

The Book of DISCIPLINE

FOR THE ORIGINAL FREE WILL BAPTIST
DENOMINATION INC.



FIFTH REVISION
2015

DISCIPLINE
Revision Year - 2015

FIFTH REVISION
OF THE DISCIPLINE FOR THE
CAPE FEAR AND SOUTH WESTERN ANNUAL CONFERENCE
MIDDLE EASTERN ANNUAL CONFERENCE
NORTHEAST ANNUAL CONFERENCE
AND THE
OLD ORIGINAL FREE WILL BAPTIST ANNUAL CONFERENCES

DISCIPLINE

THE REVISED DISCIPLINE OF THE CAPE FEAR AND SOUTH WESTERN ANNUAL CONFERENCE, MIDDLE EASTERN ANNUAL CONFERENCE, NORTHEAST ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND THE OLD ORIGINAL FREE WILL BAPTIST ANNUAL CONFERENCES.

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HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

PREFACE

On November 8, 1894, at Black Jack Baptist Church, Pitt County, North Carolina, the General Conference was duly organized and incorporated, by which it became a corporate body.

The General Conference of 1918 saw that the advanced state of the Connection and progress of time rendered it necessary to revise our Book of Discipline with changes and amendments that would make it expressive of the sentiments and usage of the denomination. Therefore, a committee was appointed to accomplish the desired work. In the meantime, a committee of the White General Conference, comprised of the following committee members was formed: Reverends Daniel Davis, R. C. Jackson, T. F. Harrison, T. H. Harrison, J. M. Barfield, Secretary, and C. Forbes. This Conference would be separate and apart and would be known as the Original Free Will Baptist Conference of America.

The following work was prepared and ordered to be printed under the auspices of this session of the General Conference of 1920. The Conference was held on December 19, 20 and 21, at Mount Zion Church, Wilson, North Carolina.

While we acknowledge our indebtedness to our former elders for the verification of the foundation of the principles upon which we stand, we have labored to make this volume, not only to serve as an exponent of our beloved connection to those who are not acquainted with us, but to be a textbook for our churches.

We acknowledge the scriptures as our only infallible rule of faith and practice. We need a manual or guide for reference to be

widely and carefully studied by our ministry and membership. We here confess our inability to the arduous task set before us and the critic's eye upon us. We hope this work will be the means of blessing to many who are walking in darkness.

We present this book to you, trusting that all the membership may find within this volume that which they have so earnestly contended for God's speed. The work is the prayer of your humble servants: Elders R. A. Horton, J. H. Skinner, G. W. Edwards, B. F. Lofton, C. W. Croom, Giles Greenfield, and Brother L. H. Horton.

The Annual Conference of 1948 saw the advanced state of the Connection and rendered it necessary to revise our Book of Discipline; therefore a Revision Committee was appointed.

DECEMBER 20, 1948

The Revision Committee met on the above date with Darden Chapel Church, Goldsboro, North Carolina, serving as host church. Services were opened by Elder J. E. Willoughby singing "Amazing Grace How Sweet the Sound." Elder J. D. McKoy read a portion of Acts Chapter 3, and prayer was by Elder Willoughby. A spiritual was sung by Elder J. D. McKoy, preliminary remarks were made and the house was opened for business. A motion was made and it was moved that Elder A. G. Graham serve as Chairman.

It was moved that the three Conferences (Cape Fear and South Western, Middle East and Northeast) Books of Discipline be read and that points, places and changes be reviewed for incorporation into the new Book of Discipline. It was moved that the Book of Discipline of the Cape Fear and South Western Conference be used as the primary Book of Discipline, and that the Northeast and Middle Eastern Conference Books of Discipline be attached.

Singing the hymn "Blest Be The Tie That Binds" adjourned the meeting. Benediction was by Elder A. B. Massie.

MARCH 21, 1949

The Revision Committee met again with Lillington Grove Church, Lillington, North Carolina.

JULY 24, 1980

Representatives from the three Conferences met at the L.N. Forbes Tabernacle, Wilson, North Carolina at 9:30 a.m., for the purpose of revising the Book of Discipline. The meeting was opened by singing, "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross." Bishop J. O. Randolph read St. John 14:1-9 and Bishop H. McLean led the prayer. A second hymn was sung, "What A Fellowship" and Bishop L. N. Forbes opened the house for business.

August 4, 1980

The committee met again at the same place. Opening hymn, "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross." Prayer by Vice Bishop W. S. Sanders. Bishop McLean read the 6th chapter of Isaiah and turned the meeting over to Bishop Forbes to complete the changes and amendments to our Book of Discipline. The meeting was adjourned.

MAY 26, 1996

During the General Conference for the four Original Free Will Baptist Conferences held at Holly Hill Original Free Will Baptist Church, Belvoir, North Carolina, a committee was appointed by

Bishop L.N. Forbes for the purpose of revising the Annual Conference Book of Discipline.

August 21, 2013

During the General Conference held at the L.N. Forbes Tabernacle in Wilson, North Carolina, the Bishops met to discuss the need to revise the Book of Discipline. It was determined that the 1980 revision needed to be updated to reflect changing conditions that the church faced in the world.

January 2014

The revision committee met at L.N. Forbes Tabernacle, Wilson, North Carolina, to begin the review of the Book of Discipline. Bishop LaVaughn Hughes, Sr. joined the meeting through Skype. Bishop James Tripp, Jr. presided over the meeting.

April 16, 2015

The revision committee met again at L.N. Forbes Tabernacle, Wilson, North Carolina to continue updating the Book of Discipline. Bishop James Tripp, Jr. presided over the meeting. A schedule was approved to allow the Book of Discipline to be published by the General Conference in August 2015.

OUR FAITH

We believe that there is but one living, true and eternal God, the Father of whom are all things, from everlasting to everlasting, glorious and immutable in all his attributes. (I Corinthians 8:6; Isaiah 40:28)

We believe that there is one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, the only begotten Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, whom God freely sent into the world, because of the great love wherewith He loved the world; and Christ freely gave Himself a ransom for all, tasting death for all men; who was buried and rose again the third day and ascended into heaven, from whence we look for Him the second time, in the clouds of heaven, at the last day, to judge both the quick and dead. (I Timothy 1:15; Hebrews 2:9, 1 John 2:2; Revelation 1:7; Acts 24:15, 21)

We believe that there is one Holy Ghost, the precious gift of the Father through His dear Son, unto the world who quickeneth and draweth sinners home to God. (John 16:7; Acts 2:1, 5-6, Ephesians 4:4)

We believe that in the beginning God made man upright and placed him in a state of glory without the least mixture of misery, from which he voluntarily, by transgression fell, and by that means brought on himself a miserable and mortal state, subject to death. (Genesis 2:17, 3:17-19)

We believe that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance unto salvation, for which end Christ has commanded the gospel to be preached among all nations and to every creature. (Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47, John 3:15-17, I Timothy 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9)

We believe that no man shall suffer in hell for want of a Christ who died for him, but as the scripture has said, for denying the Lord that brought them, because they believed not in the name of the only begotten Son of God. Unbelief, therefore, being the cause why the just and righteous God of Heaven will condemn the children of men. It follows against all contradiction that all men, at one time or other are found in such a capacity as that through the grace of God they may be eternally saved. (Acts 17:3, Mark 6:6, Hebrews 3:10, 1 John 5:10; Romans 10:13).

We believe the whole scriptures are infallibly true and that they are the only rules of faith and practice. (II Timothy 3:16-17)

We believe in the doctrine of general provision made of God in Christ, for the benefit of all mankind who repents and believes the gospel. (Mark 16:14-20, Matthew 28:10-20, Luke 13:3-5; Luke 24:47, Acts 3:19, Mark 1:15)

We believe that sinners are drawn to God the Father, by the Holy Ghost, through Christ His Son, and that the Holy Ghost offers His divine aid to all the human family so that they all might be happy. Such who do not receive the divine working of His Holy Spirit, shall, at a future day, own their condemnation just, and charge themselves with their own damnation, for willfully rejecting the offers of sovereign grace. (Matthew 11:27, John 6:44; Revelation 20:11-15)

We believe that ungodly men were of old ordained to condemnation, for they received not the love of the truth unto salvation. Henceforth, the wrath of God is upon them, and there is no respect of persons with God. (Jude 1:4, II Thessalonians 2:10-12, Romans 2:9-11)

We believe that all children, dying in infancy, are only subject to the first death, which was brought on them by the fall of the first Adam, for of such is the kingdom of God. (Matthew 18:2-5, Mark 9:36-37. Matthew 19:14)

We believe that good works are the fruit of a saving faith, and not a means to eternal life. (Revelation 22:14-15; Titus 3:5)

We believe that no man can scripturally be justified before God through his own works, power, or ability. For by grace are ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves. (Romans 4:24, Ephesians 2:8-9)

We believe that God is Sovereign, yet He has not decreed any person to eternal life or death. He hath appointed the godly unto life and the ungodly to death. (Matthew 25:31-46, Romans 6:23, 1 Peter 3:9)

We believe as touching Gospel ordinances in believers' baptism, laying on of hands, receiving of the sacraments in bread and wine (grape juice), washing the saints' feet, anointing the sick with oil in the name of the Lord, fasting, praying, singing praises to God, and the public ministry of the Word with every institution of the Lord that we shall find in the New Testament. (Acts 19:6, Luke 22:19-20, John 13:5-17 and James 5:14, Acts 6:6, John 13:4-5, 1 Corinthians 7:5, Matthew 17:21, Matthew 26:26-29)

We believe that the gospel mode of baptism is by immersion and that believers are the only subjects for baptism. (Matthew 3:16, Matthew 28:19, Acts 2:38-39, Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12, Acts 8:37-39)

We believe in the first and second resurrection of the dead and a final judgment at the last day. (John 5:28-29, Revelation 20:4-6, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, 1 Corinthians 15:20-23, Colossians 3:4)

We believe the happiness of the righteous is eternal and the torments of the wicked are endless. (Matthew 25:41, 46, Revelation 19:3, Revelation 14:11, Romans 6:23, 1 Thessalonians 1:8-9)

CHURCH COVENANT

Having given ourselves to God through Jesus Christ, and adopted the following articles as our confession of faith, we now give ourselves to each other by the will of God, and agree to the following Church Covenant:

1. We solemnly covenant, before God, that we will strive, by His assisting grace, to exemplify our profession by a corresponding practice. We covenant and agree, as members of the church and as Christians, to watch over each other in love for the mutual up building in gospel faith, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; to be careful of each other's reputation, to confess our faults one to another, to strengthen the feeble and kindly admonish the erring, and to labor together for the building up of the church and the denomination, and the salvation of sinners. Answer: "I will."

2. We promise that we will faithfully and constantly maintain secret and family prayer, and religiously instruct those under our care. Answer: "I will."

3. We covenant and agree to use our influence to sustain the regular public worship of God, contributing according to our ability and circumstances for the support of our ministry and other church expenses among us; that we will be benevolent to the needy, especially to the poor of our own church. Answer: "I will."

4. We promise that, so far as we shall be able, we will attend public worship, the fellowship meetings of the church, and report ourselves regularly at the quarterly conferences, and that we will walk in all the ordinances of the Lord's house. Answer: "I will."

5. We covenant and agree that we will abstain from all vain amusements and sinful conformity to the world; that we will not traffic in, use, nor furnish to others, intoxicating drinks as a beverage or any other mind-altering substance, and that we will sustain the benevolent enterprises of our denomination and the church, as missions, education, Sunday schools, moral reforms, and all others which tend to the glory of God and welfare of man.
Answer: "I will."

And may the God of peace sanctify us wholly, and preserve us blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we may join the glorified around the throne of God in ascribing blessing, and honor, and power, and glory to Him that sitteth on the throne and unto the Precious Lamb forever. Amen.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that God is the Father Almighty and that He is the maker of Heaven and earth as the Scriptures have said. We believe in Jesus, that He is the Christ and is the only begotten Son of the Father. He is the way, the truth and the life. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. On the third day, He rose from the dead and declared victory over the grave, death and hell. He has gone back to the Father to prepare a place for us in His kingdom. He will come back as He promised to judge the world and to deliver the righteous. We believe in the Holy Ghost, the Christian Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and eternal life for all true believers. Amen.

OUR DOCTRINE

CHAPTER I THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

These are the Old and the New Testaments; they were written by holy men, inspired by the Holy Spirit,¹ and are God's revealed word to man. They are a sufficient and infallible rule and guide to salvation and all Christian worship and service.²

CHAPTER II BEING AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

The Scriptures teach that there is only one true and living God³ who is Spirit,⁴ self-existent, eternal,⁵ immutable,⁶ omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent,⁷ independent,⁸ good, wise, holy, just,⁹ and merciful,¹⁰ the Creator, Preserver, and Governor,¹¹ of the universe; the Redeemer, Savior,¹² Sanctifier,¹³ and Judge¹⁴ of men; and the only proper object of worship.¹⁵

The mode of His existence, however, is a subject far above the understanding of man's ability to comprehend Him.¹⁶ There is nothing in the universe that can justly represent Him, for there is none like him.¹⁷ He is the foundation of all perfection and happiness. He is glorified by the whole creation, and is worthy to be loved and served by all intelligence.¹⁸

CHAPTER III DIVINE GOVERNMENT AND PROVIDENCE

God exercises a providential care and superintendence over all his creatures¹⁹ and governs the world in wisdom and mercy, according to the testimony of His Word.²⁰

God has endowed man with the power of free choice, and governs him by moral laws and motives; and this power of free choice is the exact measure of man's responsibility.²¹

All events are present with God from everlasting to everlasting; but His knowledge of them does not in any sense cause them, nor does He decree all events, which He knows, will occur.²²

CHAPTER IV CREATION, PRIMITIVE STATE OF MAN, AND HIS FALL

SECTION 1 – Creation

1. **Of the World:** God created the world and all things that it contains, for His own pleasure and glory and the enjoyment of His creatures.
2. **Of the Angels:** The angels were created by God²³ to glorify Him and obey His commandments. Those who have kept their first estate He employs in ministering blessings to the heirs of salvation and in executing His judgments upon the world.
3. **Of Man:** God created man, consisting of a material body and a thinking, rational soul.²⁴ He was made in the image of God to glorify his Maker.²⁵

SECTION 2 – Primitive Man and His Fall

Our first parents, in their original state, were upright. They naturally preferred and desired to obey their Creator, and had no

preference or desire to transgress His will until they were influenced and inclined by the tempter to disobey God's commands. Previous to this, the only tendency of their nature was to do righteousness. In consequence of the first transgression, the state under which the posterity of Adam came into the world is so different from that of Adam that they have not that righteousness and purity which Adam had before the fall; they are not willing to obey God, but are inclined to evil.²⁶ Hence none, by virtue of any natural goodness and mere work of their own, can become the children of God; but they are all dependent for salvation upon the redemption effected through the blood of Christ, and upon being created anew unto obedience through the operation of the Spirit; both of which are freely provided for every descendant of Adam.

CHAPTER V DEITY OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, possesses all divine perfections. As He and the Father are one, He in His divine nature, filled all the offices and performed the works of God to His creatures that have been the subjects of revelations to us. As man, He performed all the duties toward God that we are required to perform, repentance of sin excepted.

His divinity is proved from His titles, His attributes, and His works.

1. **His Titles.** The Bible ascribes to Christ the titles of Savior,²⁷ Jehovah,²⁸ Lord of Hosts,²⁹ the first and the last,³⁰ God, true God, great God, God over all, mighty God, and everlasting Father.³¹

2. **His Attributes.** He is eternal, immutable,³² omnipresent, omniscient,³³ omnipotent, holy, and is to be worshipped.³⁴

3. **His Works.** By Christ the world was created, He preserves and governs it; He provided redemption for all men and He will be their final Judge.

The Word, which in the beginning was with God and which was God, by whom all things were made, condescended to a state of humiliation in being united with human nature and becoming like us, pollution and sin excepted.³⁵ In this state, as a subject of the law, He was liable to the infirmities of our nature,³⁶ was tempted as we are, but lived our example, in perfect obedience to the divine requirements. As Christ was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, He is "the Son of man,"³⁷ and as the divine existence is the fountain from which He proceeded, and was the only agency by which He was begotten, He is "the Son of God,"³⁸ being the only begotten of the Father,³⁹ and the only incarnation of the Divine Being.

