

CONSTITUTION



Revised July 2009

Joining our hands to strengthen His Church

FELLOWSHIP OF EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCHES

FEBC USA
3339 N 109th PLZ
OMAHA NE 68164-2908

FEBC CANADA
PO BOX 2858 STN MAIN
STEINBACH MB R5G 1P3

phone 402.965.3860

fax 402.965.3871

info@febministries.org

www.febministries.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I: Name and Identity . . . . .	.5
Section II: Purpose . . . . .	.5
Section III: Articles of Faith . . . . .	.5
Holy Scripture . . . . .	.5
God . . . . .	.5
Jesus Christ . . . . .	.5
The Holy Spirit . . . . .	.6
Trinity . . . . .	.6
Angels, Satan, and Demons . . . . .	.6
Anthropology – Man . . . . .	.6
Soteriology – Salvation. . . . .	.7
Ecclesiology – the Church . . . . .	.8
Eschatology – The Last Things. . . . .	.8
Section IV: Ordinances and Practices . . . . .	.9
Ordinances . . . . .	.9
Practices.	10
Section V: Membership	12
Section VI: Sessions.	13
Section VII: Elections	14
Section VIII: Executive Committee.	14
Section IX: Commissions	15
Section X: Extension Committees	17
Section XI: Amendments	18

CONSTITUTION

SECTION I: NAME AND IDENTITY

Name: Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches (FEBC) is the name of this international fellowship of churches.

Identity: We are a fellowship of evangelical churches, biblically grounded, valuing local autonomy, committed to a common purpose and a shared set of values, working together to build the Church of Jesus Christ in our local communities and around the world.

SECTION II: PURPOSE

The Fellowship exists to provide a framework which enables member churches to stimulate and encourage each other to be more effective in building the Church of Jesus Christ through interaction, joint service projects, mutual assistance, accountability and fellowship.

SECTION III: ARTICLES OF FAITH

A. Holy Scripture

We believe that all of the Scriptures, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, are fully inspired (God-breathed), wholly without error in the original manuscripts, the unique Word of God, written by men of God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21). We believe this Word is truth (John 17:17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:15), that its message, the Gospel, is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes (Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 3:15), and that it provides for the instruction, correction, and equipping of the believer (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

B. God

We believe in One living and true God, eternal, perfect, a Spirit (Psa. 90:2; 102:24-27; Heb. 1:12), in Whom all things have their origin, source, support, and purpose (Gen. 1:1; Isa. 45:21; Acts 17:28; Eph. 4:6; Heb. 11:3; 1 Tim. 6:16).

We believe God is holy (Isa. 6:3), omniscient (Acts 15:18; Heb. 4:13), omnipresent (Psa. 139:7; Jer. 23:24; Amos 9:2-3), omnipotent (Gen. 1:1, 26, 35:11; Jer. 10:12-13), sovereign (Dan. 2:20-22; 4:17, 25; 7:14), the Creator (Gen. 1:1, 26; John 1:1-3), the Sustainer (Psa. 104:27-30; Matt. 10:29-30; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:3), Who is immutable [unchanging] (Mal. 3:6; Jas. 1:17).

Scripture affirms this God as Spirit (John 4:24) and Person (Gen. 1:26; 3:8-9; 6:6; Ex. 3:14; Psa. 94:9-10; John 3:16; 17:1-26; Acts 14:15; 1 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 3:19 ff).

C. Jesus Christ

We believe Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. He is Himself God, the express image of the Father. Being conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary (Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 3:16; Heb. 1:5-10), He took upon Himself humanity (Heb. 2:14). Being true God and also perfect man (1 Tim. 2:5; 1 John 3:5), He was tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15).

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for all mankind (1 John 2:2) as a vicarious, substitutionary (representative) sacrifice (Isa. 53:5-6). We hold that his death effectively saves all who believe (John 1:12; Acts 16:31); that our justification is grounded in the shedding of his blood (Rom. 5:9; Eph. 1:7); and that it is proven by his literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Rom. 4:23-25).

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ rose triumphantly from the grave on the third day. He ascended into heaven, where He now intercedes on our behalf at the right hand of God. From heaven He will come again in visible form to judge the living and the dead and to establish his rule as Lord of lords and King of kings (Matt. 25:31 ff; John 5:22-29; 20 and 21; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Tim. 6:15; 2 Tim. 4:1).

D. The Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is divine, eternal, personal, and sovereign (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 5:3-4; Heb. 9:14), a participant in creation (Gen. 1:2) and the author of Scriptures (Acts 4:25; Heb. 10:15; 1 Pet. 1:10-11; 2 Pet. 1:20-21). He came to Earth at Pentecost to perform his special work in the Church (Acts 2:17-18, 33). In this age of grace, He convicts the world (John 16:8-11), and restrains the progress of evil (2 Thess. 2:7). He is the believer's Counsellor/Helper (John 14:16-17) and Intercessor (Rom. 8:26), regenerating (John 3:3, 5; Tit. 3:5), baptizing (1 Cor. 12:13), indwelling (2 Tim. 1:14), teaching (1 Cor. 2:10-16), and empowering the believer for life and service (Eph. 3:16).

