

**Constitution and Bylaws
of the
Dover First Baptist Church of Wingdale, N.Y.**

Article 1: Name:

The name - of this church shall be the Dover First Baptist Church of Wingdale, N.Y. 12594. It shall be an independent and fundamental church.

Article 2: Object:

The object - of this church shall be to maintain public worship, to develop Christian character, **to encourage evangelistic activity and to share in the extension of God's Kingdom.** We subscribe to the Holy Bible as the guide of our faith and practice, which is inerrant, inspired, infallible Word of God.

Article 3: Membership:

1. The membership - of this church shall be those who subscribe to the church Covenant, to the Constitution, and Bylaws. Who upon recommendation of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons and receive the majority vote of members present voting at any regular meeting of the church may join by one of the following:

A. Receive baptism by immersion on profession of faith in Christ as their personal Savior.

B. Present a letter of good standing from another Baptist sister church.

C. Give a statement of Christian experience having been baptized.

D. One should make every effort to attend all services. Services include: Sunday school, Sunday morning worship, Sunday evening service, prayer services/Bible study and special activities.

2. Requirements for active membership:

A. To attend regularly called meetings of the Church, to deliberate and vote upon request; before them.

B. To honor and esteem their Pastor and Deacons to pray for them and manifest a tender regard for their reputation.

C. To financially aid the support of this Church by tithes and offerings, according to the Scriptures. (**Malachi 3: 8-10; II Corinthians 9:6-8; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Numbers 18:20-24; Deuteronomy 12:6-17**)

D. To behave in keeping with the principles of the New Testament by a practical and consistent separation from evil habits and worldly association (such as: drinking

intoxicating beverages, smoking, drug addiction, homosexuality, abortion, premarital sex relations, immorality ... such as unmarried partners living together, pornography, gambling, profanity, stealing, etc.). It is the intention of the Church to edify every believer to grow spiritually in Christ.

3. Discipline (Lack of Attendance)

A. Absence - Any member of this fellowship absent from two months of successive services without reasonable excuses will no longer be considered an active member and will be placed on an inactive roster to be voted upon by Congregation and to be carried or net such rolls for another year. (Reasonable excuses: sickness, transfer, college.) Inactive members forfeit the right to vote at meetings until reinstatement. Attendance will be reviewed by the Pastor and Deacons and will require a personal call or visit.

B. Conduct - Members who violate the Church Constitution or the Church Covenant in cases involving morale or issues which would seriously disturb the peace of the Church will be placed on an inactive roster without voting rights. The Pastor and Board of Deacons will review such cases seeking first to secure restoration of such member. If unsuccessful, the board will recommend to congregation for vote of dismissal. Membership may be terminated by letter or by request on vote in church (by active church members).

4. Reinstatement - would be by the Board of Deacons. The Board of Deacons will have the final decision as to the probation time before reinstatement - not to exceed 6 months.

Article 4: Types of Members:

1. Active - Those to whom voting power and Church office is limited.
2. Junior - Those under 18 years of age. They shall neither vote nor hold office. They become active members on 18th birthday upon recommendation of deacons and pastor. They shall be notified by the Clerk of change in status.
3. Inactive - A member who has not attended two successive months of service except in extenuating circumstances, or who is found in immoral state. May not vote nor hold office until reinstated.
4. Infirm - Confinement prevents active participation in Church program (shut-in, sick, etc.) These have voting privileges.
5. Service - Prevented from active participation in local church program for reason of training or service. They are eligible for church office and voting privileges when in area.
6. Officers of the Church - Two Offices - Elder(Pastor) & Deacons.

** Membership is also required by the Dover First Baptist Church to be eligible for any teaching role. (This does not include assisting or helping in a class.)

Article 5: Church Board:

Church Board Offices - Pastor, Deacons, Trustees, Clerks, Treasurers, and Sunday school Superintendent

Conduct - All officers shall be spiritually mature, of unquestioned Christian character, loyal to the word of God, dedicated and devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the spiritual welfare of this church. They shall also be faithful and diligent in attendance and participation in both regular and business meetings of the church. Their moral conduct shall be beyond reproach and free of carnal indulgences, such as the use of intoxicating liquors, and narcotic drugs. The candidate must give an unequivocal affirmation of faith to the Board of Deacons. Any Board Member who for a period of three (3) months, shall fail to faithfully perform the duties pertaining to his office, thereby automatically vacates said office.

Article 6: Qualified Voters:

Qualified voters - of this church shall be all active members eighteen (18) years of age or older, who have regularly worshipped with this church and have regularly contributed to the financial support during the year last preceding such meeting.