CHAPTER VI THE ATONEMENT AND MEDIATION OF CHRIST

SECTION 1 – The Atonement

As sin cannot be pardoned without a sacrifice, and the blood of beasts could never wash away sin, Christ gave Himself a sacrifice for the sins of the world,⁴⁰ and thus made salvation possible for all men.⁴¹ He died for us, suffering in our stead, to make known the righteousness of God, that God might be just in justifying sinners who believe in His Son.⁴² Through the redemption effected by Christ, salvation is actually enjoyed in this world, and will be enjoyed in the next by all that do not in this life refuse obedience to the known requirements of God.⁴³ The atonement of sin was necessary.⁴⁴ For present and future obedience can no more blot out our past sins than past obedience can remove the guilt of

present and future sins. If God pardoned the sins of men without satisfaction for the violation of His law, it would follow that transgression might go on with impunity; government would be abrogated, and the obligation of obedience to God would be, in effect, removed.

SECTION 2 – Mediation of Christ

Our Lord not only died for our sins, but He arose for our justification,⁴⁵ and ascended up to heaven⁴⁶ where, as the only Mediator between God and man, He makes intercession for us, until He comes again.⁴⁷

CHAPTER VII THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Scriptures ascribe to the Holy Spirit the acts and attributes of an Intelligent Being. He guides,⁴⁸ knows, moves, gives information,⁴⁹ commands, forbids, sends forth, reproves,⁵⁰ and can be sinned against.⁵¹ The attributes of God are ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The works of God are ascribed to the Holy Spirit; creation, inspiration,⁵² giving of life,⁵³ and sanctification.⁵⁴

The apostles assert that the Holy Spirit is Lord and God. From the foregoing, the conclusion is that the Holy Spirit is in reality God, and one with the Father in all-divine perfections. It has also been shown that Jesus Christ is God—one with the Father. Then these three: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are one God.

The truth of this doctrine is also proved from the fact that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are united in the authority by which believers are baptized; and in the benedictions pronounced by the apostles,⁵⁵ which are acts of the highest religious worship.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GOSPEL CALL

The call of the Gospel is co-existent with the atonement to all men,⁵⁶ both by the word and striving of the Spirit, so that salvation is rendered equally possible to all,⁵⁷ and, if any fail of eternal life, the fault is wholly his own.

CHAPTER IX

REPENTANCE

The repentance, which the gospel requires, includes a deep conviction, a penitential sorrow, an open confession, a decided hatred and an entire forsaking of all sin.⁵⁸ This repentance God has enjoined on all men; and without it in this life the sinner must perish eternally.

CHAPTER X

FAITH

Saving faith is an assent of the mind to the fundamental truths of revelation,⁵⁹ an acceptance of the Gospel, through the influence of the Holy Spirit,⁶⁰ and a firm confidence and trust in Christ.⁶¹ The fruit of faith is obedience to the Gospel.⁶² The power to believe is the gift of God, but believing is an act of the creature, which is required as a condition of pardon, and without which the sinner cannot obtain salvation. All men are required to believe in Christ; and those who yield obedience to this requirement become the children of God by faith.

CHAPTER XI REGENERATION

As man is a fallen and sinful being, he must be regenerated, in order to obtain salvation.⁶³ This change is an instantaneous renewal of the heart by the Holy Spirit,⁶⁴ whereby the penitent sinner receives new life, becomes a child of God,⁶⁵ and is disposed to serve Him. This is called in Scripture being born again—born of the Spirit, being quickened,⁶⁶ passing from death unto life, and a partaking of the divine nature.

CHAPTER XII JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION

Personal justification implies that the person justified has been guilty before God; and, in consideration of the atonement of Christ, accepted by faith, the sinner is pardoned and absolved from the guilt of sin and restored to divine favor.⁶⁷ Christ's atonement is the foundation of the sinner's redemption, yet, without repentance and faith, it can never give him justification and peace with God.⁶⁸

Sanctification is the continuing of God's grace by which the Christian may constantly grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁶⁹

CHAPTER XIII PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

There are strong grounds to hope that the truly regenerate will persevere unto the end, and be saved, through the power of divine grace which is pledged for their support;⁷⁰ but their future

obedience and final salvation are neither determined nor certain, since through infirmity and manifold temptations they are in danger of falling; and they ought therefore to watch and pray, lest they make shipwreck of their faith and be lost.⁷¹

CHAPTER XIV THE SABBATH

This is one day in seven, which from the creation of the world God has set apart for sacred rest and holy service.⁷² Under the former dispensation, the seventh day of the week as commemorative of the work of creation, was set apart for the Sabbath.⁷³ Under the Gospel, the first day of the week, in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, and by authority of Christ and the apostles, is observed as the Christian Sabbath.⁷⁴ On this day, all men are required to refrain from secular labor and devote themselves to worship and service of God.

CHAPTER XV THE CHURCH

A Christian Church is an organized body of baptized believers in Christ, who stately assemble to worship God, and who sustain the ordinances of the Gospel according to the Scriptures.⁷⁵ Believers in Christ are admitted to this church on giving evidence of faith in Christ, obtaining consent of the body, being baptized, and receiving the right hand of fellowship.⁷⁶ The Church of God, or members of the body of Christ, is the whole body of Christians throughout the whole world, and none but the regenerate is its members.

CHAPTER XVI TITHING

Both the Old⁷⁷ and New Testament scriptures⁷⁸ teach tithing as God's financial plan for the support of His work.

CHAPTER XVII THE GOSPEL MINISTRY

Ministers must possess good, natural and acquired abilities,⁷⁹ a thorough knowledge of the ordinances of the Gospel and ardent piety, be especially called of God to the work, and ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands.

Ministers are to preach the Word,⁸⁰ administer the ordinances of the Gospel,⁸¹ visit their people, and otherwise perform the work of faithful ministers.⁸²

CHAPTER XVIII ORDINANCES OF THE GOSPEL

SECTION 1 – Christian Baptism

This is the immersion of believers in water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in which are represented the burial and resurrection of Christ, the death of Christians to the world, the washing of their souls from the pollution of sin, their rising to newness of life, their engagement to serve God, and their resurrection at the last day.

SECTION 2 – The Lord's Supper

This is a commemoration of the death of Christ for our sins, in the use of bread which He made the emblem of His broken body and

the cup, the emblem of His shed blood,⁸³ and by it the believer expresses his love for Christ, his faith and hope in Him, and pledges to Him perpetual fidelity.

It is the privilege and duty of all who have spiritual union with Christ to commemorate His death; and no man has a right to forbid these tokens to the least of His disciples.

SECTION 3 – Washing the Saints’ Feet

This is a sacred ordinance, which teaches humility, and reminds the believer of the necessity of a daily cleansing from all sin. It was instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ, and called an "example" on the night of His betrayal, and in connection with the institution of the Lord's Supper. It is the duty and happy prerogative of every believer to observe this sacred ordinance.⁸⁴

CHAPTER XIX DEATH

As a result of sin, all mankind, is subject to the death of the body.⁸⁵ The soul does not die with the body; but immediately after death enters into a conscious state of happiness or misery, according to the character here possessed.

CHAPTER XX SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

The Lord Jesus, who ascended on high, and sits at the right hand of God will come again, to close the Gospel dispensation, glorify His saints, and judge the world.⁸⁶

CHAPTER XXI THE RESURRECTION

The Scriptures teach the resurrection of the bodies of all men, each in its own order; they that have done good will come forth to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.⁸⁷

CHAPTER XXII THE FINAL JUDGMENT AND FINAL RETRIBUTION

There will be a final judgment, when time and man's probation will close forever.⁸⁸ Then all men will be judged according to their works.⁸⁹

Immediately after the final judgment, the righteous will enter into eternal life, and the wicked will go into a state of endless punishment.⁹⁰

CHAPTER XXIII MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

The General Conference of the Original Free Will Baptist Churches of America holds true and steadfast to Bible principles on the issues of divorce and remarriage. This Conference's position on the issue of divorce and remarriage for its Pastors and/or Principal Officers is based on St. Matthew 19 and I Timothy 3 as recorded in our church Discipline.

However, if a local church within this Conference chooses to call a pastor or principal officer who has been married, divorced and remarried, and if they can agree on working together for the

cause of Christ, this Conference will not interfere as we stand for forgiveness, for healing the wounded spirit, mending the broken hearted, for peace, love and mercy. In such a case, it is up to the discretion of the local church. The Annual Conference and the General Conference is not under any bondage.

CHAPTER XXIV SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

The Original Free Will Baptist Church believes that the Bible is the inspired and only infallible written Word of God. In Genesis 1:27 the Bible indicates that God made male and female in His own image. Genesis 2:24 defines the institution of marriage as the union of one man and one woman; therefore, we take the following the position regarding same sex marriage:

While we believe that the Holy Bible is clear regarding the institution of marriage, the times dictate that we affirm our position amid the changing winds that have modified the norms of our nation. In light of this moral shift we confidently stand on the authority of Scripture to validate the definition of marriage.

Although marriage, in a civil context, is recognized by legal authorities, we hold that God established rules governing marriage long before governments began regulating the institution. As such, this sacred, God-ordained institution is to be a life-long, sexually exclusive relationship and divine covenant between one man and one woman. The opening book of the Bible tells us: “A man will leave his father and his mother and he must cleave to his wife and they must become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24). The Hebrew word for “wife” connotes one who is a female human being. Jesus confirmed that those yoked together in marriage should be “male and female” (Matthew 19:4).

Therefore, God intended marriage to be a permanent and an intimate bond between a man and a woman. Men and women are designed to complement each other so they may be capable of satisfying each other's emotional, spiritual, and sexual needs and desires.

The Original Free Will Baptist Church holds the institution of marriage in the highest regard and strongly opposes any legal sanction of marriage outside of its biblical context. Therefore, deviations from that context, such as the legalization of same-sex "marriage" cannot be supported by the Original Free Will Baptist Church as a matter of biblical principle as we hold the Word of God as our standard for faith and practice.

We therefore unequivocally affirm that marriage is a covenant relationship between a man and woman and reject all attempts to redefine marriage in terms of same-sex unions. By stating our position on same sex marriage, we neither intend to defame or disparage any group of individuals nor are we moved by personal hatred. Our only intent is the defense of biblical marriage. We embrace Jesus' command to love our neighbor and reject the notion that love requires the affirmation of that which is in conflict with our biblical perspective. We hold that there is no contradiction between Christian compassion and a call for biblical obedience and holy living.

The Original Free Will Baptist Church condemns acts of violence against and the subjugation of any person to verbal or physical harassment on the basis of their sexual practice. Such action violates the Christian's obligation to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

Credential holders within the Original Free Will Baptist Church, in obedience to God's command, will neither perform same sex

marriages, nor bless or condone such a union. Our church properties will not be leased, rented, or loaned for any purpose related to such a union.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ II Peter 1:18-21; II Timothy 3:16-17
- ² Exodus 4:15; Hebrews 1:1-2
- ³ Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Corinthians 8:4; Jeremiah 10:10; John 7:28; II Corinthians 1:19; I John 5:20; I Timothy 6:17.
- ⁴ John 4:24
- ⁵ Psalm 90:2
- ⁶ Malachi 3:6
- ⁷ Revelation 19:6
- ⁸ Ephesians 4:6
- ⁹ Deuteronomy 32:4
- ¹⁰ Ephesians 2:4
- ¹¹ Psalm 47:7
- ¹² Isaiah 45:21
- ¹³ Exodus 31:13
- ¹⁴ Hebrews 12:23
- ¹⁵ Exodus 34:14
- ¹⁶ Romans 11:33
- ¹⁷ Exodus 9:14
- ¹⁸ Psalm 19:1.2
- ¹⁹ Acts 17:28
- ²⁰ Psalm 22:28
- ²¹ Deuteronomy 30:19
- ²² Ezekiel 33:11
- ²³ Colossians 1:16
- ²⁴ Genesis 2:7
- ²⁵ Genesis 1:27
- ²⁶ Psalm 51:5
- ²⁷ Isaiah 45:21; John 4:32
- ²⁸ Psalm 83:18
- ²⁹ Isaiah 8:13, 14
- ³⁰ Revelation 22:13
- ³¹ Isaiah 9:6

- ³² Hebrews 13:8
³³ John 16:30
³⁴ Hebrews 1:6; John 5:23
³⁵ John 1:14; Philippians 2:6-7
³⁶ Hebrews 2:17
³⁷ Luke 19:10
³⁸ Luke 1:35
³⁹ John 3:16
⁴⁰ John 3:16, Galatians 1:-3-4, 1 John 2:2; Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 20:28
⁴¹ 1 Timothy 2:4, Titus 2:11
⁴² Romans 5:9, 18; Ephesians 1:7
⁴³ Romans 5:18
⁴⁴ Hebrews 9:22
⁴⁵ Romans 4:25
⁴⁶ Acts 1:11
⁴⁷ Hebrews 7:25
⁴⁸ John 16:13
⁴⁹ 2 Samuel 23:2, Acts 10:19, Acts 13:2
⁵⁰ John 16:8
⁵¹ Mark 3:29
⁵² II Peter 1:21
⁵³ I Peter 3:18
⁵⁴ I Corinthians 6:11
⁵⁵ Matthew 28:19
⁵⁶ Mark 16:15; Isaiah 45:22
⁵⁷ I Timothy 2:4
⁵⁸ II Corinthians 7:10
⁵⁹ Hebrews 11:6; Hebrews 11:1
⁶⁰ Romans 10:10
⁶¹ John 3:16
⁶² James 2:17
⁶³ John 3:3
⁶⁴ John 3:5

⁶⁵ John 1:12; 5:25; II Corinthians 5:17.
⁶⁶ Ephesians 2:1
⁶⁷ Romans 5:1
⁶⁸ Acts 8: 19
⁶⁹ I Thessalonians 5:23
⁷⁰ Romans. 8:38-39; I Corinthians 10:13
⁷¹ II Chronicles 15:2; I Chronicles 28:9
⁷² Genesis 2:3; Mark 2:27
⁷³ Exodus 20:8-1
⁷⁴ Luke 24:1-7
⁷⁵ I Corinthians 1:10-12; Acts 2:41. 47
⁷⁶ Ephesians 5:25, 27; Ephesians 1:22-23; I Corinthians 12:27-28
⁷⁷ Genesis 14:20; Malachi 3:8-10.
⁷⁸ I Corinthians 16:2; Matthew 23:23
⁷⁹ II Timothy 2:15; I Timothy 4:13-16
⁸⁰ Mark 16:15
⁸¹ Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 11:23-28; 10:16.
⁸² Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 5:2
⁸³ I Corinthians 11:23-26; Matthew 26:26-28
⁸⁴ John 13:4-8; I Timothy 5:1-10
⁸⁵ Romans 5:12; Hebrews 9:27
⁸⁶ Acts 1:11; I Corinthians 15:24-28; I Thessalonians 4:15-17;
II Thessalonians 1:7-10; Matthew 24:42-44
⁸⁷ John 5:28-29; I Corinthians 15:22-23; I Corinthians 15:35-44
⁸⁸ Acts 17:31; I Corinthians 15:24; Revelation 10:6; 22:11
⁸⁹ II Corinthians 5:10
⁹⁰ Matthew 25:46; II Thessalonians 1:8-10; Romans 6:23;
Revelation 14:11; 21:7-8

CONSTITUTION

Preamble: We the members of the Original Free Will Baptist Denomination of America, desiring to be in fellowship in a bond of union, do ordain this constitution.

This shall be the Constitution and By-Laws of the Cape Fear and South Western Annual Conference, Middle Eastern Annual Conference, Northeast Annual Conference, and the Old Original Free Will Baptist Annual Conference.