E. Trinity

We believe in the unity of the Godhead, a Triune God, one essence in three persons, God the Father (Rom. 1:7); God the Son (Heb. 1:8); God the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4); that these three are one God, coequal in power and glory, having the same nature, attributes, and perfections (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19), while carrying out distinct functions relating to each other and to all creation.

F. Angels, Satan, and Demons

We believe God created angels as spiritual beings who were righteous and had freedom of choice (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). Resulting from Satan's fall, both righteous and unrighteous angels exist. All angels have supernatural powers subject to God's sovereign purposes (Job 1-2).

1. Righteous Angels

We believe righteous angels are ministering spirits or messengers of God (Matt. 13:41, 18:10; 1 Pet. 3:22; Heb. 1:7, 14).

Though spirits, they have appeared in visible form to manifest God's power (Gen. 19:1-26; Luke 1:26; John 20:12; Rev. 20:1-10). Angels ministered to Jesus during his earthly sojourn (Matt. 4:1-10; 28:2-70; Luke 22:43; Acts 1:10-11), serve God in executing judgment (Gen. 19:13-15; Rev. 9:1-5, 19:17), minister to those who will inherit salvation (Heb. 1:14), and guard and strengthen God's people (2 Ki. 6:17; Psa. 34:7; Acts 5:19-20, 12:7-11).

2. Satan and Demons

a. Satan

We believe Satan was a sinless being, created by God, who fell from that exalted position (Isa. 14:12-17), and so became the enemy of God and of all good. While he seeks to destroy (Matt. 13:19, 39; Mk. 1:13; John 13:2), God limits the scope of his power (Job 1:12; 2:1-6; Lk. 22:31 ff; 1 Cor. 10:13).

b. Demons

We believe many angels fell together with Satan (Rev. 12:7-9), beings the Scriptures now identifies as demons. Though under the direct control of Satan to do his will (Matt. 9:34; 25:41, Rev. 12:9), they are limited by God and ultimately their activities will contribute to the accomplishment of His divine purposes. (1 Sam. 19:9; 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 12:7).

At Christ's second coming, Satan will be bound a thousand years and ultimately be cast into the lake of fire where he and his angels will be tormented forever (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

G. Anthropology – Man

1. His Creation

We believe that, by an immediate act of God, mankind was created in his image (Gen. 1:26-27). God intended that mankind should fill and rule the Earth (Gen. 1:26-28; 9:1-2), and should be holy and blameless before him to give him praise (Eph. 1:4-6).

2. His Fall

We believe mankind's loyalty and freedom were tested in the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15-17). Adam voluntarily and consciously disobeyed God's command (Gen. 3:1-3, 6), so mankind fell, and his relationship with God was broken (Gen. 3:16-19; 2:16-17). The whole human race was condemned, separated from God and subject to death (Rom. 5:12, 18), the consequence of sin. Mankind is now alienated from God

3. His Redemption

We believe God, consistent with His nature, cannot have fellowship with anyone whose sin has not been judged (Psa. 34:16; Isa. 59:1-2). Jesus Christ, God's Son, offered Himself voluntarily (John 10:17-18) on the cross as the perfect sacrifice for sin (1 John 2:2), the just suffering for the unjust (1 Pet. 3:18), bearing sin's curse, and tasting death for every man (John 1:29; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 9:11-12; 1 Tim. 2:5-6). Nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on Earth, except unbelief: his voluntary rejection of Jesus Christ as the substitute for the penalty for sin (John 3:14-16; 3:36; Acts 16:31).

4. His Resurrection

We believe every person will be raised bodily from the dead, the believers to eternal life, the unbelievers to eternal separation from God (John 5:28, 29).

H. Soteriology – Salvation

We believe that salvation is by divine grace alone through faith alone, through Jesus Christ alone.

1. Grace

We believe that God saves us on the basis of grace (unmerited favor), not on the basis of any good work or goodness in us (Eph. 2:8, 9; Rom 5:15; 2 Tim 1:9).

2. Faith

We believe faith (i.e., taking God at His word and acting accordingly – Heb. 11:1) is the means of receiving salvation (Eph.

2:8-9). The sole object of our faith is Jesus Christ, who saves us through his substitutionary death, triumphant resurrection, and ascension (John 14:6; Rom. 3:24-25; 1 Cor. 15:1-4). Only by such faith can one be saved from eternal condemnation (John 5:24; 20:30-31).

