

# **Constitution**

## **Fellowship Bible Church of Gardner, Inc.**

### ***Article I - Name and Organization***

#### **Section 1: Name**

The name of this organization shall be Fellowship Bible Church of Gardner, Inc. herein referred to as FBC.

#### **Section 2: Organization**

The organization of this church was December 1, 2005. Independent in its organization and policy, it shall resemble other conservative, evangelical churches holding forth historic Christianity in all matters of discipline, order and policy. Fundamentally, it shall be a church that is standing true to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Word of God.

### ***Article II - Incorporation and Property***

#### **Section 1: Incorporation**

- A. This organization under the above name shall apply for articles of incorporation under the laws of the State of Kansas.
- B. The articles of incorporation were applied for and then obtained on December 1, 2005. The organization is registered in the State of Kansas, City of Topeka, as Fellowship Bible Church of Gardner, Inc.

#### **Section 2: Property**

All property shall be in the corporate name of the church. The control and ownership of all assets and real property shall not be given to any outside organization but shall remain in the hands of the local constituency. No member of the church shall have any rights or privileges to any properties belonging to the church.

In the event of the dissolution of this corporation for any reason, all of its assets remaining after the payment of all obligations shall be distributed to an organization (s), whose principal purposes are to carry on with the religious, educational or missionary work in accord with the doctrinal statement, positions and practices of FBC. (This shall be in conformity to the articles of incorporation of Fellowship Bible Church of Gardner, Inc.)

### ***Article III - Character and Purpose***

#### **Section 1: Character**

Its government is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains voluntary fellowship with other Bible-believing, conservative, evangelical churches holding forth historic Christianity.

#### **Section 2: Purpose**

Our purpose as Christ's body is to glorify God (Is. 42:8, Is. 43:7). We will glorify God by "setting worship at the center of our lives, practicing stewardship with all of our lives and treasuring relationships for all our lives."

## ***Article IV - Ministry and Missionary Affiliation***

- A. This church shall be affiliated only with ministry and missionary organizations that are consistent with the doctrinal statement of this church.
- B. Ministry and mission organizations should minister in the context of Matthew 28:19-20 and Ephesians 4:11-14.

## ***Article V - Membership***

### **Section 1: Qualifications**

Anyone professing faith in Christ Jesus as Savior, having been baptized after confession of faith, giving evidence of a desire to live a Spirit controlled life and expressing unity with the principles and practices of this local church is invited to become a candidate for church membership. The candidate shall follow the procedure as outlined in the church policy and procedures.

### **Section 2: Reception of Members**

Those desiring to unite with this church shall attend a membership orientation class, and be interviewed by a team of at least two taken from the following; Pastor(s), Elders, or Membership Committee. If the former finds that the applicant meets the above requirements, they will be accepted as members and will be publicly received into membership at a church service or business meeting.

### **Section 3: Duties of Members**

- A. Members shall give testimony of a genuine experience of regeneration both by conduct and conversation.
- B. Members shall abide for the sake of love and peace with the Covenant, Confession of Faith, constitution and policies of this church-body, providing they do not conflict with God's Word.
- C. Members have the duties of acquiring Scriptural knowledge, growing in grace and spirituality, and maintaining consistency of character and conduct.
- D. It is the responsibility of each member to honor, esteem and regularly pray for the church's leadership. (Hebrews 13:7, 17-19)

### **Section 4: Termination of Membership**

- A. Members of the church are expected to conduct their lives in accordance with Biblical standards of holiness as they grow to become more like Christ. When a member knowingly ignores the direct commands and prohibitions of Scripture, he or she shall be dealt with according to the principles of restoration and discipline found in such passages as Matthew 18, Galatians 6, II Thess. 3, I Cor. 5, Matthew 7:1-5, etc. Members in the early churches were subject to confrontation for reasons such as: unwillingness to become reconciled to an offended brother (Matt. 18:15-17), unwillingness to engage in work (II Thess. 3:6-15), divisiveness in the church (Romans 16:17,18; Titus 3:9,10), sexual immorality (I Cor. 5:1-13), false teaching (I Tim. 1:20; II Tim. 2:17,18) and general sinful conduct (Gal. 6:1). When such action leads to the regrettable obligation of terminating a person from membership, this will be based on the total agreement of the Board of Elders and affirmation of the members of the church. A simple majority of the Board of Elders shall constitute a quorum with total agreement upon the matter at hand.
- B. Members who unite with other churches shall inform FBC so that their names may be dropped from the membership roll.