ARTICLE I THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE BY-LAWS

OF THE CAPE FEAR AND SOUTH WESTERN ANNUAL CONFERENCE, MIDDLE EASTERN ANNUAL CONFERENCE, NORTHEAST ANNUAL CONFERENCE, AND THE OLD ORIGINAL FREE WILL BAPTIST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SECTION I – The following shall be the By-Laws of the above Annual Conferences, a nonstock, nonprofit religious corporation, hereinafter, shall be called the "Annual Conference" or the "Conference." The Annual Conference was organized to be comprised of all the churches within its bounds of the Cape Fear and South Western, Middle Eastern, Northeast, and Old Original Free Will Baptist Conference, keeping a common interest producing unity of sentiment and discipline, to concentrate its strength in the common cause of the Redeemer, and by a fraternal interchange of views among its members to promote growth, grace and knowledge of the gospel truth as we believe and understand it to be. The Annual Conference sustains the same relationship to the church as the church does to its

members. The body being organized adopted the following constitution and By-Laws by which it is governed.

In the event of dissolution of the Conference, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the Church is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

SECTION II – The Annual Conference shall be comprised of ministers and delegates chosen from the churches that are either members or seeking membership in the Annual Conference in the manner prescribed in these Articles.

Any church may become a member of the Annual Conference by majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting, after having passed the board of investigation. It shall be the duty of the churches within the bounds of the Annual Conference to report themselves by delegation, letter, or personal form. Every minister and delegate shall attend the Annual Conference if it is within his/her power to do so. Ministers, both those in gospel order and those who are on trial should attend, when possible to do so, the entire session of the Annual Conference to which they belong. Should any minister fail to attend his/her conference, two years in succession, without a lawful excuse, he/she may be dropped from the roll.

SECTION III – Except as may be otherwise provided by law, or by the Articles of Incorporation, or by these By-Laws, the number, qualifications, rights, privileges, dues, fees, and responsibilities shall be determined by the Annual Conference.

The privileges, rights and power of lay delegates are most effectually secured by making the laity a party through representation in legislating for better of the church; therefore, each church shall have the right of sending delegates to the Annual Conference.

SECTION IV – The annual meeting of the Annual Conference shall be held at the principal office location of each of the Annual Conferences, for the purpose of transacting such business as may properly be brought before the meeting.

Special meetings of the members shall be held at the principal office of the Annual Conference, or at such other place within or without the State of North Carolina as may be designated in the notice of said meeting, upon call of the Annual Conference Officers, at such time as may be fixed by the Presiding Bishop, as the case may be, and as shall be stated in the notice.

SECTION V – The officers of this Annual Conference shall consist of the Presiding Bishop and all other officers as the Annual Conference may direct. All are elected for the number of years this Annual Conference decides.

The introductory sermon shall be delivered in the beginning of each session of the Annual Conference.

The Presiding Bishop shall take charge of this Annual Conference immediately after the introductory sermon. He shall preside over the meeting with due prudence.

SECTION VI – The clerk shall call the roll of ministers from the minutes of the last Annual Conference. The Conference shall inquire and examine into the state of the ministry. Each minister shall be examined, and upon finding that any minister has willfully neglected his/her responsibilities that are commensurate with the calling to public ministry, he/she shall be dealt with as the Conference deems proper, up to and including, upon conviction, excommunication, and shall be declared out of gospel order and his/her license revoked as the Annual Conference shall determine.

Any minister who desires to become a member of another Conference except that of which he or she now belongs, shall receive a transfer to the said Conference signed by the Presiding Bishop and clerk, and any member coming from another Conference shall do the same.

The clerk shall keep a true record of all the business of the Conference, and preserve with care all papers, deeds, notes, bonds, etc., that may from time-to-time, come into his/her possession.

SECTION VII – The treasurer shall safely keep all monies and valuables that may from time-to-time come into his/her possession, and make a report of the same when ordered to do so by either the Annual Conference or the Conference Board of Trustees.

The assistant officers of this Annual Conference shall perform the duties that are generally delegated to such officers in their absence.

SECTION VIII – Each Conference shall have the right to state its own time and place of its meeting, but should it become necessary to change the time or place of the setting after it has been placed by the Annual Conference, the minister in charge of the time and place shall have the power, through the Presiding Bishop, to make such a change, by first consulting with the elders of the Conference as far as deemed practical.

The Annual Conference shall have the power to set new Annual Conference Districts if necessary in the interval of the General Conference.

It shall be the duty of each Conference in its session, which immediately precedes each session of the General Conference to appropriate funds necessary to defray the travel expenses of its delegates to the General Conference.

Any member of the Annual Conference who shall commit any offense or violate any resolution during the session, the Annual Conference shall then and there enter a charge and the case shall be brought before the Investigative Committee. The Committee shall deal with the offender in a similar manner to that of other cases.

When a church of this Annual Conference violates her covenant, becomes heretical and corrupt in its practice, the Annual Conference, on being advised of the facts, shall investigate the matter, and after suitable labor and finding that the charges are true, withdraw fellowship from the said church.

SECTION IX – The Annual Conference shall establish a board of trustees and treasurer consisting of the number as the Conference may direct. Each member shall be twenty-one years

of age or more, bonded and be in good standing with the Annual Conference.

Unless otherwise prohibited by law or these By-Laws, the trustees shall be elected with other officers by the Annual Conference. The trustees shall be responsible to the Annual Conference and required to submit a report of its acts annually to the Conference, and this report published.

It shall be the duty of the board of trustees to protect the Annual Conference with all appurtenances in trust for the Conference, and to make such improvements as may from time-to-time be necessary for the interest of the Annual Conference to which they belong.

The Annual Conference board of trustees is to maintain order and decorum at all times during the Conference. The treasurer shall from time-to-time, be subject to the direction of the board of trustees.

No member of the board of trustees shall be ejected from his/her office while he/she is in joint custody of money or other assets of the Annual Conference.

SECTION X - The Annual Conference shall have the right to purchase lands for the church and school sites and for other benevolent and charitable purposes, and shall have the power to buy and sell, receive and convey land, deeds, bonds, notes, papers, etc.; in a fee-simple defend and prosecute the same at common law.

The Annual Conference shall have the right to a common seal.

It is the privilege of the Annual Conference to send as many delegates as needed to any Annual Conference at its sitting, provided it shall pay the delegates travel expense. Such delegates shall be known as fraternal delegates.

The Presiding Bishop shall preside in the Annual Conference. Should he fail to be present, the Vice-Bishop shall preside. Should both fail to attend, the Conference shall appoint a Bishop Pro-Tem from among the elders present and this is to be done without debate.

ARTICLE II ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Devotional Exercises
2. Delivery of the Introductory Sermon
3. House Opened for Business
4. Acceptance of Printed Programs
5. The Bounds of the Conference
6. The Official Roll Call
7. The Ministers Roll Call
8. The Enrollment of New Ministers
9. The Honorary Ministers and Members Roll Call
10. The Enrollment of New Honorary Ministers and Members
11. The Enrollment of All Presidents and Officers of All Unions and Conventions
12. The Calling and/or Appointment of Committees
13. The Report of Churches
14. The Report of the Supervisors
15. The Report of Annual Conference Trustees
16. The Report of the Investigation Committee
17. The Report of the Ordination Committee
18. The Report of Other Committees

19. The Report of Conventions
20. The Report of the Finance Committee

ARTICLE III BISHOP

SECTION 1 – History

In the Original Free Will Baptist Conference there were no bishops until 1968, when the first bishop was elected. Before 1968, the Conference leaders were called Moderators. Being a Bible-believing Conference and there being no mention of moderator in the scriptures, we agreed to refer to the top leadership as Bishop as found in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and Acts 14:23; 20:28.

SECTION 2 – Qualifications for Bishop

The Cape Fear and South Western, Middle Eastern, Northeast, and Old Original Free Will Baptist Conferences shall be presided over by the Bishop(s). A bishop is a high-ranking clergy/cleric with authority over a church, a group of churches, a district, or diocese. As it relates to the hierarchy of the church, there is no higher calling in the Christian church than that of a bishop. Only those persons duly called and qualified should aspire to the position of bishop. No one should fill the office of bishop, nor should they allow anyone to appoint them to such office without meeting all of the qualifications for the office.

No preacher or elder is qualified to serve in the office of a bishop unless they have served in other areas of the church including, but not limited to that of pastor, union or convention president, district elder, or supervisor. Unless there is specific evidence, no novice preacher is qualified to become a bishop unless called to

the office by God. According to Acts 20:28, the Holy Spirit must be in charge of the calling to the office of bishop.

All bishops must be consecrated before serving in that office.

SECTION 3 – Duties of the Bishop

The Presiding Bishop/President shall have oversight responsibility or preside over the assembly of the Annual Conference, and to direct the course of the proceedings to secure its objective. He states all motions made, puts them to vote when appropriate, and announces the result; decides points of order, and appoints committees as appropriate.

If it becomes necessary for the Presiding Bishop/President to leave his chair, and his absence is temporary, he should ask the Bishop who serves as Vice President to take to his place and preside over the assembly until he returns. If his absence were protracted, the Vice President shall serve in his place. Since the orderliness and efficiency of the Annual Conference depends upon the Presiding Bishop and his ability to conduct the business before the conference, no one should be chosen for that position out of personal esteem, nor unless he possesses the qualifications to act. In the Annual Conference meetings, the Presiding Bishop/President is ex-officio, but he can request another qualified bishop to take the chair.

ARTICLE IV SUPERVISOR

The Annual Conference shall elect a Board of Supervisors, to serve at the pleasure of the Conference. Listed below is a variety of the duties and responsibilities of the supervisor, but are in no way limited to these duties only:

1. It is the duty of the supervisor to settle controversies between the local church membership and its pastor.
2. If any church is without a pastor, it is the duty of the supervisor to recommend to that church, ministers who are qualified for the office of pastor and to see that the pulpit is filled with a minister other than him/herself.
3. The supervisor is responsible for calling in the Bishop if he/she is unable to resolve the matter at hand.
4. There shall be an expense account set aside to assist the supervisor in his/her travel and living expense while on official assignment. The amount given shall be at the discretion of the local church. The supervisor shall visit each church within his/her region and make a written report to the Annual Conference as to the condition of the churches he/she visited.

ARTICLE V
INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE

The Annual Conference shall appoint from among its membership of bishops and ministers an Investigative Committee. It shall consist of men and women of prudence and piety, well versed in the English language, the Bible and the Book of Discipline, possessing a true knowledge of the Discipline to staff the Investigative Committee. The Bishop shall select the first chairperson.

The chairperson shall select a vice-chair and secretary from among the committee. The vice-chair shall in the absence of the chair, perform the duties of the chair. The secretary shall make written notes and keep record of all matters brought before the

committee, giving a copy to the Conference clerk who shall keep said record in a safe place.

This committee shall meet with and investigate all ministers to determine their fitness and qualification, who are seeking ministerial licenses in their local church. Upon satisfactorily answering all questions related to the licenses being sought, the candidate's name shall be referred to the Annual Conference Ordination Committee for testing and licensing. In addition to ministers seeking licenses, all churches and church matters that are brought before the Conference that have not been satisfactorily resolved by the Conference supervisors, will be heard by this committee.

At the completion of the investigation and hearing of the matter, the committee shall either dispose of the matter, or provide its recommendation to the Annual Conference for disposition. If the recommendation made by the Conference is not accepted, the church or person being charged has the right to appeal the matter to the General Conference.

ARTICLE VI ORDINATION COMMITTEE

The Annual Conference shall select from among its membership of bishops and ministers an Ordination Committee. They shall consist of men and women of prudence and piety, well versed in the English language, the Bible, possessing a true knowledge of the Book of Discipline to staff the Ordination Committee. The Bishop shall select the first chairperson.

The chairperson shall select a vice-chair and secretary from among committee members. The vice-chair shall in the absence of

the chair, perform the duties of the chair. The secretary shall make and keep written notes and records of all matters brought before the committee, giving a copy to the Annual Conference clerk who shall keep all records in a safe place.

The committee shall meet with all ministers referred to them by the Investigative Committee, for further examination and testing for licenses in their local church. Upon satisfactorily passing the test and satisfactorily answering all questions, the candidate's name shall be referred to the Annual Conference with the recommendation of the Ordination Committee.

ARTICLE VII PASTORS AND MINISTERS

SECTION 1 — Qualifications for Pastors and Ministers

All pastors/ministers of the Annual Conference must abide by the third chapter of I Timothy and be in gospel order.

1. The pastor shall be ex-officio member of all boards and committees of the church and its auxiliaries. The pastor shall act as the chair at all business meetings of the church.
2. A pastor must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach;
3. Not given to much wine (no wine), or any intoxicating drink as a beverage, (nor mind altering substance) nor greedy for money; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;
4. One who ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)
5. Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into condemnation of the devil.

6. Moreover, he must have a good report of them that are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

SECTION 2 – Duties of the Pastor or Minister

It is not necessary to elect a pastor annually as long as the church and pastor can agree.

The Cape Fear and South Western, Middle Eastern, Northeast, and the Old Original Free Will Baptist Annual Conferences, shall have the authority to license and renew licenses of all qualified persons as pastor or minister. After the minister preaches his/her initial sermon, the church shall recommend the minister to the district union, and the district union shall recommend the minister to the Annual Conference for license. The license of the minister/pastor may be revoked by the Annual Conference whenever it is judged ineffective or unproductive. Neither the pastor nor minister shall be at liberty to administer the right of baptism, preside over the Lord's Supper, marriage celebration or funeral until he/she has been ordained by the Annual Conference. No person shall be granted a license who cannot read.

It shall be the duty of the pastor/minister to labor at such time and place within the bounds in which he belongs as the pastor may direct. Each pastor/minister shall pay appropriate dues and fees to the Annual Conference.

A pastor must have leadership qualities, skills and abilities, and be called by God to lead His people. He/she must also have a humble spirit and the ability to listen as well as speak. The pastor is a leader, teacher, and an overseer of the entire church. He/she must be concerned and have the ability to serve as administrator over temporal affairs of the church.

The pastor is charged by God, to preach the gospel, administer ordinances, watch over the membership, and have charge of the spiritual welfare of the congregation, and public worship.

The membership must recognize that the pastor is never to be involved nor participate in members' affairs or problems unless asked to do so, and then only with much prayer. When asked to become involved in to settle controversies in the church, the pastor must meet with all parties and serve as a neutral party without passing judgment on the matter, giving rise to the controversy.

In the absence of the pastor, the pastor will designate the minister who will be responsible for carrying out his/her duties.

SECTION 3 – The Free Will Baptist Code of Ethics for Ministers

I. The Minister and His Work

1. No minister should seek in any way to obtain a church held by another minister.
2. Ministers should insist upon a salary scale commensurate with the demands laid upon him by the church and society.
3. Every pastor should recognize and perform all the duties of a pastor to the best of his ability.
4. It is the duty of the minister to maintain his own efficiency by study, by travel, and other means.
5. The minister should not try to use pressure to secure a position, a church, or any other favors.
6. It is unethical to fail to report to the duly constituted authority of the church any matters which are clearly detrimental to the welfare of the church.
7. Ministers should never charge a fee for officiating at a funeral.
8. As a minister controls his own time, he should make it a point of honor to give full service to his church.

9. Part of the minister's service as leader of his people is to reserve sufficient time for serious study in order to thoroughly understand his message, keep abreast of current thought, and develop his intellectual and spiritual capacities.
10. It is equally the minister's duty to keep physically fit. A weekly holiday and an annual vacation should be taken and used for rest and improvement.
11. As a public interpreter of divine revelation and human duty, the minister should tell the truth as he sees it and present it tactfully and constructively.
12. As a spiritual leader in the community the minister must be honest, avoid debts, and pay his bills promptly.
13. The minister should be careful not to bring reproach on his calling by joining in marriage improper persons.

II. The Minister's Relations With His Church

1. It is unethical for a minister to break his contract made with the church.
2. As a professional man, the minister should make his service primary and the remuneration (salary) secondary. His training and efficiency, however, demands that he should receive a salary adequate to the work he is expected to do and in accordance with the scale of living in the church which he serves.
3. It is unethical for the minister to engage in other lines of remunerative work without the knowledge and consent of the church he serves, or its official board.
4. The confidential statements made to a minister by his members are privileged and should never be divulged without the consent of those making them.
5. It is unethical for a minister to take sides with factions in his church.
6. The minister recognizes himself to be the servant of the community in which he resides or serves. Fees which are offered should be accepted only in the light of this principle.