3. Repentance

We believe repentance is a response to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit (John 16:7-11) that leads one to turn from sin to God (Isa. 55:6-7; Acts 3:17-4:4; 1 Thess. 1:9), and is demonstrated by a transformed life (Luke 3:8-14; Acts 26:20).

4. Regeneration

We believe regeneration is the impartation of a new and divine life, a new creation; not the old nature altered or re-invigorated, but a new birth from God (John 3:3-8; Eph. 2:10). At regeneration we are made partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4). The power of the indwelling Spirit then enables the believer to become holy in character and conduct (Rom. 8:9-11; 2 Cor. 5:17).

5. Assurance

We believe that every believer can be assured of eternal life from the very day of their salvation, based upon the promises of God in His written Word, not upon one's own worthiness (1 John 5:10 13 John 10: 28,29; Luke 10:20; Romans 8:16).

6. Justification

We believe justification is an act of God (Rom. 8:33) by which He declares righteous those who put their faith in Christ alone (Rom. 3:23-24, 28; 4:5). This righteousness is not based on any virtue or work of man (Rom. 3:20; 4:6), but involves both the imputation of our sins to Christ (Col. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21).

7. Sanctification

We believe sanctification, a setting-apart unto God, involves both the work of God and the will of man (Phil. 2:12-13). Sanc-

tification is threefold: positional, progressive, and ultimate. It is positional, for every believer is in Christ and therefore identical with Christ's position before God (1 Cor. 6:11; Col. 3:1-4; Heb. 10:10). We believe, however, that he retains his sin nature (flesh), which cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing of the believer in Christ is perfect, his present state is no more perfect than his experience in daily life. Therefore, a believer experiences progressive sanctification, growing in grace and becoming changed by the unhindered power of the Spirit (John 17:17; Rom. 6:19; 2 Cor. 7:1). Ultimate sanctification will occur when the believer sees the Lord and becomes "like Him" (1 Thess. 5:23; 1 John 2:28-3:3).

8. Eternal Security

We believe all believers will be kept saved forever (1 Pet. 1:5) because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of his love (John 13:1; Rom. 8:29), because of the free exercise of God's grace toward the meritless on the ground of the propitiatory blood of Christ (1 John 2:2), because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life (John 5:24), because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven (Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1), because of the unchangeable promises of God (John 10:28), and because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved (John 14:16-17; Eph. 1:13-14). We believe that our righteous Father cannot overlook the sin of his children and will, when they persistently sin, discipline them in infinite love (Heb. 12:6). We believe He will finally present every believer faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. 8:29-30; Jude 24).

I. Ecclesiology – the Church

We believe the Church, which Christ began to build on the day of Pentecost (Matt. 16:18; Acts 2) and will complete at his second coming (1 Thess. 4:16-17), consists of all regenerate believers (Eph. 2:14). Local churches practice

two ordinances, the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:17-34) and believer's baptism (Matt. 28:19-20), and seek to reconcile wayward members back to Christ and to each other, administering discipline when all attempts at reconciliation have failed (1 Cor. 5; 2 Cor. 2:5-11). Church leaders (1 Tim. 3; Tit. 1) shepherd the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-4), equipping believers to serve (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4:11-16) in order to move the whole body toward maturity and unity. Believers gather to worship God together, to disciple one another, and to fellowship; they disperse to care for the needs of the body and to bear witness of Jesus Christ to the world (Acts 2:42-47).

J. Eschatology – The Last Things

1. The Return of Christ

a. The Return of Christ in the Clouds

We believe in the personal, imminent, premillennial return of Christ in the clouds to "catch away" His Church (Acts 1:11; John 14:3; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; Tit. 2:13). This hope of Christ's coming to receive his own (1 Thess. 4:13-17) is a purifying element in the life of the believer (1 John 3:3) and a warning to the unbeliever (Matt. 24:42; 2 Pet. 3:10). Believers will be judged according to their works to receive rewards or to suffer loss (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 9:25; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Thess. 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 3:11).

b. The Return of Christ to the Earth

We believe that, following the great tribulation (Rev. 3:10; 7:14), Christ will visibly return to the Earth in glory with his saints (Rev. 19:11-16) to defeat the enemies of Israel and to judge Israel (Eze. 20:33-44; Matt. 25) and the nations (Rev. 19:17-21). Following this, He will establish His millennial kingdom (Rev. 20).

2. The Resurrection and Final State

We believe in the eternality of the soul, in the bodily resurrection of the saved and the unsaved (John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:22), and in the final judgment of

good or evil deeds (2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12). We believe that at the resurrection the believer's body will be made like Jesus' glorified body (Phil. 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:17) to be forever with the Lord. We believe that the unbeliever will be judged at the Great White Throne judgment of God when all not found recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life will face eternal punishment in the lake of fire (Matt. 25:41, 46; Rev. 20:11-15).

3. God's Plan for the Church and Israel

We believe Scripture distinguishes between Israel and the Church, and that God will keep his promises to both.