- C. When a member has been absent from the services of the church for four months a Pastor, Elder, staff member or member of the Membership Committee shall make reasonable efforts to contact him or her so that the reasons may be ascertained and restoration may be effected. Where such an attempt is not successful, membership may be terminated by the total agreement of the Board of Elders. A simple majority shall constitute a quorum with total agreement upon the matter at hand.
- D. Infrequent attendance at services for reasons other than illness and vacations, etc. shall also prompt an informal inquiry by a Pastor, Elder, staff member or member of the Membership Committee as to the sincerity of the member's commitment to the health and welfare of the church. Where such infrequent attendance is determined to be the result of spiritual neglect and indifference, loving restoration will be attempted by the Elders. Where such an attempt is not successful, membership may be terminated by the total agreement of the Board of Elders. A simple majority shall constitute a quorum with total agreement upon the matter at hand.

### **Section 5: Discipline of Members**

The matter of discipline of the membership shall be in the hands of the Elders assisted by the Pastor(s) for the purpose of restoring a brother or sister to fellowship with Christ and the church. No termination action shall be taken until every effort has been made including, if physically possible, personal visits. If termination of membership becomes necessary, the procedures stated above (Article V, Section 4A) shall be followed.

## ***Article VI - Meetings***

### **Section 1: Spiritual Meetings**

- A. Worship services shall be held regularly each Sunday.
- B. Other services shall be held as scheduled by the Board of Elders or Pastoral Staff.

### **Section 2: Business Meetings**

- A. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern any business of any nature by the church body not covered by this Constitution.
- B. Business meetings will be held at least two times each year. It is the prerogative of the Board of Elders to call a business meeting. At least a week's notice must be given to the congregation.
- C. The annual business meeting of the church shall be held prior to the close of the fiscal year.
- D. At all annual business meetings the congregation will affirm the budget for the next fiscal year and written reports shall be given by the Pastor (s) , Church Clerk, Treasurer, Chairman of the Elders, and Chairman of the Deacons.
- E. The fiscal year of the church shall be as determined by the Board of Elders.
- F. At least one week in advance of a business meeting an agenda will be posted and only said or stated items will be considered. Any recommendations from the membership submitted to the Board of Elders at said meeting will be considered with findings and resolutions to be presented at the next business meeting.
- G. Business meetings for the purpose of calling a Pastor or for any amendment or alteration of the Constitution shall be called by the Board of Elders. At least two weeks notice shall be given to the congregation.

### **Section 3: Quorums**

A. During a church business meeting, before voting on any motions, 15% of the recorded voting members shall be present to constitute a quorum for spiritual or business transactions. Once a quorum is established it shall require 75% of the voting quorum to agree to carry a motion. This shall include the following business items:

- Approval of indebtedness exceeding 4% of the annual budget
- Approval of any single non-budgeted expenditure exceeding more than 4% of the annual budget.
- Approval of a yearly budget presented by the Elders
- Voting on the leadership positions of the church, to include the Elders, Deacons, Church Clerk and Church Treasurer.

This would not include the following business items: Article VI, Section 3, Par.B.

B. During a church business meeting, 40% of the recorded voting members shall be present to constitute a quorum for all voting matters listed below. Once a quorum is established it shall require 75% of the voting quorum to agree, to carry a motion.

- The calling of a member of the Pastoral Staff for positions identified in Article IX. Section 1.D.
- Amendments to this constitution.

C. Active, non-resident members (example: missionary, student, etc) will not be counted as voting members in determining the required quorum, but their names will remain on the membership list.

D. The quorum may include absentee ballots if the Board of Elders deems it appropriate.

### **Section 4: Voting Qualification of Members**

Any member 18 years of age or older is qualified to vote at any called business meeting.

## ***Article VII - Offices***

### **Section 1: Officers**

A. Official church offices shall be the Pastor (s), Elders, Deacons, Clerk and Treasurer. Other positions may be created from time to time as deemed necessary by the Board of Elders.

B. Four months prior to the Annual Business Meeting, the Board of Elders will accept recommendations from members for officers to serve the following year. The recommendation period will last 30 days. These recommendations shall be considered and evaluated by the Board of Elders. Qualified individuals shall be appointed by the Board of Elders and presented no later than the Annual Business Meeting for membership vote.

C. At any time of the year, if additional officers are deemed necessary due to resignations, additional workload, or any other reason, the Board of Elders shall have the right to appoint qualified members to that office for the balance of the year, and their name(s) shall be presented for membership vote at the following Annual Business Meeting before serving a full term.

D. The Board of Elders shall administer the affairs of the church, except for those items in this constitution designated to the Pastor (s), Deacons, Committees, and membership. The Board may, however, delegate certain responsibilities to the Pastor (s), the Board of Deacons, Committees, ministry groups or individual members of the church.

E. The Pastor(s) shall have representation on the Board of Elders.

## **Section 2: Pastor(s)**

### **A. Qualifications**

- The Pastor (s) shall meet the spiritual qualifications set forth in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:1-9.
- The Pastor (s) shall be in full agreement with the Covenant, Confession of Faith, and Constitution as set forth in this document.
- The Pastor(s) and his wife shall automatically become members of this church upon his acceptance of the church's call.