7. The minister will dedicate time and energy to the church which he/she serves, to the Christian ministry and will maintain strict standards and discipline.

III. The Minister's Personal Conduct

1. The minister should cultivate his devotional life, continuing steadfastly in reading the Bible, meditation and prayer.

2. The minister should be fair to his family and endeavor to give them the time and consideration to which they are entitled.

3. The minister should try to live within his income and not leave carelessly unpaid debts behind him.

4. The minister should strive to grow in his work through comprehensive reading, careful study, attending the district unions, conventions, and Annual Conferences.

5. The minister should lead his congregation in giving and be honest in the stewardship of money.

6. The minister should not plagiarize (steal and pass on as one's own the ideas, writings, etc., of another).

7. The minister should seek to be Christ-like in his personal attitudes and conduct toward all people regardless of race, class or creed.

IV. The Minister's Relationship to Fellow Ministers

1. The minister should refuse to enter into unfair competition with other ministers in order to secure a pulpit or place of honor.

2. The minister should seek to serve his fellow ministers and their families in every way possible and in no instance should he accept fees for such services.

3. The minister should never speak ill or disparagingly about the work of his predecessor or his successor.

4. The minister should refrain from frequent visits to a former field and if, in exceptional cases, he is called back for a funeral or wedding, he should request that the resident minister be invited to participate in the service.

5. The minister should be courteous to fellow ministers at all times and especially kind and thoughtful of retired ministers.
6. The minister will not gossip about other ministers.
7. The minister will hold in sincere respect any minister whose work is well done, regardless of the size or the nature of the field he serves.
8. The minister will consider all ministers co-laborers in the work of Christ, even though he may differ from them, he will respect their Christian earnestness and sincerity.
9. The minister will never be guilty of proselyting (trying to persuade one to leave their church to become a member of his).

V. The Minister's Relationship to His Community

1. The minister will strive to be human in all of his relationships to the community but will never lower his standards in order to appear "A Good Fellow."
2. The minister will not be a party to a funeral or marriage racket.
3. The minister will be considerate of the working hours of business and professional men and will not consume their time with unimportant matters.
4. The minister must consider that his first duty to his community is to be a conscientious pastor and leader of his own congregation; but will not use this fact as an excuse to escape reasonable responsibilities that the community calls upon him to assume.

VI. The Minister's Relationship to the Church Universal

The minister will give attention, sympathy, and when possible, support to the ecumenical church, recognizing that his church is a part of the church universal. He will not be slack in his efforts to help the church extend the Kingdom of God.

ARTICLE VIII EXAMINATION

SECTION 1 – Local Preacher

The following areas of subject matter must be mastered satisfactorily by the local preacher before he/she can become or can be considered for local license:

The Bible

Reading and Writing

Spelling

Language Usage (both oral and written expression)

Arithmetic

Geography

History (United States and State)

Physiology

The following areas of subject matter must be mastered satisfactorily by the minister who is aspiring for elder's orders:

The Bible and Connecting Branches

Spelling

Reading and Writing

Grammar (written and oral)

Arithmetic

Geography

History of the State and the United States

SECTION 2 – Queries

Every candidate shall be quizzed in the outset of the following questions and if satisfactory, the examiners may proceed to complete the examination; otherwise the examination will stop and the candidate dismissed.

d. Do you believe the scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be infallible and true? Answer: I do.

b. Do you believe the faith and order of this church to be altogether consistent with the Holy Scriptures as far as you are acquainted with them? Answer: I do.

c. Do you feel divinely called of God to take upon the office of public ministry of the word? Answer: I do.

d. Are you at this time in full fellowship with this church? Answer: I am.

e. Do you earnestly in your heart purpose to contend for the faith and order of this church? Do you purpose to serve the church as far as respects your ministerial functions in all of her orders? Answer: I do.

The above line of studies have been adopted by the Annual Conference that the arising minister may better prepare himself along the lines that he may be able to fully represent himself and his calling with honor to Christ, credit to himself and a blessing to the church.

All candidates for either order of the ministry shall make a required percent in each branch of study. To become orthodox, one hundred percent shall be the maximum and fifty percent shall be the minimum. Exhorters must make an average of fifty percent. Local preachers must make an average of seventy percent. Elders must make at least ninety percent.

ARTICLE IX
A GUIDELINE FOR ALL MINISTERS WHO PRESIDE IN THE
ORIGINAL FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH SERVICES

I. Be sure you know what you are supposed to do before you start the service. Inform those you desire to help you in order to avoid whispering and walking after the service starts.

II. Make sure you start the services on time. Get the attention of all the people before you start singing by using statements of worship such as the following: "The Lord is in His Holy temple, let all the earth keep silent before Him." "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." "O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together."

III. Always open every service with a hymn. If a choir is going to sing, it is still in order for the presiding ministers to sing a short hymn and then call for the choir. Always check with the choir so they will understand your order of services. Never walk or talk while sitting on the pulpit stand unless it is necessary. Never cross your legs.

The following order of service is for a regular morning worship but can be used for afternoon and evening services with a few changes.

Order of Service

Processional-Prayer of Consecration

Repeat Psalm 100- (all standing)

Hymn-(all standing)

Scripture-

Prayer-and Chant

Second Hymn- (Mission Offering by Ushers if Sunday)

Announcements or Notices- (if it is a Sunday Morning Service)

Alter Prayer-(if it is a Sunday Morning Service)

Introduction of Preacher-

Selection-Choir

Sermon-

Invitation to the Unsaved-

If it is a regular service, the offering will follow the invitation.

If it is a business session, the presider will turn the service into the hands of the president.

The president will carry out all business and most of the time call for the collectors. Many times they will do all the other things the program calls for until benediction. The presiding minister usually gives the benediction. Using the word "Amen" is not a benediction. All ministers must be able to say a benediction and a table grace over food.

From 12:05 midnight until 11:55 a.m. is considered morning or a.m. From 12:05 noon until 5:00 p.m. is considered afternoon p.m. From 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. is considered evening and it is still p.m. After it gets dark, we usually say night and it is, and it is yet p.m. until 12:00 at night.

In an afternoon or evening service when there has already been a long devotional service, it becomes necessary to use a shorter order of service.

ARTICLE X HELPFUL HINTS

1. Never ask or allow anyone to read the scriptures that cannot read well, God's Word is important and all need to clearly hear it in order to understand. Be sure to read it with all your might.
2. When you extend the invitation to the unsaved or unchurched, make it plain, loud and clear. Many sinners do not know what is meant by saying the doors of the church are open. If the people are shouting and the choir is singing, wait until they stop, then proceed. Be sure to stay behind the microphones so you can be heard.

3. Do what you are supposed to do, stick to your point. Some presiders waste too much time.
4. If you do not know the main preacher and you have not gotten an outline in order to properly introduce them, it is in order to let someone introduce them that know them. When introducing a person, do not talk about yourself or testify but talk about the one you are presenting.
5. Never throw off on the congregation by telling them they are dry, etc. All services are not the same.
Sometimes the Lord wants us to be quiet in order that He can really speak to us. Just pray and do your job well and leave the results to the Lord.
6. When there is a welcome program, it is proper for the presiding minister to turn the services into the hands of the secretary and when they finish they will turn the services back to the presiding minister.
7. In most cases, we strive to use two presiding ministers but one should be able to carry on at all times if the other is absent.

ARTICLE XI MANNER OF PREACHING

1. The best method of preaching is:

To Convince

To Present Christ

To Invite

To Build Up

2. The most effective way is to preach Him officially, and to declare His law as well as the Gospel to every creature. Let every minister firmly insist upon inward and outward holiness in all branches.

3. The minister should never disappoint a congregation. The following procedure is recommended

- a. Begin at an appointed time.
- b. Let the services be serious, weighty and solemn.
- c. Always prepare subjects suitable for the occasion.
- d. Choose the simplest text that is available.
- e. Take care not to ramble, but keep within the text and master what you have prepared.
- f. Take care as to eliminate any form of awkwardness either in gestures, phrases or pronunciation.
- g. Frequently enlarge upon portions of the scriptures, and let the young ministers exhort as often as the opportunities present themselves.

ARTICLE XII DISTRICT UNION

SECTION 1 – Business of the District Union

Each district union shall appoint or elect its own president, officers and committees as the need arises.

The Union board shall consist of as many members as the body thinks proper.

The Union shall open with devotional exercises.

The Union shall enroll the names of the ministers and the delegates.

The Union shall read the letters and receive reports.

The Union shall read the minutes of the last union.

SECTION 2 – By-Laws of the Union Meeting

Every church shall report to the district union by letter or delegate.

Every minister and member shall pay to the union the amount set by the union.

All deacons and mothers are members of the union by virtue of their office.

The investigating committees shall investigate all grievances and complaints and report to the union their recommendations.

ARTICLE XIII SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION

Constitution of the Cape Fear and South Western and Northeast and Middle Eastern and Old Original Free Will Baptist Sunday School Convention

SECTION 1 - This organization shall be known as the Cape Fear and South Western, Northeast and Middle Eastern and Old Original Free Will Baptist Sunday School Convention.

SECTION 2 - Its object shall be the advancement of educational interest, etc., the encouragement of Sunday school work, and the development of moral character, in order that religious principles may be incorporated in the moral improvement of the rising generation.

SECTION 3 - There shall be a president and all other officers the Convention thinks proper, and their terms of office shall be at the discretion of the Convention.

SECTION 4 - It shall be the duty of the president to preside at all meetings of the convention, decide points of order, and in case of a tie, cast the deciding vote. In the absence of the president, the vice-president shall preside.

SECTION 5 - It shall be the duty of the secretary to record the proceedings of each annual session, superintend the printing of the minutes, and see that they are properly distributed among the Sunday schools.

SECTION 6 - It shall be the duty of the treasurer to take charge of all money sent up to the convention or collected during the session, and pay out only when an order is signed by the secretary and president.

SECTION 7 - It shall be the duty of the auditor to audit the accounts of the treasurer at each annual setting and report the result to the convention.

SECTION 8 - The basis of financial representation shall be determined by the Convention.

SECTION 9 - This Convention shall have jurisdiction over all the Sunday schools belonging to the churches which compose the Annual Conference, and shall advise the Sunday school as to what kind of literature to be used, see to the organization of Sunday schools in destitute localities, and see that they are supplied with Bibles and Testaments, tracts, Sunday school papers, magazines, and make donations to them when it is advisable to do so.

SECTION 11 - The officers of the Convention may be paid such compensation for their service as may be decided upon by the Convention.

SECTION 12 - Any school wishing to become a member of this convention may become such by presenting her application at any annual meeting and complying with section eight (8).

SECTION 13 - This constitution may be altered or amended by a two-thirds vote of all members present at any annual meeting.

SECTION 14 - There shall be appointed by the convention a missionary, who shall travel the district, make talks to the various Sunday schools, assist them in planning to raise money and keep up the Sunday school interest throughout the district.

Order of Business

I. Call convention to order. 2. Devotional exercise. 3. Enrollment of schools and delegates. 4. Introductory Sermon. 5. Appointment of committees, as follows: (a) Committee on Literature; (b) Committee on Temperance; (c) Committee on Education; (d) Committee on State and Condition; (e) Committee on Finance; (f) Committee on Reception of News; (g) Committee on Restitution of Schools.

**ARTICLE XIV
YOUNG PEOPLE’S CHRISTIAN LEAGUE**

There shall be a Young People's Christian League throughout the field when there are enough young people to organize.

This society is for the enlightenment of the young people and to encourage them in their growth as young Christians.

The officers of the Convention shall be a president and as many officers as the convention directs.

The fees for the Convention shall be the amount that the convention directs.

Any member not meeting with the Convention three years in succession without a lawful excuse shall be dealt with as the Convention sees fit.

ARTICLE XV
LOCAL WOMEN'S HOME MISSION

SECTION 1 – How to Organize an Auxiliary

Local auxiliaries are the source of power. They are the springs that feed the streams which otherwise would cease to flow, hence their maintenance is of greatest importance.

An auxiliary may be organized in every church if there is one woman who faithfully labors to do it. How shall it be done?

1. Through prayer.
2. Talk with your sisters and let them know the need for mission work, and what can be done by uniting your efforts.
3. Talk with your pastor and obtain his/her support.
4. Get a meeting appointed. After the devotion let someone state the object of the meeting, if possible have a stirring address.

Auxiliaries may care for the sick and make proper donations as they see fit.

All members must care for each other when they are about to address the society. First call the president to get his/her attention. All members must obey the constitution and its by-laws of the Women's Home Missionary Auxiliary.

SECTION 2 – Officers

There shall be a president and all other officers the Auxiliary thinks proper, and their terms of office shall be at the discretion of the Auxiliary.

Each officer, members, and others affiliated with the auxiliary must obey the rules and regulations of the Woman's Home Missionary Auxiliary.

All pastors shall be members of the Women’s Home Missionary Auxiliary by virtue of their office as pastor over the church where the auxiliary is.

The State Convention has power over all auxiliaries and they are subject to the State Convention where they are. Five shall constitute a trustee board, and three shall constitute a quorum to do business.

SECTION 3 — Order of Business

- Singing
- Reading the Scripture
- Prayer
- Reading of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- Roll Call
- Unfinished Business
- Projected Programs
- Report of Work
- Report of the Sick
- Applications from New Members
- New Business
- Receipts of the Setting
- Closing

**ARTICLE XVI
THE SUNSHINE BAND**

Each church shall have a Sunshine Band composed of small children.

A convention shall be held annually and the officers, constitution, its by-laws shall be in the framework as other Conventions.

**ARTICLE XVII
WOMEN'S HOME MISSION CONVENTION**

SECTION 1 – Constitution and By-Laws

This organization shall be known as the Women's Home Mission of the Cape Fear and South Western, Northeast, Middle Eastern and the Old Original Free Will Baptist Convention.

There shall be a president and all other officers the Convention thinks proper, and their terms of office shall be at the discretion of the Convention.

SECTION 2 – Duties of the Officers

The president shall preside over all meetings, shall sign orders on the treasury, and shall cast the deciding vote in case there is a tie on any measure of balloting.

The vice-president shall perform such duties that are commensurate with that office.

The secretary shall record the proceedings of the Convention and/or trustee board.

The financial secretary shall keep a record of all the finances of the Convention.

The treasurer shall hold all money for the Convention and pay out only on orders signed by the president and the secretary, and give bond for security of the money.

The trustee board shall have the power to call upon any missionary in the field when they think it proper, fill all vacancies that may occur during intervals of the Convention and accomplish other work that will enhance the society.

There shall be a general missionary for the local societies and the state.

There shall be a regular line of missionaries on the field, whose term of office shall be determined by the Convention.

The missionaries shall be under the jurisdiction of the Convention. They shall be subject to all the rules and regulations of the society, and shall labor in their assigned territories. Their certificates may be revoked at any time by the board of the Convention.

No one shall be out on the field without obtaining a certificate from the board of the Convention, signed by the president and the secretary.

Anyone failing to observe or to be governed by the above laws shall be dealt with as the auxiliary deems proper.

SECTION 3 — Order of Business

Devotional Exercises

Introductory Sermon

Roll Call

Report of Delegates
Report of Missionaries
Unfinished Business
New Business
Closing

SECTION 4 – Certificate

To Whom It May Concern:

Greetings:

This certifies that the bearer, _____ of the County and State of _____ Is a worthy member of the Cape Fear and South Western, Northeast, Middle Eastern and Old Original Free Will Baptist Church at _____. It has been this day set apart to do missionary work for the Women's Missionary Society of these four Conferences by the board of the Convention of the above named society, is authorized to lecture on mission work and solicit aid to advance the work. All of the money and valuables given shall be accounted for. Any default will subject the bearer to indictment before the civil law. If found guilty upon trial, this certificate shall be revoked and the offender left at the discretion of the court.

**ARTICLE XVIII
FOREIGN MISSION**

There shall be a Foreign Mission that will serve as the international arm of the Women's Home Mission Convention. It shall promote and support the efforts to carry the gospel of Jesus Christ to countries beyond our national borders and shall have the

authority to establish its organizational structure and bylaws to operate in an efficient and godly manner.