SECTION IV: ORDINANCES AND PRACTICES

A. Ordinances

1. Definition

We believe that an ordinance is an observance which Christ ordered the Church to follow until He returns, and that it sets forth, in symbolic form, central truths of the Christian faith. It is not a sacrament because it does not confer upon participants any spiritual grace either for salvation or for living the Christian life. Its spiritual value for the participant lies in obedience to Christ and in remembrance of His death for our sins.

2. Baptism

- a. Water baptism symbolizes the experience of regeneration and union with Christ (Acts 8:36-39); it is a public testimony of that inner reality (Acts 2:38, 41, 47; Mark 16:16); it is to be administered to believers only (Acts 8:37; 16:30-34; 18:8).
- b. Water baptism has no saving or cleansing merits, but is rather an act of obedience demonstrating the new relationship with Christ. Infant baptism cannot be recognized as valid according to Scripture (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12; 18:8).
- c. While the Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches practice the immersion mode of baptism, other modes are recognized as valid providing salvation preceded baptism.

3. Lord's Supper

- a. The Lord's Supper is an ordinance, instituted by Christ in the night of betrayal, to be observed frequently (in our Fellowship at least four times a year) by believers until he returns.
- b. The consecrated emblems consist of bread symbolizing Christ's broken body, and the fruit of the vine as a symbol of His shed blood (1 Cor. 11:23-29). The observance of this ordinance is to be preceded by honest self-exam-

ination.

- c. There is no salvation element in this ordinance; it rather serves as a reminder of Christ's vicarious atonement (1 Pet. 3:18), and our continued dependence upon Him.
- d. The communion table is open to all believers who practice consistent Christian living.

B. Practices

1. Home and Family

The Christian home is recognized as essential for the nation in upholding the social, political and spiritual integrity of the country. The Christian family should observe closely the Biblical teaching regarding the home. Grace at every table, daily family altar, hospitality to friends and strangers, profitable leisure time and reasonable working hours, and regular church attendance should be the unfluctuating standard of every Christian home.

2. Marriage

- a. We believe that the Bible teaches that the marital relationship was designed by God to be a lifelong union of husband (one man) and wife (one woman) (Gen. 2:1-8, 21-23; Matt. 19:3-9), to be entered into with an attitude of godly reverence and wisdom, love and purity (Gen. 1:27; 2:18, 24; Prov. 18:22; Matt. 19:4-6). Therefore, divorce should not even be considered as an option among believers.
- b. We believe that it is unscriptural for a believer to unite with an unbeliever in the bond of matrimony (Deut. 7:2-4; Neh. 13:25-27; 1 Cor. 7:39). Consequently, social friendships with unbelievers inclined to lead toward courtship and marriage should be discouraged.
- c. Weddings, and all activities connected therewith, shall be planned and conducted in keeping with a Christian testimony.

3. Divorce and Remarriage

- a. The FEBC believes in the sanctity of marriage and encourages couples to keep their marriage commitment for life in spite of the difficulties they may encounter.
- b. However, Evangelical Christianity, including some of our Fellowship churches and pastors, is not united on the question of divorce and remarriage. There are those who would grant a divorce on the ground of fornication (Matt. 5:31-21; 19:9), or desertion by an unbelieving spouse (1 Cor. 7:15), and not stand in the way of remarriage while both divorcees live. Because of these differences of interpretation, the pastor will be asked to follow the constitution of the local church of which he serves in regards to divorce and remarriage.
- c. Separation without divorce, although not encouraged, is recognized in Scripture (1 Cor. 7:10-16). Reconciliation should always be the goal of God's people. In such cases, local churches should do everything they can to facilitate reconciliation.
- d. Remarriage after the death of either husband or wife has biblical sanction (1 Cor. 7:39; Rom. 7:2-3).

4. The Lord's Day

We believe that Christ's resurrection on the first day of the week makes Sunday the logical day for corporate worship, as it was practiced in the early church (Acts 20:7). However, we recognize that for New Testament believers, no single day of the week has been consecrated by God (Rom. 14:5-6; Col. 2:16), and that corporate worship can rightly be practiced on any day. The central exhortation of the New Testament is that believers do regularly assemble together (Heb. 10:24-25) for worship and encouragement and one day in the divine cycle of seven be devoted for this purpose.

Furthermore, even though we do not believe that the specific regulations of the

Law of Moses governing the day of rest apply to us, we do believe that the one-day-in-seven rest cycle is of divine origin (Gen. 2:2,3). It preceded the Law of Moses and is for all people. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all believers to observe this principle in obedience to God and for their own spiritual, physical and emotional benefit.

