; ordaining qualified men of like faith to the gospel ministry; exercising Biblical discipline; instituting, operating, and maintaining associated ministries for evangelism, education, discipleship, spiritual growth, and any other ministry the church deems necessary.

## III. Article 3 – History

Catawba Springs was organized and first pastored by Abel Olive in the year 1802 under the name of Pleasant Springs Church. The members were to be known as Christians and were to acknowledge Christ as the head of the church. Alexander Myatt was the first deacon and served until 1827.

In 1871 the church decided to move two miles west of its original location to a more central meeting place. Dr. Allen Adams donated a lot and small house to the church and the name was changed to Catawba Springs Christian Church. After renovation and use for nearly 30 years, the house was sold to the county and moved for use as a schoolhouse, at which time the church constructed a new building. This frame structure was expanded over the years with the addition of right and left Sunday School wings. Following the frame church's destruction by fire in 1946, the present brick auditorium and classroom building was completed in 1948, with a new wing being added in 1979.

From the year 1802 to 1911, 23 men served as pastor of Catawba. J. Lee Johnson served the church from 1911 until 1949. It was under his leadership that Catawba Springs voted in May of 1937 to withdraw from membership in the Congregational Christian Church Conference of North Carolina, due to the growing apostasy of the newly merged denomination. Franklin Pierce pastored from 1950 until 1980. Lacy Frye was called as pastor the next year and served until 1986. From 1986 to 1995 Bud Steadman pastored Catawba Springs. In 1997 Pastor Chuck Woodruff began his ministry at Catawba Springs.

## IV. Article 4 – Articles of Faith

These articles are not designed as an exhaustive statement of our faith, nor of its defense, but are to simply define and declare what we believe the Word of God teaches on these vital doctrines. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe and practice. We do believe, however, that the following Statement of Faith accurately represents the teachings of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature, whether print or electronic, used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

## **A. Section 1 - The Scriptures**

We believe in the verbal (every word) and plenary (complete) inspiration of the Scriptures in the original manuscripts; that the complete written revelation of God is the sixty-six books of the Bible; that these books are therefore infallible and inerrant in all matters of which they speak; that God has preserved His Word through the centuries; and that these Scriptures are the supreme, literal and authoritative standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be judged (2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:19-21). The preferred version for preaching, teaching, and memorization shall be the King James Version.

## **B. Section 2 - The True God**

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three Persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that they are equal in every divine perfection, while executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (Exodus 20:2,3; Matthew 28:19,20).

### *1. God the Father*

We believe that God the Father is father only to those who receive Jesus Christ as Savior (John 17:1-9); that He is spirit (John 4:24); that He is perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom, and measureless in power (Leviticus 11:44; Psalm 147:4); that He concerns Himself in the affairs of men (1 Timothy 2:3-6); that He hears and answers prayer (Psalm 65:2); and that He is the object of our worship and praise (Exodus 20:3-6).

### *2. God the Son*

We believe in the absolute Deity of Jesus Christ (1 John 5:20; John 1:18); His eternal existence as God (Hebrews 1:8); His incarnation (becoming flesh) by means of the virgin birth (Matthew 1:18-25); His sinlessness (1 Peter 2:22); His substitutionary atonement for the sins of mankind by the shedding of His blood on the cross (Hebrews 9:12-14); His death, burial, bodily resurrection, and ascension (1 Corinthians 15:3-6); His present high-priestly ministry in heaven (1 John 2:1); and His personal, visible return to earth (1 Thessalonians 4:16; Acts 1:11).

### *3. God the Spirit*

We believe that the Holy Spirit is divine in His person, equal to and of the same nature as the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19); that He convinces the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7-15); that He is the agent of the New Birth (John 3:5-7); that He baptizes all true believers into the body of Christ, indwelling, filling, sanctifying, sealing, and securing them unto the day of the redemption of the body (2 Corinthians 1:21-22); and that the evidence of His filling is a changed life characterized by practical spiritual graces (Galatians 5:22-23). We do not believe that the New Testament gift of tongues exists today, but, along with certain other temporary sign gifts, has ceased (1 Corinthians 13:8-10; Revelation 22:18-19).

## **C. Section 3 - Creation**

We believe the Genesis account of creation as a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of God, without the involvement of any evolutionary process (Genesis 1:1-2:25; Colossians 1:16; John 1:3-10).