ARTICLE XIX THE CHURCH

SECTION 1 – Order of the Church

The order of the church, before being constituted shall be as follows:

She shall become an arm to some sister church in the union if the distance is not too great.

There shall be members enough to fill all offices of the church in order that regular discipline may be kept.

On a day set apart of the constitution of said church, they shall be examined by three elders in respect of the faith and order of the church, and if they are found orthodox, the Bible shall be presented as the only Bible of faith and practice.

A church covenant is adopted.

A prayer of consecration shall be offered.

A right hand of fellowship shall be given; then they shall become a body with all the rights common to that of a church and to act for themselves.

After being thus organized they shall be at liberty to choose a pastor out of the number of regular elders, who shall preside over them.

SECTION 2 — Meeting of the Church

The church consisting of the Cape Fear and South Western, Middle Eastern, Northeast, and the Old Free Will Baptist Conferences, order do covenant and agree that four times a year, or every three months, to assemble for the purpose of holding a godly meeting, the members being present with convenience. Then and there the business of the church shall be done.

The meeting shall always open and adjourn with praise and prayer.

During the meeting the members shall act with all decency and good order.

One shall speak at a time, and that by request, first addressing the pastor.

All matters shall be decided by majority vote.

All quarterly meetings shall be held at a convenient time for the church members.

Every church having a pastor shall commune and wash one another's feet every quarterly meeting; but if not convenient, it may be postponed, with legitimate reasons, until a more convenient time.

Prayer and testimony meetings shall be held as often as deemed proper and should be encouraged by all members.

The officers of each church shall hold a board meeting once a month. The pastor shall be chairman ex-officio.

ARTICLE XX
QUARTERLY CONFERENCE

SECTION 1 – Order of Business

Devotion

Reading of the Minutes, Corrections and Approval

Unfinished Business

New Business

Report of all Officers

Calling of the Roll, Collection of Dues

Report of the Sick and Disabled

Report on the Provisions Made for the Widows and Orphans

Secretary's Report

Report of the Church Auxiliaries

Sunday School

Home Mission

YPCL

Sunshine Band

Usher Board

Other Auxiliaries that may be formed in the church

Report on Prayer Meetings

Call for any Demands or Encouragement for Church Work

Adjournment

ARTICLE XXI
GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

The rules for the government of the church of God are contained in the Holy Scriptures, but as many of them appear to be misapprehended in general direction, it is necessary for the better regulation that certain fixed rules and principles of practice should be adopted, providing those rules are in accordance with the Holy Scriptures of truth. It is manifested that every Christian society

should make such local regulations as will secure obedience to the perfect law by which we are governed.

1. If a church be destitute a pastor, she may, in the presence of the supervisor, call on any regular elder of our connection, and what shall be done during his charge shall be lawful.
2. Every pastor or presiding elder shall be chosen out of the number of the regular elders and come into office by choice of the church over which he is to preside.
3. The office of the pastor is to serve the church to which he is chosen in the administration of all gospel ordinances and decrees of the church. He is to have the oversight and care of the ministry in the church over which he presides and call to his assistance such persons he sees fit, and over his brethren he shall bear the title elder.
4. No pastor may withdraw from his charge or charges before his conference year expires without first tendering his resignation three months before maturity and the same applies to the church. It will left up to the church and or her officers if the pastor serve them for those 90 days or be compensated monetarily for those days.
5. If there is a controversy between the pastor and the church, the pastor or official church representative should contact their appointed supervisor. If the supervisor cannot settle the controversy, the supervisor will call in the presiding Bishop.
6. If any pastor becomes out of gospel order he shall be set aside by the Annual Conference until satisfaction is given.
7. Every elder of this connection has the right to establish branches of the same.
8. The pastor has a right to commend or reprimand any member under his care except at the time of Conference. He shall have the right to cite members to the next Conference when the offence is committed between Conferences.

9. The pastor of a charge or charges has the right to call a private conference and this conference may appoint a committee, if the nature of the case requires it, and they shall proceed as in other conferences.
10. No minister shall fill any pastor's charge for the purpose of transacting any business or preaching without first obtaining approval of the pastor in charge.
11. All ministers are members, and their names continued with church where they first became members until they are regularly dismissed.
12. All persons becoming members of the Cape Fear and South Western, Northeast, and the Middle Eastern and Old Original Free Will Baptist Conference shall have been baptized by immersion by a minister of the gospel, and agree to submit to all the rules and regulations of the church.
13. All members are under obligation to attend worship service with convenience on our own meeting day.
14. The members shall not leave the appointment of their own ministers and on the same day or days go to hear those of another order. Every member thus offending shall be liable to the censure of the church, but they are at liberty at any other time to hear whom they will.
15. All members that absent themselves from church on the day of the Conference or the time of communion shall be liable to the censure of the church.
16. All members are tributaries to their respective churches and shall pay into the treasury according to their several abilities for the support of their pastor and other church expenses, and for any delinquency they shall show cause why.
17. The treasurer shall only pay out money by the order of the Quarterly Conference or by an order of the trustee board, signed by the chairperson and counter signed by the clerk of the said church.

18. If need be there shall be an auditing committee appointed quarterly to examine the treasurer's accounts and to report the same to the Conference.
19. Members on moving from their church shall take a letter of commendation signed by the pastor and the clerk, and when the church shall know of their uniting with some other church their names shall be discontinued.
20. All meeting houses belonging to our connection shall be under the jurisdiction of the Annual Conference in whose bounds they are situated. The Annual Conference shall not dispose of the church house contrary to the wish of the church neither the church contrary to the wish of the Annual Conference.
21. No stranger shall preach in our churches unless they are well recommended.
22. The Lord's Supper shall always be administered at night, provided that it will suit the convenience of the church.
23. Each church shall give their pastor such compensation that will enable him not to be embarrassed with any worldly calling.
- 24.13. In all church business meetings, the chairperson has the deciding vote.
25. All presiding officers shall confine themselves to the law while discharging their duties. Should anyone fail in keeping the law, he shall be removed from his office by the body over which he presides, and another placed in his stead.
26. Every church shall be entitled to as many delegates as the Annual Conference deems necessary.
27. Should any member, after being informed, violate any of these rules, he shall be liable to the censure of the church.
28. Every church shall hold Children's Day once a year and put forth all efforts to encourage the young people to take part in church work to strengthen their faith.

ARTICLE XXII
LEGITIMATE ECONOMY
MANNER OF SECURING CHURCH PROPERTY

1. In all conveyances of grounds for the erection of church houses, or upon which they have already been erected, let the following clause be inserted at the proper place, to wit:

"In trust, that said premises shall be used, maintained, and disposed of as a place of divine worship for the use of the Cape Fear and South Western, North East, and the Middle East Free Will Baptist Church, subject to the discipline, usage, and ministerial elections of the said church, as may be authorized and declared by the General Conference of the said church and the Annual Conference in whose bounds the said premises are located. In all other facts of the said conveyances, let strict conformity be had to the laws, forms, and ways of the many state and territories in which the property may be located, so as to secure ownership of the premises in question."

ARTICLE XXIII
CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 – Application for Membership

Applications for membership may be accepted at any time on any Sunday, at any regular mid-week prayer service, or any previously announced preaching service of the church. Persons may be received into membership by any of the following methods:

- *By Baptism:* A person who confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, adopts substantially the views of faith and principles of the church, and is baptized by immersion in water, may be received into the fellowship of the church.

- *By Letter:* A person who is in substantial accord with the views of faith and the principles of this Church may be received by letter from any other Christian Church.
- *By Christian Experience:* A believer of worthy character who has formerly been a member of a Christian church, but who for a sufficient reason cannot present a letter from that church, but who is in substantial accord with the views of faith and principles of the church may be received upon statement of experience.
- *By Restoration:* A person who has lost membership may be restored to membership by a vote of the church.
- *By Watch Care:* A person who is a member of another Christian Church, but sojourning in this community for a brief period of time may be received into membership of the church for a six-month period. Students may unite under Watch Care while they are enrolled in a local institution of learning.

SECTION 2 – Termination of Membership

Church membership may be terminated in the following manner:

- *By Letter:* Upon the issuance of a church letter of dismissal and recommendation for membership in some other Free Will Baptist Church.
- *By Statement:* Any member in good standing may be granted a Certificate of Standing for the purpose of associating themselves with any other Evangelical Church other than a Free Will Baptist Church.
- *By Exclusion:* Upon withdrawal of fellowship by the church from a member as provided by the Holy Scriptures and more particularly in St. Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians 5.
- *By Suspension:* The board of deacons should prepare from year to year a list of those members who for a period of one (1) year or more failed to participate in the services of

worship, financial support, or the educational program of the church without valid excuse. If they are satisfied that the persons described cannot be reclaimed, they shall present to the church a recommendation that these delinquent members be removed from the membership roll. Upon such action being taken by the church, said members shall thereafter cease to be members of this church.

- *By Death.*

ARTICLE XXIV OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

Every constituted church shall elect a board of officers consisting of a Minister Board, a Deacon Board, a Mother and Deaconess Board, a Trustee Board, and an Usher Board. The pastor will appoint a clerk/secretary, presidents, auxiliaries, and committees as deemed appropriate.

The clerk shall keep a true record of all the business of the church in a book procured for that purpose, and make a report of the same to the board at quarterly meetings.

ARTICLE XXV DEACONS

SECTION 1 — Qualifications for Deacons

Every constituted church shall from among its members, elect deacons as needed. After the election, and by order of the Conference (before they act officially) the pastor shall set apart a time of prayer and fasting for the purpose of ordination, and call upon as much help as he/she deems proper, and qualify them for

all the designated purpose of their appointment. The Pastor shall select the first chairperson.

The chairperson shall select the first officers from among the deacons. The vice chair shall, in the absence of the chair, perform the duties of the chair.

The deacon should have the character and reputation of being worthy of respect, trustworthy in all things, serious, and not a gossip. They should be filled with the Holy Ghost and self-controlled and temperate. Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, (no wine) or any intoxicating drink as a beverage, (nor mind altering substance) not greedy for money; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let them first be proven; then let them use the office of deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacon be the husband of one wife, ruling their children and their own house well. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. (Acts 6:3, 1 Timothy 3:8-13)

SECTION 2 – Duties of the Deacon

The duties of the deacon shall be as follows:

1. To serve at the Lord's Table;
2. To distribute the bounty of the church among its needy members;
3. To visit the sick;
4. To assist the pastor in promoting the order and attendance upon the means of grace and mercy; and
5. To see that an efficient scriptural discipline be enforced in the church.

ARTICLE XXVI
MOTHERS AND DEACONESSES

SECTION 1 – Qualifications for Mothers and Deaconesses

Every church shall elect mothers and deaconesses as needed. After the election and by order of the Conference (before they act officially) the pastor shall set apart a time of prayer and fasting for the purpose of ordination; call upon as much help as he/she deems proper, and qualify them for all the designated purpose of their appointment.

Mothers/Deaconesses should be of good character and reputation, trustworthy in all things, serious, not a gossiper, and filled with the Holy Ghost. They must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, (no wine) or any intoxicating beverage, (nor mind-altering substances) not greedy for money; holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. They should likewise be first tested; then let them serve as mothers/deaconesses, being found blameless. The qualifications of the mothers/deaconesses will be the same as for deacons. (Ephesians 5:21-24 and Titus 2:1-6)

SECTION 2 – Duties of Mothers and Deaconesses

The duties of Mothers/Deaconesses are as follows:

1. To admonish the younger women, to love and be faithful to their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the work of God may not be blasphemed;
2. To help care for the Lord's Table and to look after the sick and shut-in.
3. To have oversight and settle delicate matters between the sisters of the Church.
4. To live holy and righteous lives.
5. To visit the sick.

6. To assist the deacons and pastor in promoting the order and attendance by the means of grace and mercy.

SECTION 3 – Dress Code for Mothers and Deaconesses

In like manner, the mothers/deaconesses should adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array, but (which becometh a woman professing Godliness) with good works. (Acts 2:47, Acts 2:38, St. Matthew 16:16-17, Titus 2:3-5, 1 Timothy 2:9-10)

ARTICLE XXVII RULING ELDERS

SECTION 1 – Qualifications of Ruling Elders

Every constituted church shall elect/appoint ruling elders as needed. The ruling elder must be a spiritual person in accordance with Galatians 6:1 which states "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted;" one whose lifestyle is exemplary as stated in Acts 6:3, a person of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit, and a person of wisdom.

This position requires much prayer and a person of vision. Philippians 4:8 reads: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

SECTION 2 – Duties and Responsibilities of the Ruling Elders

1. Handle minor annoyances and irritations that may come up in the local church body or local congregation with love and meekness;
2. Never work alone according to Matthew 18:15-17, and always have a witness;
3. Speak what you know, according to St. John 3:11, and be spiritually mature.

ARTICLE XXVIII CLERK/SECRETARY

SECTION 1 – Qualifications for Clerk and Secretary

Every church shall appoint a clerk/secretary. They should be Spirit-filled, and have a teachable spirit; must be a member and in good standing spiritually and financially with the same church.

They must have the ability to read, write, spell, proofread, file and retrieve correspondence accurately; have knowledge of bookkeeping, typing, and a working knowledge of computers. The clerk/secretary must be able to keep all church business confidential.

SECTION 2 – Duties of Clerk/Secretary

The clerk/secretary is appointed to perform the duties as follows:

Keep good accurate records of all business of the church.
Make available these records to the pastor, chairmen of the trustee and deacon boards and personnel deemed appropriate by the pastor and the appropriate board chairman.

SECTION 3 — Administrative Assistants

Some churches have an administrative assistant who serves as an aide to the pastor. He/she should be able to answer administrative-related questions, serve in the absence of the pastor, and to brief him/her upon their return. The administrative assistant should not make any legally binding agreement on behalf of the church without the approval of the pastor.

ARTICLE XXIX FINANCIAL SECRETARY

SECTION 1 – Qualifications for Financial Secretary

Every church shall appoint a financial secretary. The financial secretary should be Spirit-filled and have a teachable spirit. They must be a member in good standing spiritually and financially with the same church; must have the ability to read, write, spell, and file correspondence; must have a working knowledge of bookkeeping, and typing with some computer knowledge. The financial secretary must be able to keep all church business confidential.

SECTION 2 – Duties of the Financial Secretary

The financial secretary is appointed to perform the duties as follows:

Keep true and accurate financial records of church monies, write all checks and balance check book, receive and record all finances from the treasurer, subject to inspection by the pastor, chairman of the trustee and deacon boards at any time, and make available a financial report at each business meeting.

**ARTICLE XXX
TREASURER**

SECTION 1 – Qualification for Treasurer

Every church shall appoint a treasurer. The treasurer should be Spirit-filled and have a teachable spirit. They must be a member in good standing spiritually and financially with the same church; having the ability to read, write, spell, file and retrieve correspondence, and should have a working knowledge of computers.

SECTION 2 – Duties of the Treasurer

The treasurer is appointed to perform the duties as follows:

1. Shall be bonded (as appropriate) and entrusted with all church funds. They shall keep true account of all monies and other valuables received, from whom received, make weekly deposits of all monies received, provide financial secretary with record of all monies received, and is to make a written report to the church, and

2. Be subject to the direction of the trustees and pastor. No monies shall be paid out without the knowledge of the trustees, financial secretary, the treasurer, the church and pastor.

**ARTICLE XXXI
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

SECTION 1 – Qualifications for the Trustees

Every church shall appoint a board of trustees, which shall consist of as many as needed. Each member shall not be less than twenty years of age and in good standing in their local church, of the

Cape Fear and South Western, Middle Eastern, Northeast and the Old Original Free Will Baptist Conferences.

The trustees should be Spirit-filled and have teachable spirits; must be full members of the church; must be in good standing with the church; must have knowledge of business, must have the ability to understand legal documents, and must be able to keep all church business confidential.

The board of trustees shall be responsible to the pastor and church. The board of trustees shall be required to make a report at each quarterly conference.