5. Christian Walk

We believe that man is created in the image and similitude of God (James 3:9; Eph. 2:24; Gen. 1:26). A Christian, therefore, should be willing to walk in all simplicity and humility, love and unity, honesty and purity. Discretion should be used in regards to appearance and dress. Believers should glorify God in all things (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Tim. 2:8-10; 4:12; 1 Pet. 3:1-16; Col. 3:1-14; Eph. 4:1-7; Rom. 12:9-12; 1 Cor. 11:1-16; Deut. 22:5).

6. Christian Stewardship

We believe and teach that God is the possessor and sustainer of everything (Hag. 2:8; Ps. 24:1; Col. 1:16-17). The Bible clearly teaches systematic and proportionate giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:7-8). To give the tithe and beyond the tithe has the promise of God's blessing (Mal. 3:10; Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 9:6, 10). The Christian is also steward over that which he retains as well as his time and talents (Matt. 35:14-30; Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5).

7. Dedication of Parents and Children

We support parents who voluntarily declare their willingness to educate their children in biblical values and to release them to the Lord for whatever ministry He desires of them. Therefore, children may be dedicated when the parents so request.

8. Divine Healing

We believe that divine healing of the body can be realized by God's children on conditions as set forth in Scripture (James 5:13-16). The Believer is admonished to preserve life and health (Ex. 20:13; Phil. 4:5, 11; 1 Cor. 9:27; 10:31; 1 John 4:1-6;

2 Cor. 11:13-15). In light of these passages we caution against the obvious abuse of the spectacular in the modern day phenomena of mass "faith healing."

9. Sign Gifts

We believe that the New Testament sign gifts (tongues-speaking, interpretation of tongues, miracles, healings) served to authenticate the Apostles' message and ministry (1 Cor. 14:22; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:4).

While we acknowledge that God is able to employ whatever gifts He may choose to accomplish His sovereign plan, (1 Cor 12:11) we believe that these sign gifts are not normative for today, having had their biblical purpose fulfilled in the apostolic period.

We reject sign gifts as indicators of one's spirituality, since these gifts can be imitated by unbelievers and even Satan (Matt. 7:21-24; 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:13). Instead, evidence of spirituality is to be found in the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). Rather than embrace gifts for self-edification, believers should pursue that which builds up the whole Body of Christ (1 Cor. 14).

10. Civil Government

We believe that civil government is ordained of God for the punishment of evil doers, for the protection of the good, and to justly direct the interaction of society (Rom. 13:1-7; Ex. 18:21-23). We, therefore, consider it our duty to pray for our political, judicial, and administrative leaders (1 Tim. 2:1-3), and to be submissive and obedient to their authority except in things which militate against the supreme law and will of our Lord Jesus Christ (Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 3:13-14; Acts 4:19; 5:29; Matt. 23:10; Rev. 19:16; Rom. 14:9-13).

11. Education

We believe our children and youth are a God-given heritage and the Bible teaches parental responsibility for their education. Whether children attend public, private or

home schools, parents must be discerning about the teaching their children receive. The quality of these schools rests largely upon the parents and teachers. Educational convictions should be guided by scriptural principles. We should seek to protect quality education which respects Christian conscience and conviction.

12. Oaths and Profanity

We believe that the Scriptures clearly indicate that believers are to be honest, trustworthy people, whose “yes” is “yes” and whose “no” is “no” (Matt. 5:37; Jas. 5:12). Therefore, any oath in a court of law should be unnecessary in order to affirm our words, yet the taking of such an oath is not an act of sin. However, the scriptures do teach that it is a sin to use the name of the Lord irreverently (Ex. 21:7).

13. Secret Societies

We believe that all secret orders are contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures. There is nothing belonging to Christianity of which the followers of Christ need to be ashamed or want to conceal to men. Therefore, under no circumstances should members be allowed to hold membership in any secret organization. (John 3:18-20; Eph. 5:11-12; 2 Cor. 6:14-18), neither shall any such person be received into church membership.

14. Instigating Lawsuits Against Believers

We believe that the Scriptures teach us to “Follow peace with all men” (Heb. 12:14), to be inoffensive (Eph. 4:3; Rom. 12:8), not to seek revenge or repay evil for evil to anyone (Rom. 12:17-21), and particularly instruct believers to not settle disputes between themselves via lawsuits in secular courts (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Matt. 5:25).

15. Response to Conflict

a. We believe that God has called us to live peaceably with all men, to overcome evil with good, and to walk worthy of our vocation (2 Cor. 10:3-4; 1 Thess. 5:15; 1 Pet. 2:21-23; John 15:12; Gal. 5:3-15; 1 Pet. 3:8-9; 1 John

3:15, 23).

- b. Our churches respect the right of individual conviction and recognize that various positions will be taken on war and military service. We support our youth who because of faith and conscience accept exemptions or alternatives to combat service. We also support youth who choose military service by encouraging them to exert a positive testimony for Christ.
- c. We believe that the proper expression of Christian love and discipleship is by a daily manifestation of a meek spirit. We believe that it is necessary in daily living to return evil with good and not evil for evil. The principle of non-resistance is as important in daily contacts with people as it is in any national or international crisis.
- d. We also believe that the taking of a non-resistant position, and the registering of the same with our government, shall be a matter of personal conscience and conviction.