## **D. Section 4 - The Devil, or Satan**

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, the Devil (Matthew 4:1-11); his creation by God and subsequent fall (Isaiah 14:12-17); that he is the author of sin, the initiator of man's temptation and fall (Genesis 3); that he is the enemy of God and man, the leader of a host of demonic forces, and the god of this present world system (2 Corinthians 4:4); and that he is destined to judgment in the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:10).

#### **E. Section 5 - The Fall of Man**

We believe that man was created in innocence in the image and likeness of God, but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state (Genesis 3:1-6); that being in Adam all men have a sin nature and are guilty as sinners by virtue of their nature and actions (Romans 3:10-19; 5:12,19); and that all men are under just condemnation without defense or excuse (Romans 1:18,32).

#### **F. Section 6 - Civil Government.**

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. We believe that we must obey the state unless it requires us to act contrary to our faith at which time we must obey God rather than the state. (Matt. 22:15-22; Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Titus 3:1-2; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)

#### **G. Section 7 - Salvation**

We believe that the salvation of sinners is divinely initiated and wholly of grace through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ; that Christ is the only and all-sufficient Savior, His blood shed upon Calvary being the only means of the remission of sin (Acts 4:12; Hebrews 9:22); that man's only condition for salvation is faith in Christ, but that genuine faith unto salvation is evidenced by changed attitudes and actions (Ephesians 2:8-10); that all who receive Christ are regenerated instantaneously by the Holy Spirit and become children of God; that no rite, ceremony, or work can avail for a sinner's salvation or make the believer's salvation more secure (Titus 3:5-7); and that all who are truly born again are kept secure in salvation by God and shall never perish (John 10:28,29).

#### **H. Section 8 - Christian Growth**

We believe that all who are born from above in salvation will be becoming like Jesus Christ as the Spirit and Word of God work in their daily lives (Romans 8:28,29); that each believer has the responsibility of growing in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18); and that this growth comes by a personal walk with Christ in the Word of God, in prayer, in obedience, in fellowship with other saints, and in service to Him (Acts 2:41-47; Eph. 5:13; II Pet. 3:18).

#### **I. Section 9 - The Church**

We believe that the church as an organization is an assembly of baptized believers, voluntarily associated by covenant in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ for the purposes of conducting and supporting a local church ministry in accordance with the Word of God (Acts 2:41-47); that its officers are pastor(s) and deacons whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly set forth in the Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:1-13); that the local church has the right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations, religious or governmental (Acts 15:1-35); that the local church's only Superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit (Colossians 1:18); that it is Scriptural for true churches of like faith and practice to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel, and that each local church is the sole judge in the measure and method of its cooperation; and that in all matters of membership, policy, government, discipline, benevolence, and rule, the will of the local church under the authority of the Word and Spirit of God is final (Acts 15:1-35).

We further believe that all those who have been truly born again in this New Testament church age are a unified part of the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13).

## **J. Section 10 - Church Ordinances**

We believe that there are two Christian ordinances and that they are symbolic, not sacramental: Baptism and the Lord's Table.

### **1. *Baptism***

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water after his salvation profession, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19,20); that it sets forth in picture the essential facts in redemption - the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 6:4); that it gives testimony to that which has taken place in the life of the believer - death to sin and resurrection to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4); and that it is an act of obedience to Christ and a prerequisite to local church membership (Acts 2:41).

### **2. *The Lord's Table***

We believe that the observance of the Lord's Table is a commemoration of the Lord's death to be observed until He comes (Matthew 26:29); that the elements - the unleavened bread and the unfermented juice - are symbols of His broken body and shed blood (Matthew 26:26-28); that our observance of it is a pictorial testimony of the believer's fellowship with the crucified Savior (1 Corinthians 10:16-21); and that the observance should be preceded by solemn heart searching and self-judgment (1 Corinthians 11:17-34).

## **K. Section 11 - Separation**

We believe that the Christian is to separate himself unto Christ in true holiness (Romans 12:1,2); to separate himself from any participation in or endorsement of sin or worldliness (1 John 2:15,16); from ecclesiastical organizations and religious personalities that deny the faith or compromise its message (2 Corinthians 6:14-18); and from brethren who walk disorderly or who unrepentantly continue in sin (2 Thessalonians 3:6; 1 Corinthians 5:4,5; Titus 3:10-11).

## **L. Section 12 - Future Events**

We believe in the pre-tribulational, premillennial return of Christ, an event which can occur at any moment (Philippians 3:20,21); that at that moment the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death, and both groups shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44,51-54); that this rapture of the church is pre-tribulational - that is, it shall take place immediately prior to the seven years of Tribulation (Revelation 3:10); that the Tribulation will be culminated by the premillennial revelation of Jesus Christ in power and great glory to deliver Israel, to bind Satan, and to sit upon the throne of David for a literal 1,000 year reign upon the earth (Revelation 20:1-4,6); that Christ shall ultimately cast Satan and his hosts into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:10).