SECTION 2 – Duties of the Trustees

The Board of Trustees is appointed to perform the duties as follows:

1. It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees to take charge and protect all church assets in its trust for the membership. They are, from time to time, to make such improvements as may be necessary for the interest of the church of which they are trustees, and to see that order and decorum are at all times observed in the church.
2. The Board of Trustees shall, from time to time, be subject to the direction of the treasurer, and shall be subject to the inspection of the pastor in charge.
3. The Board of Trustees shall act as the official representative as directed by the church and affix signatures to all documents involving church property.

4. The Board of Trustees shall act only as directed by the church in regular business sessions. They can never act independently of the church. If a trustee acts without the authority of the church, he/she is personally responsible for the actions.
5. The Board of Trustees is to maintain an update of all inventories of church property, property deeds, mortgage loans, and the insurance on the property. All such information should be kept in a safe deposit box, a fireproof safe with copies filed in the church office. Some churches have an insurance committee that keeps the insurance program up-to-date. In this case, the Board of Trustees shall be kept informed of the insurance coverage.
6. The Board of Trustees shall counsel with the church officers, committees and other organizations of the church concerning church matters. Often the Board of Trustees can provide information regarding legal matters and transactions.
7. The church should keep in mind that:
 - a. The board of trustees is responsible to the church as a body.
 - b. The board of trustees has only the authority approved by the church.
 - c. The board of trustees is permitted to make disbursements up to an amount agreed upon by the local church. The church board approval is required up to another amount agreed upon, and church membership approval for all disbursements beyond the authorization of the church board.

- d. Every action of the board of trustees shall be recorded in the minutes.
- e. Instruments (documents) signed by the trustees should reflect that the trustees signed as trustees for the church and not as individuals.
- f. The board of trustees is the official representatives for the church in case of a suit for or against the church.

**ARTICLE XXXII
STEWARDS**

- 1. The pastor's steward shall be elected in the same manner as other officers to serve for one year, then subject to re-election.
- 2. The pastor's steward shall see that the temporal comfort of the pastor is arranged, and he shall constitute a regular member of the board of the church in advising and regulating the beneficiary. He shall be subject to the quarterly conference.
- 3. Any delinquency on the part of the pastor's steward will be grounds for removal from office.

**ARTICLE XXXIII
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

SECTION 1 – Qualifications for the Finance Committee

Every church shall appoint a finance committee. The finance committee should consist of Spirit-filled members that have teachable spirits, and must be in good standing spiritually and financially of the same church. The committee shall consist of: trustees, financial secretary, and treasurer.

SECTION 2 – Duties of the Finance Committee

The finance committee is appointed to perform the duties as follows:

1. Work with the trustees, financial secretary and treasurer to help count and record the church monies;
2. Update and maintain the financial files for the church; and
3. Prepare a written quarterly financial report of all the church monies received and disbursed.

ARTICLE XXXIV INTERNAL FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

SECTION 1 – Qualification for the Internal Financial Review Committee

Each church should have an Internal Financial Review Committee, either appointed by the pastor or elected by the church of which the pastor will serve as ex-officio over. This is an ad hoc committee assembled for the purpose, task, and time specified by the pastor and board. The committee should consist of Spirit-filled members with teachable spirits, and must be in good standing spiritually and financially in the local church. The committee shall include, but not be limited to: trustee(s), financial secretary and treasurer.

SECTION 2 – Duties of the Internal Financial Review Committee

The Internal Financial Review Committee is appointed to perform the duties as follows:

1. The committee will work with the trustees, financial secretary and treasurer to keep all church records in order and up-to-date, filed, and in good order. They are to assemble the financial records of the church for the purpose of determining the financial condition of the church; to provide accurate financial information to the finance committee and the pastor, and to provide financial

records in case of audit by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) selected by the church board.

2. This committee will work closely with the church accountant or bookkeeper to ensure that all financial information is accurate and is available for the church and the auditor, i.e., records of all income, expenditures, invoices, checking and savings accounts, Certificates of Deposit (CD) selected by the church and the committee and to be available to the audit to answer questions pertaining to the financial records of the church.

By federal law, an audit must be conducted by a CPA and the audit conducted in accordance with General Acceptance Auditing (GAA) standards. Those standards require that the auditor plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatements. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.

All cost associated with an audit is the sole responsibility of the church requesting the audit. The Auditor/CPA will certify that all records examined reflects the financial condition of the church for the period in which such audit has been requested, and may be used by the Internal Revenue Service, Banks and other financial institutions requesting the financial condition of the church.

ARTICLE XXXV CHOIR MEMBERS

SECTION 1 – Qualifications for Choir Members

Every church shall accept membership for its choirs. Choir members however, should be Spirit-filled, and have a teachable spirit; must be a member of the church; must be in good standing

with the church; must have the ability to sing, and must have knowledge of music or be willing to learn.

SECTION 2 – Duties of the Choir Members

The duties of the choir members shall be as follows:

Attend rehearsals on a regular basis;

Learn songs appropriate for all occasions;

Sing hymns in the manner in which they are written when asked;

Wear robes or uniforms when singing;

Watch and follow the directions of the Choir Director.

All music must be spiritual and Christ-centered.

ARTICLE XXXVI NURSE'S ASSISTANTS

SECTION 1 – Qualifications for Nurse's Assistants

Each church may appoint nurse's assistants as needed. They should be in the church at least 120 days, to have been under the word of God for a while without interruption. They should be alert, and able to glance over the congregation to see if there is anyone in need of assistance.

The nurse's assistant must have received training in, but not limited to CPR, and have kept their training up to date. They should be proven servants, with concern, kind, and faithful spirits.

SECTION 2 – Duties of the Nurse's Assistants

The nurse's assistants are always to work under the supervision and guidance of a duly qualified nurse, follow instructions and never take matters into his/her own hands.

ARTICLE XXXVII SEXTON

SECTION 1 – Qualifications for Sexton

Every church shall elect a sexton annually or as needed.

SECTION 2 – Duties of the Sexton

It shall be the duty of the sexton to open the church on time, and to keep it in decent order for divine services.

He/she should love the house of God as well as God, since their pay will never measure up to their duties.

He/she is on time for service since they have the responsibility of opening the church on time.

He/she is to be trustworthy since often times they will be there alone.

He/she should be familiar with the members and can readily spot any stranger constantly on church property while he/she is there that does not belong.

He/she is reliable and available to tidy up the church before and after funerals, weddings etc.

ARTICLE XXXVIII
THE FREE WILL BAPTIST CODE OF ETHICS FOR MEMBERS

1. Never speak ill of your pastor.
2. If what you are about to say is not for the good of all, don't say it.
3. It is the duty of members to be just, courteous, and Christian in all relationships with the pastor and other members.
4. Members should not speak disparagingly of each other, but rather watch over one another with brotherly love.
5. It is the duty of members to assume all duties and responsibilities of the church membership according to our "Book of Discipline."
6. It is the duty of every church member to support and attend every auxiliary of the church.
7. It is the duty of members to keep church business confidential and let it remain in the church and not in areas other than their own church.
8. If you are dissatisfied with something talk it over with your pastor.
9. Do not try to be pastor, there are many ways to help the pastor.
10. Be honest, truthful, courteous, thoughtful, and friendly.
11. Be a Christian always, everywhere, in everything. Abound in good works.
12. If a member does not attend any services, Bible Studies, Sunday schools or give their tithes and offerings within a 90-day period, their name may be dropped from the church roll, or placed in a non-active member status except in the case of sickness or other extenuating circumstances.

ARTICLE XXXIX SUNDAY SCHOOL

What shall the church do for the moral, intellectual and Christian training for our children and adults?

Answer: Every pastor should bring the subject of Sunday School before the Quarterly Conference each year and the Quarterly Conference should see that the Sunday School is set to work (if there is not one already organized), with its proper officers, teachers, etc., and promote in all proper ways the attendance of children and adults on our Sunday School worship and our regular public worship.

ARTICLE XL SINGING

1. In every church consideration should be given to sacred music and to develop an appreciation for sacred music. The Quarterly Conferences should, if desired, appoint annually a committee of three or more to cooperate with the pastor in regulating matters pertaining to this part of divine worship.
2. We shall sing hymns proper for the congregation.
3. Refrain from singing all of the stanzas in a song. Seldom sing four stanzas.
4. Make sure that the proper tune goes with the words.
5. Keep the tempo of the music lively, be cautious of the audience singing too slowly, this tends to formality.
6. Encourage everyone in the congregation to participate in the singing.

THE ORDER OF THE CONSECRATION OF A BISHOP

Bishop: Bishops, in the Church of God, The Original Free Will Baptist Church, the clergy, and people trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, support the election and ratify the College of Bishops, the appointment of _____ to the Bishops and chief Pastors. We therefore ask you to lay hands upon him, _____ and the power of the Holy Spirit to consecrate him as a Bishop in the one, Holy, Universal, and Free Will Baptist Church.

The testimonial is to be read by the Conference Secretary

All are seated for the reading of the following Scriptures:
A Lesson from the Hebrew Scriptures Isaiah 61:1-3
Lector: "The word of the Lord."

The People Respond: "Thanks be to God."

A Reading from the Epistles 1 Peter 5:1-4

Lector: "The Word of the Lord."

The People Respond: "Thanks be to God."

The People stand for the reading of the following Scriptures

A Reading from the Gospels St. Matthew 10:5-15
Gospelor: "The Word of the Lord."

The People Respond: "Thanks be to God."

A Reading from the Gospels St. John 1:14-16
Gospelor: "The Holy Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to John."

The People Respond: "Praise to the Lord Jesus Christ."

The People may be seated during the following hymn sung by the choir.

Ministry of Music

The Sacred Greeting

The Response from the People

The Offertory Appeal

Ministry of Music

The Presentation of the Consecration Messenger

The Sermonic Selection

The Consecration Proclamation

Invitation to the Unsaved

The Hymn of Consecration

The Holy Rite of Consecration

(Doors will remain closed)

The Declaration

In the name of Jesus Christ, who is God Almighty, I, _____, appointed Bishop of this Conference, solemnly declare that I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the Word of God and to contain all things necessary to salvation. I do solemnly promise to conform to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Church and I do pledge myself to render due obedience to the canons of this Church so help me God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Bishop: Brothers and Sisters in Christ, you have heard the testimony given that Bishop-Elect _____ has been duly and lawfully designated as Bishop of The _____ Free Will Baptist Annual Conference. You have been assured of his suitability for this sacred responsibility. Nevertheless, if any of you

know any reason why we should not proceed, let this now be made known.

All Members of the Conference stand

Bishop: Conference, Is it your will that we consecrate _____ a Bishop?

People: This is our will.

Bishop: Officers and members of this Conference will you uphold _____ as a Bishop?

People: We will.

The Examination

My brother, _____, a Bishop is called to lead in serving and caring for the people of God and to work with them in the overseeing of the Church; promoting its mission, proclaiming Christ's death and resurrection and working for justice and truth in the world.

As Bishop, you will share with your fellow Bishops a special responsibility to maintain and further the unity of the Church, to uphold its discipline and to guard its faith.

It will be your duty to watch over and pray for all those committed to your care, and to teach them, speaking in the name of Jesus and interpreting His gospel; to govern the Church after the example of the Apostles, to know your people and to be known by them; to celebrate and to provide for the administration of the Ordinances of the New Covenant, to assist in the ordination of Elders and Deacons and to join in enabling them to fulfill their ministry; and to be in all things a faithful Pastor and Bishop and a wholesome example for the entire body of Christ.

Bishop: Do you believe that God has called you to the office of a Bishop in His Church?

Bishop-Elect: I do believe that God has called me.

Bishop: Will you accept this call and fulfill this trust in obedience to Christ?

Bishop-Elect: I will obey Christ, and will serve in His name.

Bishop: Do you accept the Holy Scriptures as uniquely revealing the work of God and containing all things necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ?

Bishop-Elect: I do accept them.

Bishop: Will you teach and proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom of God inaugurated by Jesus and declare its meaning to the world?

Bishop-Elect: By the help of God, I will.

Bishop: Will you devote yourself to prayer, to reading the Holy Scriptures, and to such studies as may deepen your faith and increase your love, reverence and service to God?

Bishop-Elect: I will for the love of God.

Bishop: Will you accept the discipline of the Church and faithfully exercise authority within it?

Bishop-Elect: I will by the help of God.

Bishop: Will you strive to fashion your own life and that of your family and household according to the way of Christ, so that you may be a wholesome example to all the people?

Bishop-Elect: By the help of God, I will.

Bishop: Will you be merciful to all, show compassion to the poor and strangers, and defend those who have no helper?

Bishop-Elect: I will for the sake of Jesus Christ.

The Act of Consecration

(The Bishop-Elect will lay prostrate before the Consecrator. All other Bishops stand to the right and to the left of the Consecrator. The Consecrator assisted by the adjutant will anoint his head, his right ear, the thumb of his right hand and the sole of his right foot. The Bishops assisting will lay their hands upon his head as they pray.)

The Prayer of Consecration

The Chief Consecrator then says:

Almighty Father, fill this servant with the grace and power which you gave to your apostles; that he may lead those committed to his charge in the proclaiming of the gospel of salvation. Through him increase your Church, renew this ministry, and unite its members in a holy fellowship of truth and love. Enable him as a true shepherd to feed and govern your flock; make him wise, a teacher, a steadfast guardian of the faith and ordinances. Guide and direct him in presiding at the worship of your people. Give him humility, that he may use this authority to heal, not hurt; to

build up, not to destroy; and to stand before you blameless, and finally with all your servants enter your eternal joy.

Accept our prayers, most merciful Father, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom belongs all glory, honor, worship and praise, now and forever.

_____, receive authority for the office and work of a Bishop in the church of God, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Remember to stir up the gift of God which is within you, for God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

The Giving of the Bible

Bishop _____, receive the Holy Scriptures. Guard the faith of the church, and feed by word and ordinance the flock of Christ committed to your care.

The Charge of the Bishop

Bishop: Bishop _____, as the newly consecrated Bishop of the _____ Free Will Baptist Annual Conference, the flock of God and the saints of our Lord Jesus Christ, do you promise to preach the Word of God rightly dividing it, live it, as an example before the saints?

Bishop Elect: "I will, so help me God."

Bishop: Do you, Bishop _____, promise to teach these saints who are under your instruction, the doctrine of the _____ Free Will

Baptist Annual Conference, its constitution and governing laws of the church?

Bishop: "I do, so help me God."

Bishop: Are you, Bishop _____ willing to serve faithfully, holding the trust of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost and the charter of the incorporated, to the best of your knowledge until such that kingdom promotion, divine providence or unforeseen events remove you?

Bishop: "I will, by the help of God."

Chief Consecrator: Then I, Bishop _____, Chief Consecrator and Presiding Bishop of the _____ Free Will Baptist Annual Conference, commend you to God's keeping, in the face of these witnesses, that you serve this church, love the people, preach the Gospel, feed the flock, and lead a godly life so that you may win many and in the end, gain eternal life through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Chief Consecrator then says:

The Bishops, Officers and Members of the _____ Free Will Baptist Annual Conference, have the utmost confidence in your integrity and your devotion to Christ and His Church. Hence, we reverently trust your spiritual ability to assist in directing the affairs of the Church and the promotion of its divine mission.

Be fully aware, as Bishop, you now accept the challenge and responsibility to assist in the leadership of this organization in the

fulfillment of the Great Commission of Jesus Christ, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.

Therefore, as the Chief Consecrator, I charge you:

To uphold and obey the Word of God as an example to the flock which God has made you overseer.

To admonish and exhort the Saints to spiritual growth and personal development for the effective witness of Christ and the building of His kingdom.

To provide pastoral care and direction to pastors, fellow servants and Christian workers, ministering grace and support to those in need.

Signature of Documents

The Certification of Appointment

The Certification of Proclamation

The Affirmation of the College Of Bishops

The Credential of Consecration of Bishops

The Presentation of the Bishop's Robe

Presentation of the Bishop

The Chief Consecrator presents to the people the new Bishop saying:

"I present to the congregation - Bishop _____."

The Presiding Bishop and other Bishops, greet Bishop _____, Sr. along with other members of the clergy and the relatives of the Bishop.