SECTION V: MEMBERSHIP

A. Autonomous churches within our Fellowship relate to the Commission on Churches. Church plants, however, are accountable to the Commission on Church Planting (either directly or through their extension committee or their mother church). This relationship remains in effect until specific criteria have been fully met. The following defines the status of a church in relation to our Fellowship.

1. Associate Membership

When a church begins public worship services under the auspices and with the approval of the Commission on Church Planting, in cooperation with either an extension committee or “mother” church, it will be granted Associate Membership in our Fellowship with one delegate vote at conventions.

2. Full Membership

- a. A church plant will be granted Full Membership and corresponding voting privileges (according to Section V. Paragraph 2b of the Constitution) when the following criteria have been met:
 - 1) Approval of the Constitution of the FEBC (see Section IV, No. 2 of the Constitution).
 - 2) Incorporation with an official membership list including registration as a charitable organization.
 - 3) An annual membership meeting with proper minutes.
 - 4) An annual budget with clear evidence that the church is making a conscious effort to respect it throughout the year.
 - 5) Duly appointed elders (at least two apart from the pastor) who are genuinely qualified for that office according to scriptural norms.
 - 6) Make application for membership to the Commission on Churches.
 - 7) A church plant will relate solely to the Commission on Churches when the following additional criteria have been met:
 - a) No longer receiving any subsidies from the Commission on Church Planting.
 - b) Approval from its regional extension committee or mother church to be considered as an autonomous church within the FEBC.
- B. Admission of congregations: Any church that is in agreement with the Constitution and Articles of Faith of the Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches may apply to the Fellowship for membership, and upon approval will be accepted as a member Church. Application of a congregation for membership shall be submitted in writing to the Commission on Churches which shall evaluate it and make a

recommendation to the delegate body.

SECTION VI: SESSIONS

- A. The Fellowship shall meet annually to conduct its business. Additional sessions may be called as deemed necessary.
- B. Representation at the annual convention.
 1. All officers of the Fellowship, church leaders and delegates are strongly urged to attend the annual convention sessions. Members who are not delegates shall be privileged to participate in open deliberations. Non-members may request the privilege to participate in open deliberations by permission of the delegate body. This privilege does not include voting power.
 2. A member congregation shall be entitled to one vote for every twenty (20) members or a fraction thereof. An elected delegate may carry up to three votes. If a congregation does not have enough delegates to carry all its eligible votes, other persons not already carrying the maximum number of votes, may be asked to vote on its behalf.
 3. The officers of the Fellowship — president, vice-president, secretary, and administrator — by virtue of their office shall be entitled to cast one vote on any and all questions coming before the annual or special sessions of the Fellowship.
 4. Any congregation, organized or unorganized, served by a Fellowship worker and under the direction of the Fellowship, may be represented by the worker in charge or any other person recognized by the Commission on Churches.
- C. The Fellowship's fiscal year shall close October 31.
- D. Final authority in all Fellowship action and decisions rests with the delegate body at the annual convention. This shall not deter any regularly elected commission or committee from performing its prescribed duties. In addition to the regular reports from the respective commissions and committees, matters of policy or

procedure changes and major expenditures not budgeted for, shall be brought to the delegate body for action.

SECTION VII: ELECTIONS

- A. The Executive officers and members of the commissions shall be elected at the annual convention by the delegates.
- B. All elections shall be by ballot.
- C. The Executive officers shall be elected by majority vote.
- D. A plurality vote shall decide the election of the commission members; i.e., excess of votes for one individual over those cast for any one of several competing candidates.
- E. To be eligible for nomination to a commission, a person shall have been a member of a local FEBC church for two years.
- F. All newly elected organization officers and commission members shall take office at the close of the annual convention, except the Recording Secretary and Administrator, who shall take office as soon as the predecessor has completed the organization's business for the fiscal year.
- G. No member shall serve on more than one commission concurrently.
- H. A term of office shall be three years unless otherwise determined by delegate action. With the exception of salaried personnel, an officer or commission member cannot succeed himself after serving three successive terms. Such person however, is eligible to serve on the same commission or committee after one year.
- I. The appointment of professional and/or management personnel shall be made by the Executive Committee, subject to ratification by the delegate body at the annual convention.
- J. The Executive Committee shall fill any vacant office until the following convention.
- K. Members of the Executive, the Commission

on Churches and the Commission on Church Planting must be elder-qualified men.