### **B. Appointment**

Pastoral Search Committee shall be formed for the purpose of calling a pastor as outlined in Article IX. Section 1.

### **C. Term**

The Pastor(s) shall remain in office for an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservations: The Board of Elders reserves the right to dismiss a Pastor upon giving him written notice of their intention to dismiss. This vote shall be taken with the Pastor in question abstaining if he is serving on the Board.

### **D. Duties**

- Such duties as are customarily associated to this office shall be performed by the Pastor(s) and at all times to the best of his ability. He shall, along with the Board of Elders, have the oversight of the spiritual growth of the church body according to the practices, patterns and principles of the New Testament.
- The Pastor(s) shall be an ex-officio member of the committee(s) assigned to him by the Board of Elders.

## **Section 3: Elders**

### **A. Qualifications**

- The Elders shall be men who meet the spiritual qualifications set forth in I Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:1-9, 1 Peter 5:1-3.
- A man shall be an active member of the church for one year prior to becoming an Elder.

### **B. Appointment**

Elders shall normally consist of a combination of member(s) of the pastoral staff and qualified men from the congregation who shall be appointed by the Board of Elders. These Elders shall be approved by a vote of the membership at the next annual business meeting.

### **C. Term**

- The Elders shall serve an indefinite term. Each Elder, before the end of the calendar year, will be asked to re-examine his qualifications and desire to serve another year. Should he meet the qualifications and have the desire to serve, he shall continue to serve.
- When an Elder ceases to meet the scriptural qualifications, he shall be required by the Board of Elders to step down. (Such a request from the other Elders shall be made only when they are in unanimous agreement.)
- An Elder may also desire to be relieved from the office either temporarily or permanently if he feels unable to serve for any reason. The process of his reinstatement at a later time will be determined by the Board of Elders.

#### D. Duties

- The Elders shall hold meetings regularly on dates established by the Board of Elders. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Chairman of the Board of Elders or by any Elder through the Chairman.
- It shall be the responsibility of the Elders, together with the Pastor(s), to fulfill any and all needs regarding the spiritual welfare of the church body.
- They shall visit the sick, needy, and distressed, and especially promote and maintain missionary, evangelistic, educational, and Bible teaching programs.

### **Section 4: The Board of Elders**

#### A. Appointment

The Board of Elders will select its members from qualified Elders, not to exceed 12, to serve as the Board of Elders each year. Pastoral staff shall have representation on the Board of Elders, not to exceed 25% of the Board.

#### B. Term

The normal term on the Board of Elders is 4 years on the Board followed by at least one year off the Board. Pastor members of the Board may be exempted from this provision.

#### C. Duties

- The Board of Elders shall be the governing board of the church and serve as the general oversight organization (Acts 20:28). The Board of Elders shall hold meetings regularly on dates established by the Board of Elders. Special meetings may be called at any time by the chairman of the Board of Elders or by any Elder through the Chairman. A simple majority shall constitute a quorum with total agreement upon the matter at hand.
- The Board of Elders has general oversight of all church staff.
- It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders to oversee the reception of new members and matters of discipline.
- The Board of Elders shall appoint all officers of the church body. These officers shall be approved by a vote of the membership at the next annual business meeting.
- The Board of Elders shall appoint pastors, subject to membership vote as outlined in Article IX. Section 1.D.
- The Board of Elders shall select members and officers for the Board of Elders for the next year before the Annual Business Meeting.
- The Board of Elders has authority of dismissal in relation to appointed officers and committee members, if deemed necessary.
- The Board of Elders has general oversight of monies received by the church, monies disbursed, and records thereof.

### **Section 5: Deacons**

#### A. Qualifications

- The Deacons are to meet the spiritual qualifications set forth in Acts 6:3, and 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- They must be active members for one year before a nomination can be made.

## B. Appointment

- Deacons will be appointed by the Board of Elders from recommendations of the church body (Acts 6:2-3) and voted on by the church membership.
- The Deacon Committee shall normally consist of at least three members as determined by the Board of Elders.  
The Deacon Committee shall elect a Chairman and he shall be affirmed by the Board of Elders.

## C. Term

- A Deacon shall serve an indefinite term. Each Deacon before the end of the calendar year will be asked to re-examine his qualifications and desire to serve another year. Should he meet the qualifications and have the desire to serve, he shall continue to serve.
- When a Deacon ceases to meet the scriptural qualifications, he shall be required by the Board of Elders to step down. Such a request by the Board of Elders shall be made only when they are in total agreement. A Deacon may also desire to be relieved from the office either temporarily or permanently if he feels unable to serve for any reason. The process of his possible reinstatement at a later time will be determined by the Board of Elders in relation to attendant circumstances.