## **M. Section 13 - The Eternal State**

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (Romans 6:17,18); that only those who are justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ are truly righteous in God's sight (Romans 5:1,2); that all men who continue in rebellion and unbelief are in God's sight wicked and under the condemnation of God's judgment (John 3:18); that all those who are justified by faith in Jesus Christ shall spend eternity in the heavenly presence of God (Revelation 21:1-7); that all those who do not receive Christ as Savior shall forever be in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:11-15; 21:8-9).

## **N. Section 14 - Human Sexuality**

1. We believe that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman as God has created them uniquely to be one flesh (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; I Cor. 7:10; Matt. 19:4-6).
2. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 18:20; Gen. 19:5-7 & 13; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-32; I Cor. 5:13; 6:9; I Thes. 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4). The Scriptures also prohibit obscene behavior (Eph 5:3-4), pornography (Matt 5:28; Mark 7:21-22; Gal 5:19-21; 1 Thess 4:5; Rev 18:9), prostitution (Prov 5:1-23; 7:4-27; 1 Cor 6:18), transvestitism (Deut 22:5; 1 Cor 11:1-16).
3. Because of the divine command to end such practices, persons engaged in immoral activities shall not be members of this church (I Cor. 5:1; 6:9).

## **O. Section 15 - Family Relationships**

1. Though God has purposefully made men and women physically/genetically different, we believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God; but, that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. A husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and/or ordination by the church (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; I Tim. 2:8-15; 3:2-5; 12).
2. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including scriptural, corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)
3. We believe that marriage, according to the Scripture, is between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5-6; Mark 10:8; Ephesians 5:31; Leviticus 18:22; 20:15-16; Romans 1:26-27; I Corinthians 6:9) Furthermore, in keeping with this belief that marriage is between one man and one woman, no member or employee of Catawba Springs Christian Church shall preside over or participate in any marriage, union or other joining of any persons contrary to this statement of faith, nor shall any property belonging to Catawba Springs Christian Church be used for any marriage, union, joining, celebration, honoring, or support in contradiction to this belief.

## **P. Section 16 - Abortion**

We believe that the human life begins at conception and the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of an unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortion of pregnancy due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well being of the mother are acceptable (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; Ps.139:13-16; Is. 44:24; Is. 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; Luke 1:44).

## **Q. Section 17 - Love**

1. We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)
2. 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 (Matt. 7:12; 22:39; Luke 10:25-37; Rom. 12:18; 1 Pet. 2:17).

## **R. Section 18 - Missions**

We believe that God has given the church a Great Commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us (Matt. 28:19,20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8; II Cor. 5:20).

## **S. Section 19 - Law Suits Between Believers**

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil law suits against other Christians or the Church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the Church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander (I Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31,32).

## **T. Section 20 - Standard of Conduct**

A member/participant/student may be dismissed/removed from any ministry function or asked not to return if he/she demonstrates by conduct or spirit that he/she is out of harmony with the Statement of Faith, the spirit, or the policies of the ministry, whether on or off property as determined in the sole discretion of the ministry leadership. Readmission considerations following dismissal/removal will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

# **V. Article 5 – Membership**

## **A. Section 1 - Admission**

Any person professing faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior who gives satisfactory evidence of having been born again and endeavoring to live a life honoring to the Lord Jesus, may, by vote of the church, be received into the membership, providing they have been baptized following salvation and have accepted the articles of faith. Each candidate for membership must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the active church members present in a regular meeting or business meeting, and shall be received in one of the following ways:

1. Profession of faith in Christ, followed by baptism by immersion.
2. Promise of a letter of membership recommendation from another church of like faith and order.
3. By a statement of personal saving faith in Jesus Christ having been followed by baptism by immersion.

## **B. Section 2 - Affiliated Co-Laborer**

Those desiring fellowship, accountability, and opportunities for service with this assembly on a temporary basis but who maintain active membership in a like body of believers outside this city, may be granted affiliated co-laborer status with this church. The affiliated co-laborer may be eligible to serve in certain capacities determined by the pastor and deacons, and may attend fellowship events granted for members. This affiliation does not grant membership or the rights of membership to the individual(s) so granted. Affiliated co-laborers shall not be entitled to hold any office, vote in or have any say in any church matter, and shall not be counted for quorum purposes. A person wishing to become an affiliated co-laborer with this assembly must request so of the pastor, who will, in consultation with the deacons if necessary, decide if affiliated co-laborer status may be granted to the individual. If the pastor so determines, the person may be granted such upon a majority vote of the church membership at any public service or church administration meeting.