SECTION VIII: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- A. The Executive Committee shall provide spiritual leadership and give oversight to the activities of the Fellowship so that its life and affairs will honor God, be consistent with our understanding of Scripture, enable the Fellowship to accomplish its objectives, and respect its Constitution and policy statements.
- B. The Executive Officers are the President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary and Administrator. The terms of the three elected officers shall begin on alternate years.
- C. The Executive Committee shall include the Executive Officers and chairmen of the Commission on Churches, Church Planting, Education, Missions, Outreach and of Trustees. To be eligible for a position on the Executive Committee, other than the Administrator, a person shall have served one full three-year term on a commission unless otherwise determined by Executive recommendation and delegate action.
- D. Following the biblical pattern of male leadership in the home and the church, and due to the spiritual nature of the leadership role of the Executive, the chairmen of the Commissions must be elder qualified men with the exception of the Commission on Women's Ministries which will be represented by the vice-president (*See IX.F.7.d.*).
- E. Duties:
 - 1. Coordinate the work of all the FEBC commissions.
 - 2. Lead the commissions and convention delegates in establishing direction and goals for the whole Fellowship.
 - 3. Ensure that the work of each commission contributes to the overall vision and current goals of the Fellowship.
 - 4. Ensure that each commission has an up-to-date job description, manual and clearly articulated goals.

5. Give direction to the work of those employees who are directly accountable to the Executive and conduct periodic evaluations of their ministry.
 6. Ensure that the Fellowship has a doctrinal statement which is faithful to Scripture and that the Fellowship remains true to that statement.
 7. Approve all recommendations for modifications to the FEBC Constitution as well as to other policy statements and procedures prior to presentation to the delegate body for vote.
 8. Initiate appropriate action in case of moral and/or serious ethical failure by an Executive or commission member or an FEBC employee.
 9. Review plans for the annual Conventions and Workshops.
 10. Appoint a new chairman for a commission, in the event that the vice chairman of the commission cannot assume this responsibility, in the case of a sitting chairman.
 11. Arbitrate in case of conflict between member churches and between FEBC commissions.
 12. Meet at least twice a year.
- F. Duties of Executive Officers
1. President
 - a. Preside at all sessions of the convention and Executive Committee and perform such other duties as pertain to his office.
 - b. Make the necessary appointments for the annual convention.
 - c. By virtue of his position he is an ex-officio member of all commissions.
 2. Vice-president
 - a. Exercise all the rights, duties, and privileges of the President when he is absent, unable to serve or when so assigned by the President.
 - b. In case of resignation, death, or other disqualifications of the President, the Vice-president shall become President until the following annual election.
 - c. Serve as chairman of the nomination committee.
 - d. Represent the Commission of Women's Ministries on the Executive Committee.
3. Recording Secretary
- a. Record sessions of the delegate body and Executive Committee meetings.
 - b. Submit the minutes of the convention for publication.
 - c. Be responsible for the safe keeping of all minutes, records, and papers belonging to the Fellowship except such as shall be specifically assigned to another party.
4. Administrator
- a. Carry out the policies of the Fellowship and oversee the operation of the International Office.
 - b. Assist any commission as requested and able.
 - c. Consult with the Executive Committee in interpreting and communicating the total Fellowship program and ministry to the local congregations.
 - d. Serve as Registered Agent on behalf of the corporation in the State of Nebraska.
 - e. Make appropriate recommendations to the respective commissions, and shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of all commissions.
 - f. Be custodian of all legal documents and instruments, and shall be responsible for the safe-keeping of same.
 - g. Serve as treasurer of the Fellowship.
- SECTION IX: COMMISSIONS**
- A. The Commissions on Churches, Church Planting, Education, Missions, Outreach, Trustees and Women's Ministries shall integrate and coordinate the work of the Fellowship.

B. Organization

1. The Commission on Churches, Missions, Education and Outreach shall consist of nine members, three of whom shall be elected annually by the delegate body.
2. The Commission of Trustees shall consist of ten members, five Canadian and five U.S., who will also serve as the Canadian and U.S. Boards of Directors respectively. The elections shall be in a cycle of [4] [3] [3].
3. The Commission on Church Planting shall consist of nine members, one chosen by and from each of the functioning regional extension committees for three-year terms and the remaining members elected by the delegate body to three-year alternate terms.
4. The Commission on Women's Ministries shall consist of at least five and not more than nine members, elected by the delegate body to three-year alternating terms.

C. Each commission organizes annually during the annual convention by electing from its membership a chairman, vice-chairman and secretary. The chairman must have served one full three-year term on the commission unless otherwise determined by Executive action.

D. Each commission chairman shall make regular reports on activity within his respective commission to the Executive Committee.

E. Each commission shall prepare its annual budget and submit it to the Commission of Trustees at the semi-annual session.

F. Duties of Commissions:

1. Commission on Churches
 - a. Examine, and recommend to the delegate body all candidates for licensing and ordination to the ministry.
 - b. Give assistance and advice to a local church in calling a pastor.
 - c. Assist when requested in arranging for Bible conferences and evangelistic meetings.
 - d. Encourage pastoral church leadership development.