Presentation of Gifts

Remarks and Words of Thanks

The Closing Prayer and Benediction

Presider: "May the Blessing of God be upon you."
"May the Blessing of God be upon you."

The People Respond: "And Also You."

Recessional

ORDINATION OF MINISTERS

Table of Lessons

The King of Glory – Psalm 24.

Love of Zion – Psalm 26, Psalm 122.

How Beautiful – Isaiah 52:7-10.

Warning to Watchmen – Ezekiel 33:1-9.

Commission – Matthew 28: 16-20.

Good Shepherd – John 10:1-16.

Duties of Ministers – I Timothy 4:6-16, II Timothy 3:1-7,
Titus 2:1.

Organ Interlude

Anthem

Hymn

Notices

Sermon

Anthem

Minister: Brethren, these are they whom we purpose, God willing,
this day to ordain elders: for after due examination, we find not

the contrary, but that they are lawfully called to this function and ministry: and that they are persons meet for the same. But, if there be any of you who knoweth of any impediment or crime in any of them, for the which they ought not be received into this Holy Ministry, let him come forth in the name of God and show what the crime or impediment is.

The Collect

Minister: Almighty God, giver of all good things, Who by the Holy Spirit has appointed Divers orders in Ministers in Thy Church, mercifully behold these Thy servants now called to the office of elders, and replenish them with the innocency of life, that both by word and good example they may faithfully serve Thee in this office to the Glory of Thy name and the edification of Thy Church, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, world without end.

The Epistle

Minister: Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore He saith, when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same, also that ascended up far above all Heavens that He might fill all things.)

Minister: And He gave some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists, and some, Pastors, and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Minister: Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But, he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them, but they understood not what things they were which He spake unto them.

Minister: Then said Jesus unto them again, verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. By Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture.

Minister: The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill and to destroy; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the Good Shepherd; the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.

Minister: But he that is a hireling and not the Shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling and careth not for the sheep. I am the Good Shepherd and know My sheep, and I am known of mine. As the Father knoweth Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they

shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd.

Minister: You have heard brethren, as well in your private examinations as in the exhortation which was just made to you, and in the writing of the Apostles, of what dignity and of how great importance this office is, where unto ye are now called. And now again, we exhort you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye have in remembrance into how high a dignity and to how weighty an office ye are called; that is to say, to be messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord; to teach and to admonish, to feed and to provide for the Lord's family; to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for His children who are in the midst of the evil world, that they may be saved through Christ forever.

We have good hope that you have weighed and pondered these things with yourself long before this time; and that you have clearly determined by God's grace to give yourselves to this office, whereby it has pleased God to call you, so that as much as lieth in you, you will apply yourselves wholly to this one thing, and draw all cares and studies this way; and that you will continually pray to God the Father, by the mediation of our only Savior Jesus Christ, for the Heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost; that by daily reading and weighing of the scriptures, ye may wax riper and stronger in your Ministry; and that ye may so endeavor yourselves from time to time, to sanctify the lives of you and yours, and to fashion them after the rule and doctrine of Christ, that ye may be wholesome and goodly examples and patterns for the people to follow.

And now that this present congregation of Christ have assembled may also understand your minds and wills in these things; and that this your promise may the more move you to do your duties.

You shall answer plainly to these things which we, in the name of God and His Church shall demand to you, touching the same.

Minister: Do you think in your heart that you are truly called according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the order of elder?

Candidates: I do so believe.

Minister: Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrines required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? Are you determined out of the said scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach nothing, as required of necessity to salvation, but that which ye shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the scripture?

Candidates: I am so persuaded, and have so determined by God's grace.

Minister: Will you then give your faithful diligence always to minister the doctrine and sacraments and discipline of Christ as the Lord hath commanded?

Candidates: I will do so, by the help of the Lord.

Minister: Will you be ready with all faithful diligence always to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word; and to use both public and private monitions and exhortations, as well as the sick as to the whole within your charge as need shall require and occasion shall be given?

Candidates: I will, the Lord being my helper.

Minister: Will you be diligent in prayer and in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the world and of the flesh?

Candidates: I will endeavor to do so, the Lord being my helper.

Minister: Will you be diligent to frame and fashion yourselves and your families according to the doctrine of Christ; and to make both yourselves and them, as much as in you lieth, wholesome examples and patterns to the flock of Christ.

Candidates: I shall apply myself thereto- the Lord being my helper.

Minister: Will you maintain and set forth, as much as lieth in you, sweetness, peace and love among all Christian people, and especially among them that are, or shall be committed to your charge?

Candidates: I will do so, the Lord being my helper.

Minister: Will you reverently obey your chief ministers unto whom is committed the charge and government over you, submitting yourselves to their Godly judgments?

Candidates: I will do so, the Lord being my helper.

Minister: Almighty God, who hath given you this will to do all these things, grant also unto you strength and power to perform the same; that He may accomplish His work which He hath begun, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ORDINATION OF DEACONS/DEACONESSES

At the appointed time established by the church or union, the ordination services for members elected to the office of deacon/deaconess should commence. The ordination service is one of great gravity and should be conducted without interruption in a solemn and spiritual manner. The candidate and those participating in the ordination service should prepare their hearts for the occasion with a time of prayer, fasting and meditation before the service begins.

The ordination service should always be conducted by qualified elders, who have properly prepared for the service. The candidate should be seated before the congregation facing the elders participating in the ordination. The members of the congregation present should be advised that the ordination service is about to begin and of the weightiness of the service. At the appropriate moment, the presiding elder proceeds as follows:

The ordination of the Member(s) will now commence.

Selected Scripture readings: Exodus 18:13-23
Acts 6:1-6; I Timothy 3:8-13

Minister: With the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Chief Shepherd, the responsibility for the welfare of the Church was delegated to the under shepherds, the apostles. With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Minister: As the number of the disciples increased, murmuring was made against the Hebrews by the Grecians, because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of provisions. Understanding the importance of the effective ministry of the word of God, the apostles called the Church together and indicated that it was not good that they should leave the word of God and serve tables. The congregation was charged with the responsibility of identifying brethren among them who were of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, who could be appointed to this important task. After the brethren were selected, they were brought before the apostles, who gave them the responsibility of the daily administration by praying and the laying on of hands.

Minister: It is the duty of the Deacon/Deaconess, at the discretion of the Pastor, to serve the Lord's table, to distribute the bounty of the Church among its needy members, to visit the sick, to assist the Pastor in promoting order and attendance upon the means of grace, to see that an efficient scriptural discipline be enforced in the Church. The Deacon/Deaconess must be by the Church considered a spiritual person, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, ruling well his/her own house.

According to the wishes of (Church Name) Original Free Will Baptist Church, (Candidate's Name) has been duly appointed to the office of Deacon/Deaconess, and now it becomes our sacred duty to set him/her apart thereto by prayer and the imposition of hands.

Brother/Sister, you have been called to an honorable, weighty and responsible office in the house of God: and now it devolves upon me to inquire respecting your purpose about the same.

Do you believe in your heart that after being elected by your church family, the Lord Jesus Christ has prepared you for this weighty office? Answer: I do.

Do you heartily and truly accept the Holy Bible as the revelation of God, and will you accept it as the rule of your faith and the guide of your life? Answer: I do.

Will you endeavor to faithfully discharge the duties of a deacon/deaconess in every way to promote the interests of the Church, which has honored you by advancing you to this office? Answer: I will.

Will you faithfully strive to assist your pastor and to maintain harmonious relations with all of the officers and members of your church? Answer: I will.

Will you endeavor to promote peace and goodwill among all men, especially the membership of your Church? Answer: I will.

The candidate(s) will then rise, and kneel before the Elders to be anointed with oil in the name of the Lord. A prayer will be offered with the laying on of hands by the Elders. At the conclusion of the prayer, the candidate(s) will rise and face the congregation. The Holy Bible will be presented by one of the Elders. The candidate(s) is then greeted by all well-wishers in the congregation, beginning with the Bishops, Ministers, and Deacons/Deaconesses. After everyone has greeted him/her, the presiding minister will give the benediction.

ORDINATION OF MOTHERS

(Candidates either standing or seated before the Bishop or Pastor)

An Introductory Word:

You have been called to share in the greatest work of the church. Yours is the high honor of leading women to a richer and fuller life through Christian service. No nobler task could be given you. With every high privilege there are corresponding obligations. It is especially so in your case. You are also responsible for the preparation of the elements of the Lord's Supper.

You are entrusted with special duties. Your life, your words, your attitude, may influence many. Your supreme duty is, through your leadership, to exalt Christ and thus to inspire those who follow your leadership and who give themselves to the service of God and their comrades. You are asked therefore to pledge your acceptance of these responsibilities.

To the Mothers:

Do you accept this responsibility in earnestness and prayer? Do you affirm your purpose to lend a spirit of cooperation in every possible way; to be in your place of duty unless illness or other emergency prevents; to continually strive to grow in effectiveness through study and prayer; and to live such a life that your influence will lead others to the service of Christ?

If you accept these obligations, please signify by saying, "I do."

Answer: "I Do."

The Charge:

Mothers, you have accepted the responsibility of your position. You are charged therefore to keep in mind the challenge of the task to which you are committed. I charge you to study. Show yourselves approved; workmen that have no cause for shame. I

charge you to pray. Pray without ceasing. Sit often at the feet of the Master, learn of Him how to pray, how to live, how to lead. I charge you to keep ever before you the ultimate goal of all your efforts, the uniting of women around the world in the service of Christ. You are to inspire sacrificial service. You are to help bring the Kingdom of God in its fullness, and to speed the day when God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. You are to assist at the Lord's Supper Table.

You are to train the young women to love, honor, and respect their husbands. Their husbands are the head of the house as Christ is the head of the Church.

Let Us Pray: (The Prayer of Ordination)

The Anointing With Oil:

(All other regular Mothers should stand and take part in this service as well as ordained deacons/deaconesses. Candidates should kneel while the prayer of ordination is being made: They should stand or sit for the anointing with oil. After the completion of the ceremony, the regular Mothers should escort these candidates to their seats.)

COMMUNION SERVICE

SECTION 1 – Preparation

All communion services should be held at night or late in the evening. (I Corinthians. 11:20-23, John 13:2-4, Luke 22:20) and supper being ended...

In the Original Free Will Baptist Church, communion must take place at least four times a year (every 90 days). However, you may have it more frequently if you so desire.

Offerings should not be received in the Communion Service. You may receive an offering for the Minister before the date of your

Communion Service, preferably during your Quarterly Conference, if it is held during the same week preceding the Service.

No musical instruments (organ, piano, tambourine, etc.) should be played during Holy Communion Service.

Brothers should wear white slacks, socks, tie and a dark coat. Sisters are to wear white.

SECTION 2 – Responsibilities of the Deacon, Mother and Deaconess

Only ordained deacons/ministers/mothers can prepare and serve Holy Communion.

All preparations (Mothers and Deacons) are to be done before the service begins.

Mothers

Prepare the bread.

Dress the Communion Table (including chairs) and Pulpit area in white.

Provide head coverings (white) for all sisters.

Provide foot towels for all.

Deacons

Buy and prepare (grape) juice.

Fill communion cups.

Break the bread into small pieces (if necessary).

Place bread in serving tray.

Fill all pans with water for feet washing.

After bread and juice are prepared and ready, set up the communion table and set them in their proper place on the table.

Cover the Sacraments neatly with a white covering.

Notes: When setting up the table, on the end opposite the Minister in charge, a glass of juice and a saucer with a piece of

bread shall be placed to represent Jesus' seat. (Jesus' seat is to be prepared draped in white and no plates or trays are to ever cross the table where Jesus' seat is.)

SECTION 3 – Order of Communion Service

Call to Order (moment of silent prayer)

Outline of Hymn

Scripture

Prayer

Outline of Hymn

Introduction of Preacher

Message

Washing of hands (all Ministers, Deacons)

Communion

Feet Washing

Benediction

SECTION 4 – Communion Hymns

- There is Power in the Blood
- There is a Fountain
- Glory to His Name
- Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone
- Dark was the Night
- Jesus Paid it All
- You See How They Done My Lord
- When We All Get to Heaven

SECTION 5 – Communion Service

After the message, the Deacons are to hold a pail of water (prepared beforehand) along with a towel, so that all Ministers and Deacons may wash their hands before serving at the Lord's Table. (A hymn will be sung during the washing of hands.)

Note: At this time, all Ministers and Deacons are assembled on the side of the table from which the sacraments will be served. (The table is covered before service.) Two deacons will fold back the covering from the table and remove the tops from the sacraments, to make them accessible to the Minister.

After the washing of the hands: The Minister or Deacon in charge will begin by inviting every born-again Christian to participate in this most sacred event.

Minister: (Reference I Corinthians. 11:23-30) The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread (take bread in hand): and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: This do in remembrance of me.

After the same manner, also he took the cup (take cup in hand), when he had supped, saying: This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

Note: The Deacons will now cover the table for prayer and the Minister will now appoint someone to pray over the Lord's Table.

Step 1:

Immediately following the prayer, the Deacons will again uncover the table. Now begin to assemble at the table in groups of 12 (the minister in charge sitting at the head). Remain standing until the minister motions them to be seated.

Seating at the table will be in the following order:

Ministers

Deacons

Mothers and Deaconesses

All Church Officers

All Others

Note: Two ordained Deacons will stand beside the Minister (one on each side) to assist him/her to serve.

Two ordained Ministers will stand on the opposite end of the table to assist participants to the table.

Hymns are to be sung until everyone is served.

Step 2:

Once they are seated, the minister will take the bread and give to the deacons standing at his side; saying: "the body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Note: The deacons will now pass the tray down until all twelve receive bread and (the deacons) will give the tray(s) back to the minister.

Minister: Let us all eat together.

Step 3:

In like manner (of step 2) the same is done with the juice

Minister: The blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Minister: Let us all drink together.

Step 4:

After the seated 12 are served:

Minister: Let these retire and let others come.

Repeat (Steps 1-4) Until Everyone Is Served

After everyone has been served and the Minister is sitting alone, prepare for feet washing.

(Reference Scripture: St. John 13:2-17, 34, 35)

Minister: And supper being ended, Jesus riseth from supper, and laid aside his outer garments; (all brothers pull coat off at this point) and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter; and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, what I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter said unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith unto him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

Note: The minister will give direction for the men to wash the men's feet and the women to wash the women's. All things are to be done decently and in order.

Continue singing congregational songs during the feet washing.

Be reverent with the feet washing as with the Lord's Table. After everyone's feet have been washed the men will again rejoin the women.

The Minister is now seated at the table again along with 12 other Ministers, Deacons, or Officers and will continue the service by saying:

Minister: After Jesus had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet: ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, Verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Jesus said to his disciples a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. And they sang a Hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

Note: The Minister will now pray a closing prayer and sing a hymn. Greet your brothers and sisters without conversation and be dismissed.

BAPTISM

The minister should read a lesson of his own selection from the scriptures; after he shall address the congregation saying:

Dearly beloved, the last command of our risen Lord was to go in all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. His representative, the Holy Spirit, through the books of Acts

enforced this command through the apostles in relation to all who believe in Christ; therefore, it is our abounding duty, as possessor of His grace to conform to this commission both in preaching the word and the administration of the ordinances of baptism, as the opportunity affords. (Here the candidates for baptism are invited to stand before the congregation, the minister addressing them as follows:)

Dearly beloved, this act of your coming before us seeking baptism in the name of the Lord, is a public testimony of your professed faith in Christ and the grace of God for the pardoning and cleansing of your soul from sin.

But you may further declare your determination to the commandments of the Lord in faith of Christ. You shall in the presence of God and this congregation, give response to the following questions:

Have you faith in Christ? Answer: I have.

Have you the witness of the spirit to your acceptance to God.

Answer: I have.

Will you endeavor to walk in the fear of God and in the way of His commandments to the end of your life? Answer: I will endeavor to do so, by His grace.

Then the minister shall proceed with a selected hymn and go forward with the candidate into the water and perform the ritual of baptism by immersion.