## D. Duties

- The Deacons Committee and an Elder representative shall hold meetings regularly on dates established by the Deacon Committee. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Chairman of the Deacons Committee or any Deacon through the Chairman. A simple majority shall constitute a quorum with total agreement upon the matter at hand.
- The Deacons are to serve in an assistance capacity to the Elders and church body. They shall perform various tasks as assigned by the Board of Elders. The Deacons are granted authority to manage and execute specifically assigned ministries within the church under the supervision of the Elders. The Deacons are to administrate and execute the ministries assigned to them, within the policies of the church and the oversight of the Elders.
- They shall set an example in Godly conduct and see that all things are done in decency and order.
- They shall be responsible for managing the benevolent ministry of the church.
- The Deacons shall have supervision over the tangible and real property owned, leased or rented by the church.
- They shall maintain all necessary repairs or replacements and attend to the purchasing of all equipment
- They shall attend to the purchasing of all necessary supplies for maintenance and upkeep of the building and grounds. They shall purchase the necessary supplies for the operation of the church body as assigned.
- They shall provide for the security and safety of the facilities and all those who attend the facilities.

## **Section 6: Clerk**

### A. Qualifications

- The Church Clerk shall exhibit a consistent Spirit-filled walk and embrace the kind of Christian conduct described throughout the New Testament.
- He or she must be an active member of the church.

B. Appointment

The clerk shall be appointed by the Board of Elders, subject to a vote of the membership at the next annual business meeting.

C. Term

The clerk shall serve one year. The clerk may be appointed for more terms if the person's name is resubmitted.

D. Duties

- The duties of the Clerk shall be as defined in the job description approved by the Board of Elders.
- The Clerk shall keep minutes and accurate records of all business transactions by the church at all business meetings and present them at the opening of the following business meeting.

E. Accountability

The clerk is directly accountable to the Board of Elders.

**Section 7: Treasurer**

A. Qualifications

- The treasurer shall exhibit a consistent Spirit-filled walk and embrace the kind of Christian conduct described throughout the New Testament.
- He or she must be an active member of the church.

B. Appointment

The treasurer shall be appointed by the Board of Elders, subject to a vote of the membership at the next annual business meeting.

C. Term

The treasurer shall serve one year. The treasurer may be appointed for more terms if the person's name is resubmitted.

D. Duties

- The treasurer shall function in co-operation with the Board of Elders, and shall be responsible for his or her assigned duties and responsibilities as outlined in the job description approved by the Board of Elders.
- The treasurer shall be bonded if this is deemed necessary by the Board of Elders.
- Accurate annual individual records shall be mailed or presented to each member at the close of the calendar year. All such records shall be kept confidential.
- Regular monthly and annual reports shall be prepared. A financial report shall be presented at the business meetings of the church.
- The treasurer shall provide at any time all information required by the Board of Elders or Pastor(s) regarding the financial status of the church.

E. Accountability

The treasurer is directly accountable to the Board of Elders.

***Article VIII - Pastoral Staff***

Pastoral Staff members are those so designated by the Board of Elders. They are ultimately accountable to the Board of Elders. Job Descriptions will be approved by the Board of Elders.

## ***Article IX - Committees***

### **Section 1: Pastoral Search Committee**

- A. A Pastoral Search Committee shall be formed for the purpose of calling a Pastor.
- B. The Pastoral Search Committee shall consist of the following members:
  - A Deacon
  - The Board of Elders
  - Two members of the congregation appointed by the Board of Elders
- C. The duty of the Pastoral Search Committee shall be to fill a pastoral office.
- D. All candidates for pastoral staff positions shall be presented to the church membership for a vote before calling them as a Pastor.
- E. One candidate at a time shall be presented to the church membership for membership vote.
- F. This shall be the process for the membership to vote on the calling of a pastor:
  - The Chairman of the Pastoral Search Committee shall present the name from the pulpit and have said name posted in the church buildings at least two weeks prior to the calling of a Pastor.
  - The church body shall hold a general discussion regarding the candidate at a designated meeting prior to the calling of a Pastor. Such meeting shall be under the supervision of the Board of Elders. Appointment procedures are covered under Article VI, Sec. 3, Par. B.
  - The Pastor(s) shall be affirmed and called at a meeting designated only for this specific purpose.
- G. When a pastoral staff position has been filled, the committee is to be dissolved immediately.

### **Section 2: Other Committees**

The Board of Elders shall appoint other committees as they deem necessary. All other organizations or committees in the church, including youth groups, ladies' groups, men's groups, and any other group, is subject to the Constitution and the Board of Elders in their activities.

### **Section 3: Other Leadership Positions**

Membership is a requirement for those individuals serving in the positions of Lead Teacher, Small Group Leader, Ministry Team Coordinator, Pastoral Search Committee member and other committee chairpersons.