

**The Constitution and By Laws of
Community Baptist Church
Of Hixson, TN**

**Pastor Clif Roth
November 2004**

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Church Covenant

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

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spreading of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the gospel of our Lord and Savior.

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

We moreover engage that, when we remove from this place, we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Preamble

Recognizing God's word as the final authority and standard by which all matters of belief and conduct are to be governed, *this church* consisting of individuals who each personally believe, trust, know, and follow the commands and gospel of Jesus Christ, *is united to worship almighty God by spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ "to the uttermost part of the world" and building up believers through regular fellowship, prayer, and right living day by day.* Pursuant to our commitment to unity in worship, the King James Version shall be used in all preaching, teaching, and memorization programs of this church. Other translations may be referenced in order to help clarify certain passages of scripture.

Name

The name of this organization shall be *Community Baptist Church of Hixson, TN.* It is a nonprofit, religious corporation organized locally as an autonomous, Bible-believing, fundamental (doctrine), dispensational (theology), and missionary-sending Baptist church.

Articles of Faith

I. The Local Church

We believe that the local church is at the heart of God's plan in this age of grace. It is a fellowship of believers, baptized by immersion, observing the ordinances of Christ and governed by the Holy Scriptures. Its ordinances are baptism and the Lord's Supper. Its members exercise the gifts, privileges and responsibilities invested in them by God's Word and bestowed on them by the Holy Spirit. Its offices are two, that of Pastor(s) and Deacon(s) whose qualifications and duties are clearly defined in scripture. We further believe that the true mission of the church is to proclaim the gospel to all men, to disciple converts, to teach the whole counsel of God in order to edify the saints. The local church is a self-governing, autonomous body, unified in spirit and purpose, free from any hierarchical control by any external individuals or organizations. The one and only superintended is the Lord Jesus Christ working through the Holy Spirit. The will and decisions of the local church, insofar as they are consistent with biblical principles, are therefore final in all matters that come before it. (Matthew 16:19; Colossians 1:18; Acts 2:41-42, 20:27-28; I Corinthians 11:2, 12:1-13; Ephesians 4:11-16; II Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).

II. Church Ordinances

We believe that Christian *Baptism* is a picture of the death, burial and resurrection of our Savior, and upon their profession of faith in Christ is accomplished by immersing the believer into water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is the first step of obedience after salvation and a public testimony of one's faith in Jesus Christ. It also identifies the believer with the local church and is prerequisite to church membership. Baptism conveys no grace to the individual and has no part in salvation whatsoever. (John 3:23; Matthew 3:16, 28:19-20; Acts 8:26-39; Romans 6:3-5; Ephesians 2:8-9; Colossians 2:12-14.)

We believe that the *Lord's Supper* was instituted by Christ and until He returns, is shared regularly by the local church in commemoration of his death. Communion should always be preceded by solemn self-examination. Salvation and believer's baptism are prerequisite to participation at the Lord's table. Communion conveys

no race... no part in salvation whatsoever. We practice open communion; that is, any born-again, scripturally baptized believer is welcome to partake of the Lord's Supper. (Matthew 26:26-30; I Corinthians 11:23-28; Acts 2:41-46.)

III. Civil Government

We believe that civil government is ordained of God for the orderly conduct of society. Those who are in civil authority are to be prayed for, respected and obeyed. Civil disobedience should not be taken lightly and undertaken only with clear permission of the Word of God, our highest authority. (II Samuel 23:3; Daniel 3:17-18; Matthew 22:1; Acts 4:19-20, 5:29, 23:5; Romans 13:1-7; Hebrews 13:7.)

IV. Creation

We believe that God, as written in the book of Genesis, created the heavens, the earth and its inhabitants in six literal, twenty-four hour days. God created man and woman on the sixth day. Mankind is His highest creation, made in God's image and for His glory. (Genesis 1 & 2, Colossians 1:16-17; John 1:3)

V. Depravity of man

We believe that the first man, Adam, was created in innocence under the law of God his Creator. By Adam's volitional act of disobedience, he fell from his sinless and happy state. The consequences of this sin are far reaching to all mankind, in so much that every person is born a totally depraved sinner by nature and eventually, by choice and is in rebellion against the Creator. We believe our condition is hopeless; and outside of divine intervention, we deserve the wrath of the creator God whom we have spurned. (Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 1:18 & 32, 3:10-19, 5:12 & 19)

VI. End Times

We believe in the pre-millennial rapture of all believers, an event that can occur at any moment; and that, at that moment, the "dead in Christ" shall first be raised in glorified bodies and secondarily, the living "in Christ" shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death. All believers shall be caught up (raptured) to meet the Lord in the air before the seven years of the tribulation. WE believe that the

Great Tribulation, which follows the rapture of the church, will be culminated by the revelation of Christ's second coming in power and great glory to sit upon the throne of David in Jerusalem and to establish the millennial kingdom. (Daniel 9:25-27; Isaiah 9:6&7, 11;1-9; Matthew 4:29-31; Luke 1:30-33; Acts 29:29 & 30; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15:42-44, 51-54; Philippians 3:20 & 21; Revelation 3:10, 20:1-4,6)