These Bylaws can be amended at any regular called business meeting. The proposed amendment is to be read on the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting.

Article 7: The Annual Church Meeting:

The Annual Church Meeting - shall be held in January. Notice will be given (read two Sundays previous), stating its nature and new business. (Voting will be by secret ballot.) Names of those whose terms of office expire and suggested nominations to vote on will be discussed.

Article 8: Corporate Meeting:

Corporate Meeting - shall elect Trustees and consider matters of property and debt encumbrance.

Article 9: Special Meetings:

Special Meetings - Any major decision regarding expenditure over \$1,000 would be brought before the members of the church approval or disapproval. (Decisions needing special attention - ex. under \$1,000, not changing church policies, ex. needy families - can be decided upon immediately by Board Members present.)

Article 10: Lord's Supper:

The Lord's Supper - will be observed in this church upon the first Lord's Day of each month.

Article 11: Missions:

Missions - We the deacon board have drafted a policy concerning missions for Dover First Baptist as such:

Mission as defined by the Scriptures. As any born-again individual or Gospel preaching organization that goes forth and carries the gospel to the lost according to these Scriptures in the Word of God.

Missions and missionaries need to be reviewed yearly as to how their finances are appropriated. (**Luke 24:46-48; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Mark 16:15; John 20:21**)

Article 12: Leadership:

Christ - the Head of the Church. (**Ephesians 1:22, 4:15, 5:23; Colossians 1:18, 2:19**)

Elder - (Pastor)

Qualifications - (**I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-3**)
- Phrase Clarification - "the husband of one wife" (**I Timothy 3:2**). Divorce is not acceptable for the position of Pastor and Elder because he must have a good reputation with those outside the Church (**I Timothy 3:7**).

Pastoral Candidate - Upon death, resignation or dismissal, the Deacons shall immediately appoint five members of the Congregation to serve with them as a Pulpit Committee to select suitable candidate for consideration.

Call/Dismissal - The Pastor shall be called by an affirmative congregational vote of 75% of the members present. Dismissal shall be by a vote of at least 75% of the members present.

Article 13: Dissolution:

Section 1 - This church shall have the right to own and sell tangible properties, both real and personal, in its corporation: and through properly elected and authorized officers.

Section 2 - No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any persons from the assets, holdings or other transactions in which this corporation may become involved.

Section 3 - In event of the dissolution of this corporation, all of its debts shall be fully satisfied. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among its members, but shall be irrevocably dedicated by the Deacons, to such other non-profit religious corporations as are in agreement with the letter and spirit of this constitutional statement of faith, and in conformity with the requirements of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Code of 1954 (Sec. 501 c-3) or any subsequent amendments thereto.

Duties of Officers

1. Pastor - The Pastor shall have spiritual oversight of the activities of the church. He shall be responsible for preaching, teaching and do the work of an evangelist. He is eligible for election as moderator of all its meetings. (**Ephesians 4:11; I Peter 5:2**)
2. Deacons - The Deacons shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a period of three years. They shall advise and assist the Pastor in the spiritual activities and in the administration of the ordinances. (**Acts 6**)
3. Trustees - The Trustees shall be elected at the Corporate Meeting for a period of three years. It shall be the duty of the trustees to attend all legal transactions according to the Religious Corporate laws of New York State.
4. Clerk - The Clerk shall be elected at the Annual Meeting and serve for one year. He/she shall keep a complete and accurate record of the minutes and membership of the church.
5. Treasurer - The Treasurer shall be elected at the Annual Meeting annually to serve for one year. (He/she shall keep a record of the financial standing of each member with the church.) He/she shall present a written report at the Annual Meeting of funds received and disbursed.
6. The Sunday School Superintendent - The Sunday School Superintendent shall be elected annually at the Annual Meeting to serve for one year. He/she shall be the executive officer of the Church School, responsible to the Church Board.

Assistant Superintendent, Secretary and Treasurer are to be elected at the Annual Meeting for a one year term. The Church Board is composed of all officers, Deacons and Trustees. The Pastor is an (ex officio) member of all board and committees.

Amendments follow Roberts Rules of order.

The 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 Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We agree, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in spiritual knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality. To sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to give it a sacred pre-eminence over all institution of human origin; by attending all the regular services of the church. To contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations. This giving should be done in accordance to the Scriptures.

We also agree to maintain family and personal devotion; 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.