## **C. Section 3 - Dismissal**

### *1. By Death*

### *2. By Request*

Any person who wishes to have his name withdrawn or membership transferred to another church may do so upon request. Those requesting membership in a church of like faith and order may be granted a letter, while those requesting membership in a church of differing faith and order will be dropped, with no letter being granted.

### *3. By Exclusion*

Any person who becomes an offense to the testimony of Christ and the church by reason of flagrant breach of Scriptural teaching may be dismissed from the church by congregational vote after repeated attempts seeking repentance and restoration have been made.

### *4. By Inactivity*

- a. A member who willfully neglects attending services of the church for a period of three months will be placed automatically on an inactive list. This means this member will not be able to participate in a vote of a matter of business concerning the church.
- b. Any member who willfully neglects the services of the church for a period of six months will automatically be removed from the membership roll. Upon good cause being shown to the discipline committee, this provision for removal may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the discipline committee.
- c. No member of this church may simultaneously hold membership in another church. If any member unites in membership of another church, that person will be automatically dropped from the church roll without notice.
- d. Members, not under the disciplining process, may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church in the event that the member is seeking membership in another church.

## **D. Section 4 - Voting**

1. A voting member shall be an active member in good standing with the church, regular in attendance at the services of the church, unless providentially hindered, and at least 18 years of age or as specified in other articles.
2. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. The eligible membership of the church may only exercise voting privileges in those areas that are defined and limited by these bylaws.



## **E. Section 5 - Discipline of a Member**

1. There shall be a discipline committee consisting of the Pastor and the Deacons. These men shall have sole authority in determining heresy or any deviations from the Articles of Faith and Practice. If the Pastor or Deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the discipline committee. He shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.
2. Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another (I Cor. 13:7; Prov. 19:11). When a member becomes an offence of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and testimony, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration (Deut. 19:15; Matt. 18:16).
3. If reconciliation is not reached, a second or third church member either a Deacon and/or the Pastor is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination, and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
4. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (2) & (3) have been taken, the discipline committee, as the church representatives biblically responsible for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the hearing before the discipline committee, the committee shall recommend to the members of the church that they, after self examination, make an effort to go to the offending member and seek the member's restoration (II Thes. 3:14,15).
5. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (2), (3), (4) have been taken, such members who refuse to repent and be restored are to be removed from the membership of the church upon a majority vote of the membership present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action. A voting member, in a disciplinary action, shall be an active member in good standing with the church, regular in attendance at the services of the church, unless providentially hindered, and at least 18 years of age.
6. No matter may be heard by the discipline committee or the church unless the steps outlined in subsections (2), (3), have been taken except in the case of a public offence (I Cor. 14:40).
7. If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the church membership, all efforts toward contact with him/her from that point forward must be for the sake of restoration (except family members) (Matt. 18:17; I Cor. 5:11-13).

## **VI. Article 6 – Officers**

### **A. Section 1 - Pastor**

#### *1. Qualifications*

The pastor shall be a male, called of God to preach, and meeting the Scriptural demands set forth in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-11. He must believe and adhere to the articles of faith and practice of the church, and be uncompromising in the preaching and exercise of these truths.

#### *2. Call*

A pulpit committee, composed of the deacons and two additional male members in good standing and selected from the congregation, shall recommend a qualified man to the church when the need arises. After hearing him preach and allowing sufficient time for proper interviewing, research and prayer, the

membership shall vote on his taking the pastorate. He shall be elected by a 75% vote (as amended July 14, 1996) of those members present, providing there is a quorum. Voting shall take place at a regular or special called business meeting, and shall be done by secret ballot.

3. *Tenure*

Having been properly elected, the pastor shall serve until such time as he voluntarily resigns his office or is requested by the church to resign upon a 75% vote of the membership present in a special meeting called for that purpose and announced in advance, providing there is a quorum. It shall be understood that sixty days notice shall be given by either party in case of desired separation. The sixty days may be dispensed by mutual consent of the pastor and the church, or by the church in cases of pastoral dismissal.