VII. Heaven and Hell

We believe in the eternal conscious, blessedness of those who are saved, and the eternal, conscious, agony of those who have ignored the offer of God's salvation through the sacrifice of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. (John 14:1-6; I Thessalonians 4:14-17; II Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Luke 16:19-31; Revelation 20:11-15; Mark 9:43-48; John 3:16, 5:29)

VIII. Israel

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people distinct from the New Testament church; that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ; that she is being re-gathered in the Holy Land; that she will be saved as a nation at the second coming of Christ. (Genesis 13:14-17; Romans 11:1-32; Ezekiel 37; Zechariah 12:8-10)

IX. Priesthood of Believers

We believe in the priesthood of all believers; that Christ is our Great High Priest and through Him every born-again person has direct access to the throne of God without the need of a human priest; that each believer has the right and responsibility to personally study and apply God's Word guided by the Holy Spirit. (I Peter 2:5,9)

X. The Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that only those who are justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Holy Spirit of God are truly righteous in His esteem, while all such as continue unrepentant and unbelieving are in God's sight wicked and under His righteous wrath. This distinction remains among men both in and after

death, in the everlasting bliss of the saved and everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in the lake of fire. (Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:7-18; I John 5:19; Romans 7:6, 6:23; Proverbs 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matthew 25:34-41; John 8:21; Revelation 20:14, 15.)

XI. Salvation

We believe that the salvation of sinners is divinely initiated and wholly of grace through the mediatory office of Jesus Christ, who, as the only begotten Son of God the Father, voluntarily took upon Himself our humanity, yet without sin; that Jesus honored the divine law by His personal obedience, thus qualifying Himself to be our Savior; that, by the shedding of His blood, and His death, He fully satisfied God's holy and just demands regarding sin; that His sacrifice was not to set us an example by His death as a martyr, but rather was a voluntary substitution of Himself as each sinners' satisfaction for the penalty of their sin; that having risen from the dead He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His wonderful person the most tender sympathies with divine perfection; that He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate and an all-sufficient Savior. We believe that the condition for salvation is complete surrender to the authority of almighty God and His plan for us to place faith in the sacrificial death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. (Jonah 2:9; Ephesians 2:8; Acts 15:11, 20:20-21; Romans 3:24-25; John 3:26; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 2:14-17; Isaiah 53:4-7; I John 4:10; I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21; I Peter 2:24.)

A. New Birth

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born-again of God; that this is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about by our sovereign God in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith and newness of life. (John 3:3; II Corinthians 5:17; I John 5:1; Acts 16:30-33; II Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1 & 5; Colossians 2:13; John 3:8.)

B. Justification

We believe that justification is that judicial act of God whereby He declares the believer righteous based on the imputed righteousness of Christ; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely by grace through faith in our Redeemer's shed blood. (Romans 3:24, 4:5, 5:1-9; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; Philippians 3:9.)

C. Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God, accomplished in a threefold manner; first, an eternal act of God based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he trusts the Savior; second, a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the life; third, the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord's return. (Hebrews 10:10-14, 3:1; John 17:17; II Corinthians 3:18; I Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 5:25-27; I Thessalonians 4:3-4, 5:23-24; I John 3:2; Jude 24-25; Revelation 22:11.)

D. Security of the Saints

We believe that all who are truly born-again are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6; John 10:28-29; Romans 8:35-39; Jude 1). We believe that every saved person is a saint, and as such is eternally secure having been sealed by the Holy Spirit of God until the day of redemption (John 10:27-31; Romans 8:35-39; Philippians 1:6).

XII. Satan (Devil)

We believe in the reality of the person of Satan (a.k.a. the Devil). He was created as a perfect holy being but through pride and wicked ambition rebelled against God. He is now utterly depraved in his character and the great adversary of God and God's people. His ultimate doom is certain and his immediate power limited in the lives of believers who will resist him, apply the power of the blood of Christ, yield to the will of the resident Holy Spirit of God, and employ the armor of God. (Revelation 12:9-11; Ezekiel 28:14-17; Isaiah 14:12-15; Revelation 20:10; Ephesians 6.)

XIII. Scripture

We believe in the holy scripture: We accept fully the writings of the Old and New Testaments as the very Word of God, inspired word-by-word in all parts; and, therefore, totally without error as originally given by God to human authors; and preserved through the ages by God, remaining our only authority for faith and practice. (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:19-21.)

XIV. Separation – Personal and Ecclesiastical

A. Personal

We believe in righteous living and good works, not as a means of salvation in any sense, but as the proper evidence and fruit of our salvation before men. We believe in separation from the world and specifically, from all things sinful according to God's Word. We further desire to avoid even the appearance of evil, including anything that might bring reproach on the name of Christ or on His church.