THE FREE WILL BAPTIST MARRIAGE SERVICE

At the day and time appointed for the solemnization of matrimony, the persons to be married shall come into the body of the church, or be ready in some proper house, with their friends and neighbors. There standing together, the man on the right and the woman on the left, the minister shall say:

Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the face of this company, to join together this man and this woman in holy matrimony; which is commended of St. Paul to be honorable among all men; and therefore is not by any to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, and in the fear of God. Into this holy estate these two come to be joined. If any man can show just cause why they not be lawfully joined together, let him speak, or else hereafter forever hold his peace.

To the couple:

I require and charge you both, as you will answer in the dreadful day of judgment, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of you knows any impediment why ye may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony, you do confess it now. For be ye well assured, that if any persons be joined together otherwise than as God's word doth allow, their marriage is not lawful.

If no impediment is alleged, the minister shall say to the man:
_____ wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance, in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health, and forsaking others, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?

The man shall answer, I will.

Then the minister shall say to the woman:
_____ wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinances, in the holy estate of matrimony?

Wilt thou submit to him and serve him, love, honor, and keep him in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others keep thee only unto him, so long as you both shall live?

The woman shall answer, I will.

Then shall the minister say:

Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?

The father shall say, We do.

Then shall they give their troth to each other in this manner:

The minister, receiving the woman at her father's or friend's hand, shall cause the man with his right hand to take the woman by her right hand and say after him as follows:

I, M., take thee, N., to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death do us part according to God's holy ordinance and thereto I plight thee my troth.

Then they shall loose their hands, and the woman with her right hand taking the man by his right hand shall likewise say after the minister:

I, N., take thee, M., to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward for better for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, to cherish and to submit, till death do us part according to God's holy ordinance, and thereto I give thee my troth.

Then shall they again loose their hands, and the man shall give the woman a ring. And the minister taking the ring shall deliver it unto the man, to put it upon the third finger of the woman's left hand. And the man holding the ring there, and taught by the minister, shall say:

With this ring I thee wed, and with all my worldly goods I endow thee. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Then the man leaving the ring upon the woman's left hand, the minister shall say: Let us pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven, give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

O Eternal God, Creator and Preserver of all mankind, Giver of all spiritual grace, the Author of everlasting life, send thy blessings upon these thy servants, this man and this woman, whom we bless in thy name; that as Isaac and Rebecca lived faithfully together, may these persons surely perform and keep the vow and covenant between them made, whereof these rings given and received are tokens and pledges, and may ever remain in perfect love and peace together, and live according to thy laws, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Then shall the minister join their right hands together and say:

What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.

Then shall the minister say unto the company:

For as much as M. and N. have consented together in holy wedlock and have witnessed the same before God and this company, and hereto have given and pledged their troth, each to the other and having declared the same by the giving and receiving of rings, and by joining hands; I pronounce that they are man and wife, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

And the minister shall add these blessings, the candidates kneeling and the minister putting his hands upon their heads:

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you; The Lord look mercifully with His favor upon you, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace, that you may live together in this life, that in the world to come, you may have life everlasting. Amen.

THE DEDICATION OF INFANTS IN CHURCHES

At any regular church service one may use a service of dedication of babies. During a singing of a hymn, ask the parents to come forward with the little ones and occupy the front seats. After a few words to the parents and the congregation as to the meaning and purpose of the service, ask this question of the parents.

"Do you solemnly promise before God and these witnesses that you will, to the best of your ability, bring up this little one in the way of the Lord, making use of all the help God has given you in family, religion, church, and Sunday School?"

Parents should answer: I do.

To you, the father, I give this red flower, as a symbol of rich blood that you build and defend the home into which this little one has come. May it be a home built firmly upon the ideals of Jesus, the man of Galilee, and the Son of God. Let nothing enter into your home that will tend to destroy the faith, confidence, and mutual love—without which no home can long endure. Let nothing come into your home that will injure the soul of this little one, or crowd out the Master who said: "Whosoever shall receive such a child in my name receiveth me."

To you, the mother, I give this white flower, a symbol of purity of heart and purpose with which you have endowed the home into which this little one has come. If your child grows to know God as a personal experience, it will be largely because of your having awakened the child's latent faith into its first consciousness of God, and because you have nurtured him/her in the things of God. It is from you, the greatest object of a child's affection, comes his first idea of God. As you bow with the little one at your knee, the sense of awe and reverence is awakened in the little soul.

To you, (use the child's name) I give this white flower as a token of your innocence and purity of soul in the sight of God. My earnest prayer, as I look into your unsullied face, that when you lose your innocence and your eyes of understanding are opened you will see Jesus, whom to see is life and life eternal.

Prayer: "Our Father in heaven, we thank thee for this service of dedication and pray thy blessings upon these parents and this child. May this father and mother, inspired and led by the loving Spirit, be enabled to so train and teach this little one so that he shall grow, as did the Christ child, in wisdom and stature in favor of God and man. Amen."

BURIAL OF THE DEAD

The minister, at the house or at the church, may read the following scripture:

Psalm 39: I said, I shall take heed to my ways that I sin not with my tongue. I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence: I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred. My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned; then spake I with my tongue: Lord make me to know my end, and the measure of my days, what it is that I may know how frail I am. Behold thou hast made my days as an handbreadth, and my age as nothing before thee; verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches and knoweth not who reapeth them. And now Lord what wait I for? My hope is in thee. Deliver me from all of my transgressions, make me not the reproach of the foolish. I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it. Remove thy stroke away from me, for I am consumed by the blow from thy hand. When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquities thou makest his beauty to

consume away like a moth; surely every man is vanity. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears; for I am a stranger with thee and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. O spare me that I may recover strength before I go hence and be no more.

I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. John 11:25, 26.

For I know my redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself; and mine eyes shall behold and not another. Job 19:25, 27.

We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. Job 1:21.

Here lies the patience of the saints; here they are that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus Christ. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. Revelation 14:12-13.

Man that is born of woman hath but a short time to live and is full of misery. He cometh up and is cut down like a flower; he fleeth as it were a shadow, and never continueth in one stay. In the midst of life there is death; of whom may we seek for succor, but of thee, O Lord, who for our sins art justly displeased? Yet, O Lord God, Most Holy, O Lord, Most Mighty, O Holy and Merciful Savior, deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death. Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts, but spare us, Lord Most Holy, O God Most Mighty, O Holy and Merciful Savior, Thou most Worthy Judge Eternal, suffer us not at our last hour for any pains of death to fall from thee.

For the Committal Service, the minister shall say:

For as much it hath pleased Almighty God, in wise providence, to take out of this world, the soul of the departed, we therefore, commit the body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust; looking for the general resurrection in the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ, at whose second coming in glorious majesty, to judge the world, the earth and the sea shall give up their dead, and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in Him shall be changed and made like unto His glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself. I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write, henceforth they shall rest from their labors, Lord have mercy on us, Christ have mercy upon us, Lord have mercy on us.

Let us pray:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

LAYING OF A CORNERSTONE

A platform should be erected and all rubbish shall be removed from the area before the congregation appears.

Hymn – "How Firm a Foundation"

Scripture – Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:23

Hymn – "The Church's One Foundation"

Words of Welcome

Statement on Progress on Building and in Raising Funds

Special Music- "Onward Christian Soldiers"

Responsive Reading

Pastor: Therefore saith the Lord, Behold I have in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone of the foundation.

People: Wherefore, it is contained in the scriptures: Behold, I lay in Zion, a chief cornerstone, elect, precious cornerstone, he that believeth shall not be confounded.

Pastor: The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

People: This is the Lord's doing: It is marvelous.

Pastor: And ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.

People: In whom all the building fitly framed together unto a holy temple in the Lord.

Pastor: In whom we also are builded together for the Glory of God through the Spirit.

DEDICATION OF A CHURCH

In the dedication of a Church, the following order of service will be found useful.

The Scripture Lessons should be brief, and may be chosen from the following table, arranged with titles for ready reference:

TABLE OF LESSONS

Solomon's Prayer: 2 Chronicles 6:12-21.

Glory of Zion: Psalm 48.

Praise of the Sanctuary: Psalm 84, Psalm 122.

Foundation of the Church: Matthew. 16:13-20; Ephesians. 2:10-22

Unity of the Church: Psalm 133; John 10:7-8; 18:11-26.

Division Reproved, and Unity in Christ: 1 Corinthians 3

Duty of Attending Worship: Hebrews 10: 19-26.

Organ Voluntary

Anthem by the Choir.

Invocation.

Hymn.

Scripture Reading.

Hymn.

Dedication Offerings.

Notices.

Anthem.

Sermon.

Dedicatory Exercise.

At the close of the sermon the minister assigned to this part will say:

Dearly Beloved, in the bountiful mercies of Almighty God, the hour having come when this house is to be formally dedicated to His service, may you all signify your assent thereto by rising to your feet and reverently accompanying us.

(The people will rise.)

Heartily desiring that these walls may continually serve to set forth His most worthy praise, we this day dedicate the same to

Almighty God, our Father and Creator, in whom we live and move and have our being, trusting that He may make here His abiding place, and manifest His adorable majesty and glory.

Response by the people: Amen.

And to Jesus Christ our Lord, the only begotten of the Father, Redeemer of the world, who hath bought us with His most precious blood; to the end that here His Gospel may have free course and be glorified to the perpetual honor of His holy name.

Response: Amen.

And to the effectual outpouring of the Holy Ghost, that blessed Comforter, under whose benign influence the souls of disciples may have continual solace, and the world be convinced of sin and of righteousness and judgment.

Response: Amen.

And to a zealous effort according to godliness, and brotherly kindness, to proclaim the substantial unity of all faithful Christians in their Lord; to the oneness of their labor, hopes, and promises, and to the speedy proclamation of that unity in the face of all mankind.

Response: Amen.

And to a faithful preaching of all truth which shall tend to uphold the authority of Holy Scripture, and lead men to worship God, and live in peace, purity and righteousness.

Response: Amen.

And to an increasing fervency of spiritual life, which shall cause all Christians to seek, through the willing consecration of every faculty, the growth of Zion, and the conversion of souls.

Response: Amen and Amen.

And that all these desires may be accomplished in the will of God, let us bow in prayer.

Here the minister appointed will lead the Dedicatory Prayer.

The service will then close with a hymn and the Benediction.

CONFERENCE LETTER

FORM LETTER FROM THE CHURCH TO THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ORIGINAL FREE WILL BAPTIST CONNECTION CONSISTING OF THE CAPE FEAR AND SOUTH WESTERN, MIDDLE EASTERN, NORTHEAST AND THE OLD ORIGINAL FREE WILL BAPTIST CONFERENCE.

To the _____ Annual Conference to be held with _____ in the County of _____ and the State of _____. We the pastor, members, and officers of _____ church are blessed to make our annual report

as follows:

Received: _____

Dismissed: _____

Expelled: _____

Died: _____

Total Number of Members _____

Active: _____

Inactive: _____

Number of Auxiliaries _____

Total Amount for Budget _____

Representing to the Conference with the amount of _____

Pastor Next Year: _____

We send _____ as delegate(s) to the Conference.

LETTER OF DISMISSAL

This certifies that _____ is a regular member of the Cape Fear, and South Western, Middle Eastern, Northeast, and the Old Original Free Will Baptist Conference in _____ County, and the State of _____, in good standing. As such we commend _____ to the fellowship of God's people; and when we are informed that _____ has united with another evangelical church, we shall consider _____ regularly dismissed from the church.

_____ Pastor
_____ Clerk

MINISTER'S LICENSE

This certifies that the bearer _____ of this Cape Fear and South Western, Middle Eastern, Northeast, and Old Original Free Will Baptist Conference at _____ in the county of _____ and the State of _____ having been divinely called, and after due proof of efficiency by us, and in the testimony of our approval, is commissioned to preach the gospel of our Lord and Savior, and hereby is commended to the fellowship of all Christians. In behalf of ____ Annual Conference. This _____ day of _____, in the year of our Lord _____.

_____ Pastor
_____ Clerk

CREDENTIALS

This certifies that the bearer _____ of the County of _____ and the State of _____, is a worthy member of the Cape Fear and South Western, Middle Eastern, Northeast and the Old Original Free Will Baptist Conference at _____ in the County of _____, and the State of _____ has this day been publicly ordained to the work of the Christian ministry by fasting and praying and the laying on of hands by the Presbytery, according to the usage of the _____ denomination, and is hereby authorized to preach the Gospel and administer its ordinances, wherever the great Deity in His providence may direct.

Done this _____ day of _____, in the year of our Lord _____.

Ordaining Council: _____

A TRANSFER

This certifies that the bearer, (Rev. or Elder or Missionary) _____ has been transferred from the _____ Annual Conference to the _____ Annual Conference. As such we commend to your fellowship.

_____ Clerk
_____ Bishop

FUNERAL HYMNS

(S. M.)

1.

And am I born to die?
To lay this body down?
And must my trembling spirit fly
Into a world unknown?

2 .

A land of deepest shade,
Unpierced by human thought;
The dreary regions of the dead,
Where all things are forgot.

3.

Soon as from earth I go,
What will become of me?
Eternal happiness or woe
Must then my portion be!

4.

Wak'd by the trumpet's sound,
I see from my grave shall rise,
And see the Judge with glory crown'd,
And see the flaming skies!

(c. M.)

1.

Why do we mourn departing friends,
Or shake at death's alarms?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends
To call them to His arms.

2.

Are we not tending upward too,
As fast as time can move?
Nor would we wish the hours move slow
To keep us from our love.

3.

Why should we tremble to convey
Their bodies to the tomb?
There the dear flesh of Jesus lay,
And left a long perfume.

BAPTISM HYMNS

(S. M.)

1.

Down to the water side,
Behold Thy children, Lord;
With freedom come to follow Thee,
And make Thy Word their guide.

2.

The glorious Son of God
To John the Baptist come,
Went meekly down bold Jordan's bank
And was baptized by him.

3.

This by the Savior done,
Fulfill'd all righteousness,
And God the Father own'd His Son,
(C. M.)

1.

Gaze on, spectator, while we show
Obedience to the Lamb,
And wonder, while you gaze, that you
Forbear to do the same.

2.

"Come, see the place where Jesus lay,"
An angel said, of old;

We say the same; His grave you may
In water here behold

3.

Buried in Jordan was our Lord,
As well as in the tomb,
And in obedience to His Word,
We imitate the Lamb.

Prayer for a Holy Heart

(C. M.)

1.

O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free!
A heart that always feels Thy blood
So freely spilt for me.

2.

A, heart resigned, submissive, meek,
My great Redeemer's throne-
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone.

3.

O for a lowly, contrite heart,
Believing, true, and clean,
Which neither life nor death can part
From Him that dwells within.

(S. M. D.)

1.

Soldiers of Christ, arise,
And put your armor on;
Strong in the strength which God supplies
Through His Eternal Son.

2.

Strong in the Lord of hosts,
And in His mighty - power,
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.

3.

Stand, then, in His great might,
With all His strength endued:
But take, to arm you for the fight,
The panoply of God.

4.

That, having all things done,
And all your conflicts past,
Ye may o'ercome through Christ alone.
And stand entire at last.

(C. M.)

1.

Try us, O God, and search the ground
Of every sinful heart;
Whate'er of sin in us be found,
O bid it all depart!

2-

When to the right or left we stray,
Leave us not comfortless;
But guide our feet into the way
Of everlasting peace.

3.

Help us to help each other, Lord.
Each other's cross to bear;
Let each his friendly aid afford;
And feel his brother's care.

4.

Help us to build each other up.

Our little stock improve;
Increase our faith, confirm our hope,
And perfect us in love.

(S. M.)

1.

The clay is past and gone,
The evening shades appear;
Oh, may we all remember well
The night of death draws near!

2.

We lay our garments by,
Upon death will soon disrobe us all
Of what is here possessed,

3.

Lord. keep us safe this night,
Secure from all our fears;
May angels guard us while we sleep,
Till morning light appears.

4.

And when we early rise,
And we set out to win the prize
And after glory run!

CAPE FEAR AND SOUTH WESTERN
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
MIDDLE EASTERN ANNUAL CONFERENCE
NORTHEAST ANNUAL CONFERENCE
AND THE
OLD ORIGINAL FREE WILL BAPTIST
ANNUAL CONFERENCE