The deacons will be at liberty to recommend to the church the dismissal of the pastor when he demonstrates a failure to meet Scriptural qualifications, unfaithfulness in or violation of his Scriptural obligations, departure from the articles of faith, or for any reason no longer agrees with the stand and position of the church.

4. *Responsibilities - Head Pastor*

The pastor, as under-shepherd responsible to Jesus Christ, shall preach and teach the Word of God and administer the ordinances of the church. He shall be the spiritual leader of the church and shall advance the spiritual life of the congregation. He is the overseer of all phases of the church's work and ministries, and shall be at liberty to schedule special meetings, revivals, missionary conferences, etc., as he deems necessary and appropriate. The pastor is an ex officio member of every committee and organization of the church. He shall moderate all church business meetings, or appoint a moderator to take his place. All employees of the church shall be under the supervision of the pastor.

**B. Section 2 - Deacons**

1. *Qualifications*

Deacons shall be males and shall meet the Scriptural qualifications of the office as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6. They shall have been active members of the church for at least five consecutive years prior to their election to office.

2. *Election*

There shall be a minimum of ten active deacons at any given time, providing qualified men are found to fill the offices. Nominations for the available positions of deacon will be made at the annual meeting of the church, or as vacancies need to be filled. The pastor and active deacons will comprise the nominating committee, considering names submitted by the church congregation. Nomination forms for such purpose will be distributed to the congregation approximately one month prior to the election. Screening of nominees will be carried out by the nominating committee, who will then present a final ballot to the church for vote. The deacons shall elect annually from their midst a chairman to moderate deacons meetings and to represent the deacons before the congregation, a vice chairman who will assist the chairman and serve in his place when he is absent, and a secretary who will record the deacon meeting minutes.

- a. Election to the office of deacon shall be for a five-year term.
- b. The term of a deacon shall begin in the first month of the calendar year.
- c. A deacon may be elected to serve more than one term.
- d. A deacon who has served a given term shall not be eligible for re-election until one year has elapsed.
- e. Each year, the church shall elect two new or returning deacons.
- f. Should a deacon not complete a term, a special election will be provided to fill this vacancy. Based on the length of the term served, the deacons and Pastor will determine if the one-year ineligibility rule will be waived should this man seek an additional term.

### 3. *Responsibilities*

Deacons shall assist the pastor in carrying on the work of the church in accordance with the Scriptural precedent for the office. They shall assist in the administration of the ordinances and shall be actively involved in the ministries of the church. Along with the pastor, they may make recommendations to the church in matters of church business. In the absence of a senior pastor, the deacons shall be responsible for carrying out the duties of the pastor. A deacon who is remiss in his actions will be accountable to the church, and in cases of flagrant violation of his qualifications or responsibilities may be recommended to the church by the pastor and deacons for dismissal.

#### **C. Section 3 - Records Secretary**

The church records secretary shall be elected annually and shall be present at all church business meetings to keep an accurate record of all business transactions, including the membership roll and its activity. He/she shall also issue letters pertaining to church membership as authorized by the church. An assistant may be elected as necessary.

#### **D. Section 4 - Treasurer**

The treasurer shall be elected annually for the purpose of receiving, banking, and disbursing funds of the church in accordance with the policies and actions of the church. He/she shall keep at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall prepare a reporting of these to the church at regular intervals. An assistant may be elected as necessary.

#### **E. Section 5 - Trustees**

The church trustees shall consist of three men elected for an indefinite period term, one of whom must be the chairman of the deacons. They shall, as provided by law and the action of the church, hold in trust the titles to all property of the church and shall represent the church in all matters of legal responsibility regarding the purchase, improvement, and disposal of church property. They shall, however, have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the church without two-thirds vote of the church authorizing such action, providing there is a quorum. They shall execute all legal papers as the church shall direct. The trustees shall work with the pastor, as they deem necessary, to do an annual audit of the records kept by the secretary and treasurer of the church.

#### **F. Section 6 - Church Staff and Workers**

In order to meet the needs of the congregation and ministries, the pastor is responsible to fill church positions unsalaried and salaried with personnel who are equipped for the task and meet the Scriptural qualifications for the positions.

Salaried staff may only be hired after the congregation has allocated the funds for that position. For the hiring of a pastor (e.g., youth, music, or other pastoral position under the pastor (senior pastor)), the deacons will be consulted and a vote of confirmation taken. Once the deacons confirm the pastor's selection, a vote of confirmation (by secret ballot) by the church will also be required in a called or regular church meeting, with a one-week advance notice given. The percentage of yes votes needed for confirmation will be the same as for the calling of the pastor. For other salaried staff members, the deacons will be consulted and a vote of confirmation (by the deacons) will be taken. The church will be notified of the hiring at the earliest convenient time, and within at least one week of the decision.