- e. Advise and assist member churches in their exercise of biblical discipline.
- f. Withdraw credentials from ordained and licensed personnel who fail to respond to redemptive biblical discipline.

2. Commission on Outreach

Identify and provide resources and approaches to assist individual churches in establishing and maintaining an outreach passion throughout their respective congregations.

3. Commission on Church Planting

- a. Formulate policies, goals, guidelines and strategies for planting FEBC churches in North America.
- b. Work with regional extension committees in carrying out the church planting projects and programs that have been designed and implemented.
- c. Ensure that FEBC policies and guidelines are respected in carrying out church planting.
- d. Encourage and assist in the formation of regional extension committees in areas where such a body does not exist.
- e. Select and supervise leadership to carry out church planting work in areas without a regional extension committee or mother church.
- f. Approve pastoral personnel for FEBC church planting projects prior to a call being issued. The Commission on Churches shall examine and recommend such personnel to the delegate body, and assume the responsibility for pastoral discipline in accordance with IX. F. 1. above, as with all other pastors.
- g. Recommend the allocation of FEBC funds for church planting activities carried out by the commission, regional extension committees and churches.

4. Commission on Missions

- a. Encourage and assist active and retired FEBC missionaries.
- b. Make contact with prospective mis-

The primary purpose of an extension committee is to select, plan, initiate and supervise local church planting projects in its area. Each committee will respect policies and guidelines set forth by the Commission on Church Planting while showing consideration for the local culture.

The primary duties of an extension committee are set forth in the job description of an extension committee in the Church Planters Manual.

The bylaws of each extension committee will include the purpose statement above and the duties of an extension committee as outlined in the above mentioned job description.

In its efforts to stimulate church planting, the Commission on Church Planting will partner with the extension committee in regions where such a committee exists.”

SECTION XI: AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended only by a two-thirds majority vote of the delegate body present at the annual convention, providing notice is given three months or more in advance of the proposed changes to allow time for discussion and recommendation by the local congregation.

Index

A

administrator 13, 15
angels 6
annual budget 16
annual convention 13, 14, 16
annual meeting. *See* Sessions
anthropology 6
appointments 15
arbitrate 15
associate membership 12
Assurance 7
Audio-Visual Library 17
autonomous churches 12

B

ballot 14
baptism 8, 9
business administration 17

C

chairman 16
charitable organization 13
Christian Walk 11
Church 8, 9
church planting projects 16
commissions
 Commission of Trustees 16, 17
 Commission on Churches 16, 17
 Commission on Church Planting 16
 Commission on Education 17
 Commission on Missions 16
 Commission on Outreach 16
 Commission on Women's Ministries 16, 17
communion 10
conflict 12
congregations 13
conscience 12
Counsellor 6
courts 12
creation 6
Creator 5
credentials 16

D

dedication 11
delegate body 16
delegate vote 12
deliberations 13
demons 6
divine healing 11

divorce 10

E

editor 17
education 11
elections 14
eligible votes 13
eternal security 8
Executive Committee 14
executive officers 14
extension committee 16

F

faith 7
faith healing 11
fall 7
fiscal year 13
full membership 13

G

giving 11
God 5
God-breathed 5
grace 7
great tribulation 8

H

historical library 17
Holy Spirit 6
home and family 10

I

identity 5
imminent 8
inspired 5
Intercessor 6
International Office 15
Israel 9

J

Jesus Christ 5
justification 7

L

last things 8
lawsuits 12
legal representative 17
licensed 16
licensing 16

Lord's Supper 8, 9

M

man 6
marriage 10
millennial 8
missionaries 16, 17
missionary candidates 17

N

name 5
nomination 14
nomination committee 15

O

oaths 12
ordination 16
ordinance 9
ordinances 8
ordination 16

P

pastoral call 16
pastoral personnel 16
Pentecost 6
premillennial 8
president 13, 15
profanity 12
property 17
purpose 5

R

reappointment 17
recording secretary 14, 15
redemption 7
regeneration 7
regional extension committee. *See* extension committees
Registered Agent 15
remarriage 10
repentance 7
resolutions 17
resurrection 5, 7, 8

S

salaried personnel 14
salvation 7
sanctification 7
Satan 6
scholarship program 17
Scripture 5
secretary 13
secret societies 12

semi-annual session 16
sessions 13
sign gifts 11
sin nature 8
Son of God 5
stewardship 11
substitutionary 5
substitutionary death 7
Sunday 10
Sustainer 5

T

term of office 14
terms 16
treasurer 15
triune 6

V

vacant office 14
vicarious 5
vice-president 13, 15
vote 12, 13
voting 13

W

weddings 10
women's ministries 17
Word of God 5
world missions 17