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

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

Views On Modern Movements

We reject such teachings that oppose the Lord's Supper and water baptism as not being a means of Christian testimony and spiritual worship today. We believe that Seventh Day of Adventism is misleading in its teaching of worship on Saturday. The Sabbath Day was a worship day for the Jews. The disciples came together for fellowship on Sunday, the first day of the week, which began on the day of Pentecost.

We strongly disagree with the teaching of the Jehovah's Witnesses, whereas they do not believe in the Triune God nor the deity of Jesus Christ. They teach salvation by works and total annihilation for those who do not measure up to Jehovah's standard. This teaching conflicts with scripture. **(Ephesians 2:8-9)**

We reject the teachings of Christian Science. They deny the existence of a Triune God and the deity of Jesus Christ. They believe sin and evil are unreal in a world of "illusion". Mrs. Mary Eddie Baker was a confused, frustrated woman grasping for personal glory. She died full of fear and loneliness. Her teachings of healing and personal healing have no basis in the scriptures and were all part of a scheme to make money.

The tongues movement is a very powerful movement in today's church, crossing the barriers of Protestants and Catholics. We believe that the tongue movement of today is totally out of harmony with the scriptures. Tongues and its proper use have ceased. It only appeared as a temporal gift of the church. Tongues were a sign (to the Jews, **I Corinthians 1:22**) to unbelievers, not believers, and were known languages. Its purpose was to authenticate the church era.

The Charismatic movement, which also employs tongues, faith healers and being slain in the Spirit, are also out of harmony with the true gospel. Their use of tongues doesn't cohere to the biblical mandate even if it were a gift of today. Some faith healers create a psychological healing through emotions and suggestion or are simply fraud.

The new or neo-evangelical movement is a compromising position of method and practice. This new movement tries to find a happy medium between fundamentalism and liberalism. This, we believe, is an attempt to try and bring the fundamentalist into an ecumenical camp. However, its doctrinal beliefs remain (for now) biblically fundamental. They compromise the issues to promote the gospel. This is subtle contamination. Their methods are not all biblical.

Resolution on the Divine Institution of Marriage

Whereas, at the time of creation, God Himself established the institution of marriage and defined marriage as the union between one man and one woman for life **(Genesis 2:23-24)**, and

Whereas, Christ also honored the institution of marriage and reaffirmed its definition by quoting from Genesis 2 **(Mark 10:1-12)**, and

Whereas, the New Testament epistles are consistent in their support of the importance of the institution of marriage and in reaffirming the

definition of one man and one woman for life (**Romans 7:1-6; I Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:22-33; I Peter 3:1-7**), therefore,

Be it resolved, that we, the members of the Dover First Baptist Church, Wingdale, NY do now commit ourselves to uphold and faithfully proclaim the sanctity of marriage and to consistently reaffirm that marriage is a privilege, not a right, instituted by God and not subject to the whims of man;

Be it further resolved, that we declare that man has no right to change that which God has instituted or to alter the Bible's definition of marriage;

Be it further resolved, that we will oppose and firmly stand against any legislation or decisions by the courts which seek to expand the definition of marriage beyond one man and one woman united for life and that we strongly support all legislation that will defend the sanctity of the divine institution of marriage and its biblical definition wherever necessary.

Resolution on the Primacy of Preaching

Whereas, the ministry of preaching, i.e. the proclamation of the Word, has been diminished over recent years, in favor of other forms of communication that tend more towards entertainment than instruction, and

Whereas, Scripture establishes the priority of preaching the Word in the local Church, at all times, because faith comes by the hearing of God's Word (**Romans 10:17**) and,

Whereas, the Apostle Paul, admonishes those who are pastors, elders and bishops to preach the Word (**II Timothy 4:2**), under all circumstances and at all times because it is profitable unto all the needs of those who hear it (**II Timothy 3:16-17**), and

Whereas, it is the duty of preachers to be well-prepared to preach the whole counsel of God (**Acts 20:27**) and to rightly divide the Word of Truth (**II Timothy 2:15**) before their hearers;

Be It Therefore Resolved, that we, the members of the Dover First Baptist of Wingdale, NY do hereby agree that we will devote ourselves to establishing and maintaining the preaching (proclamation) of the Word of God, not allowing any other worship activity, as valuable and worthy as it may be, to eclipse the preaching and teaching of the Word, whereby we follow the example of reading, explaining (**Nehemiah 8:8**) and applying God's Word. That we emphasize biblical doctrine in our preaching, so that our people not only know what they believe, but also why they must believe it. Finally, that we guard our pulpits from those who would scatter the flock with unsound teachings that elevate the wisdom of men to equal authority with the wisdom of God's Word.