The pastor is entrusted with the responsibility of dismissing staff members and workers who violate or fail to meet their qualifications or responsibilities.

For salaried staff, the employee will only be dismissed or notified of impending dismissal after the pastor and deacons have met for consultation, which will be followed by a vote of confirmation by the deacons. The consultation will consist of a review of any evaluation(s) of the individual's work/ministry responsibilities and qualifications, with deficiencies and/or violation(s) noted. Before a vote of confirmation is taken, the deacons may request a meeting with the individual, and with others, who can give testimony that will help confirm or counter the decision to terminate. If termination is confirmed the pastor and deacons will determine the terms of dismissal. The terms of dismissal should take into consideration the seriousness of the situation, and whether the individual should be given a period of time to find another place of ministry prior to termination. In cases where termination is imminent, the church should be notified as soon as possible. If the terms of dismissal involve a monetary stipend a church vote will be required to give approval of the stipend.

The pastor may give an employee a paid leave of absence when, in his judgment, the testimony of the church is being damaged by the employee, especially in cases of a moral failure. The pastor and deacons will then determine the action(s) to be taken as directed above.

#### **G. Section 7 - Eligibility**

Eligibility for continuance in office:

1. All officers shall affirm their agreement with the Articles of Faith and Practice.
2. Only church members are eligible for election or appointment to any church office or position at the discretion of the Pastor.
3. A member must be 18 years of age or older to hold an elected office in the church.

### **VII. Article 7 – Meetings**

#### **A. Section 1 - Regular Services**

Regular services shall be held for worship, fellowship, evangelism, etc., in accordance with the purposes of our church. These shall include but shall not be limited to Sunday services, morning and evening; midweek prayer and Bible study; baptismal services, the Lord's Table no less frequently than once a quarter; and special emphasis meetings, such as revivals, etc.

#### **B. Section 2 - Business Meetings**

Regular business meetings of the church shall be held no less frequently than quarterly, with an annual meeting being held. The specific times shall be appointed by the pastor and deacons. The dates for the fiscal church year shall be determined by the pastor and deacons. A simple majority of voting members present at any church wide meeting shall be sufficient to pass business, provided a quorum is present, with the exception of cases stated elsewhere in these articles. A quorum shall consist of the active members of the church present at a duly called meeting. Moderator for all meetings shall be the head pastor.

#### **C. Section 3 - Election of Officers**

The date of the annual election of church officers shall be set by the pastor and deacons. Unless otherwise indicated in these articles, the pastor shall chair and appoint the nominating committee for church officers,

which will solicit and review nominations from the congregation to be presented at the time of election. Candidates having the largest number of votes shall be elected.

## VIII. Article 8 – Church Facilities and Cemetery

All the facilities and properties of the church are dedicated to Jesus Christ and shall be used only for those activities that are approved by the church as being consistent with the Word of God and the ministry purposes of the church.

The cemetery committee shall consist of the pastor, the chairman of the deacons, and a trustee. At least one member of this committee shall supervise all grave openings and monument erections in accordance with church directives and state laws.

Active church members and their immediate family (husband, wife, unmarried children in the home), or a person having a spouse already buried at Catawba, may be buried in the cemetery. Inactive members (as spelled out in Article 5, Section 2, Number 4) may only be buried in the cemetery under the latter condition. No plot shall be laid off in the cemetery ahead of time, with the exception of a plot for the spouse of a person already buried in the cemetery.

## IX. Article 9 – Ministries

All ministries of the church are subservient parts of the church and shall under no circumstances be considered as separate and apart from the church.

## X. Article 10 – Adoption and Amendments

These articles of faith and practice shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect upon their ratification by two-thirds of the church voting in a business meeting called for such action, providing there is a quorum. Article 4, entitled “Articles of Faith” shall never be essentially amended, altered, or repealed. The remainder of the articles may be essentially amended, altered, or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a church business meeting, provided that the proposed changes have been submitted to the pastor, deacons, and church secretary in writing, and have been presented at least 30 days prior to the time of the vote; and provided that the changes are consistent with the teaching of the Word of God and the purposes of the church as stated in these articles.

## XI. Article 11 – Dissolution Clause

Should there be a dissolution of the Church, the trustees shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the church, dispose of all the assets of the church to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States, Internal Revenue Law), as the trustees shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to organizations, which agree with the church’s statement of faith.