B. Ecclesiastical

We hold the conviction that we cannot knowingly support or cooperate with those who compromise the truths of the scriptures, in teaching and/or in practice. Believing that the Bible is the Word of God, we specifically reject, therefore, any kind of association or cooperation with the World

Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches, the modern charismatic / speaking in tongues movement, the modern ecumenical movement, and hyper-Calvinistic groups. We also must reject the errors of neo-orthodox teaching, neo-evangelical associations, and hyper-dispensational theology, including Ruckmanism. (I Thessalonians 5:22; I John 2:15-16; James 4:4; II Corinthians 6:14-18; Titus 3:9-11; II Timothy 4:5.)

XV. True God

We believe in one true God inhabiting eternity as three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe that each member of the Godhead exists with the others in unity and is equal with the others in every divine perfection, each executing a distinct but harmonious function in the great works of creation and redemption. (Isaiah 57:17; Genesis 1:1-2; Matthew 28:19-20; 1 John 5:7; 1 Corinthians 8:6)

A. God the Father –*Maker of Decisions*

God the Father is an infinite spirit. He is the first person of the trinity and the Supreme Ruler of heaven and all creation reigning in inexpressible glory and holiness. Therefore, God the Father is worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love. (Exodus 20:2-3; Revelation 4:11)

B. God the Son –*Jesus Christ, Doer of the Work*

We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the second person of the trinity, the Eternal Word of God and “only begotten Son” of God the Father; that without any change in His divine person, He became man by a miraculous, Holy Spirit empowered conception within the womb of the virgin Mary; that as a man, He was tempted in all points as we are, remaining sinless; that as the perfect Lamb of God, He gave Himself in death upon the cross as the final sacrifice for the sins of all mankind, suffering the full penalty of divine wrath in our stead; that He arose bodily from the grave and was glorified; that, as our high priest, He ascended into heaven, there to appear before the face of God as our advocate and intercessor. (Matthew :20; 4:1022; Luke 2:26-30; John 1:1-2; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 4:15; 1 John 2:1, 5:20)

C. God the Holy Spirit – *Influencer of the Work*

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in creation and in the conception of Christ within the womb of Mary, a virgin; that in His relation to the unbelieving world, He restrains Satan until God's purpose is fulfilled; and also convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment; that He bears witness to the truth of gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the agent in the new birth; that He empowers, guides, teaches, sanctifies, seals and fills believers who daily surrender to Him. All children of God are baptized in the Holy Spirit at salvation. (2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16-17; Romans 8:14-27; John 16:7-11)

XVI. Virgin Birth of Christ

We believe that Jesus was begotten of God the Father by the power of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner; born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can be born of woman; and that He is both the Son of God and God the Son. (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14)

Glossary of terms that describe us – (as they appear in our name)

Non Profit: That we are not organized for the purpose of making a financial gain for any other reason than to advance the kingdom of God.

Religious: That we exist for the glory of God and not for the praise and adoration of men.

Corporation: That we are incorporated in the state of Tennessee as a 501C3 not-for-profit corporation and as such, maintain tax-exempt status, and carry the official name *Community Baptist Church of Hixson*.

Organized: That we have officers, leaders and followers who function in an organized fashion under Christ our Head.

Autonomous: That we are self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating and not answerable to any religious association, synod, district, or convention.

Bible-Believing: That we endeavor to show by our conduct that we hold as our creed, the Word of God, and that we practice New Testament church principles.

Fundamental: That we hold Bible positions that are essential, foundational and historic to our system of faith – these are in short the...

1. Verbal, plenary inspiration of the scriptures.
2. Trinity of the Godhead.
3. Deity and virgin birth of Jesus.
4. Creation and fall of man.

5. Substitutionary atonement through the death of Christ.
6. Bodily resurrection of Christ from the grave.
7. Regeneration of believers.
8. Return of Jesus Christ to earth.
9. Resurrection of all the saved to eternal conscious blessedness.
10. Resurrection of all the lost to eternal conscious torment.

Dispensational: That God's management of His creation had changed through the ages. Dispensations allow us to view each age to see how God is working to bring about final reconciliation through the sacrificial death of His Son.

1. Creation to Fall – Innocence
2. Fall to Noah – Conscience
3. Noah to Law – Human Government
4. Law to Incarnation – Law
5. Incarnation to Tribulation – Grace
6. Tribulation to Millennium – Israel
7. Millennium to Eternal State – God's Kingdom

Missionary Sending: That we are actively endeavoring to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord to spread the gospel both here and abroad.

Baptist: That we are distinctively and historically Baptist, holding distinctive Baptist positions, these are in short that our...

1. Head and founder of Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:18).
2. Only rule for faith and practice is the Word of God (II Timothy 3:15-17).
3. Name is "church" (Matthew 16:18).
4. Polity is congregational (Matthew 20:24-28).
5. Members are only saved people (Acts 2:47).
6. Ordinances are believers' baptism and the Lord's Supper (Matthew 28:19-20).

7. Officers are pastors and deacons (1 Timothy 3:1-16).
8. Work is the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20).
9. Financial plan is tithes and offerings (1 Corinthians 9:14).
10. Weapons of warfare are spiritual not carnal (Ephesians 6:10-20).
11. Independence is the separation of church and state (Matthew 22:21).