

Constitution
&
By-Laws

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Coast Bible Church
26300 Via Escolar
San Juan Capistrano, CA
92692

Ph: (949) 364-1191
Fax: (949) 364-7266

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CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS
of COAST BIBLE CHURCH
A California Non-Profit Religious Corporation

PREAMBLE

We believe our heavenly Father is a God of order and system. We, His children through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, should endeavor to do all things “decently and in order,” according to the teachings of His Word (I Corinthians 14:40). Therefore, we, as members of the Coast Bible Church, do ordain and establish the following Articles:

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ARTICLE I
Name and Location

The name of this Corporation is Coast Bible Church. It is a California non-profit religious Corporation with its principal meeting facilities and offices at 26300 Via Escolar in San Juan Capistrano, California 92675.

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ARTICLE II
Purposes

Civil Purpose:

The Corporation is a non-profit religious Corporation and is not organized for the private gain of any person. Its purpose is to establish, sustain, and develop an evangelical Christian church in Orange County, California.

Purpose as a Local Evangelical Christian Church:

The purpose of Coast Bible Church is to be "a pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15) "that every person might be presented perfect [fully developed] in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28).

- ◆ We seek to hold up the truth before men and women that they might see and believe it, receiving God's gift of eternal life. If they are believers, that they might be "renewed in their minds" and "transformed in their character and life" (Matthew 5:16; Romans 12:1-2; I Timothy 3:15; 4:6-16).
- ◆ In a world of constant change and uncertainty we seek to be a foundation of truth; putting the truth under the feet of God's people. Only by the solid foundation of His truth can we fully develop into all God wants us to be (I Timothy 3:15).
- ◆ We desire "to speak and live the truth in love, that we may grow up in every way into Him who is the Head of the Church, Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 4:15).

In view of our purpose we emphasize three primary things in the life of the Church:

PROCLAIMING THE TRUTH

- ◆ In sharing the message of God's love in Jesus Christ (evangelism) (Acts 8:4; II Timothy 4:5)
- ◆ In observing the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper (Matthew 28:19-20; I Corinthians 11:23-34)
- ◆ In preaching and teaching the Word of God (Acts 2:42; II Timothy 4:1-5)
- ◆ In worshipping God (Ephesians 5:19-20; Colossians 3:16-17; Hebrews 13:15-16)

PRACTICING THE TRUTH

- ◆ In loving one another (Romans 13:8; I Thessalonians 3:12; I Peter 1:22)
- ◆ In honoring one another (Romans 12:10)
- ◆ In being kind to one another (Ephesians 4:32)
- ◆ In accepting and showing patience toward one another in love (Romans 15:7; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13)
- ◆ In sharing hospitality with one another (I Peter 4:9)
- ◆ In stirring one another up to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24)
- ◆ In serving one another in love through the use of spiritual gifts, talents, time, opportunities and the personal and financial resources God has given to each of us (Galatians 5:13)
- ◆ In caring for one another being especially careful not to overlook widows, the poor and destitute, the sick and dying, and anyone in grave need (I Corinthians 12:25)
- ◆ In bearing one another's burdens through listening, counseling, and sharing our hearts and brokenness (Galatians 6:2)
- ◆ In praying for one another (James 5:16)
- ◆ In confessing our sins to each other (when we wrong the other person)
- ◆ In sharing our personal and financial resources for the building of the church in love (Romans 12:3-13; I Corinthians 12-14; II Corinthians 8-9; Ephesians 4:11; I Timothy 5:17-18; Galatians 6:9-10)
- ◆ In making the truth known by way of its personal practice in love (John 13:34-35)

PROMOTING THE TRUTH

Also, in view of our purpose, we seek to do what we can to see that the truth is proclaimed and practiced in other local settings here at home and around the world:

- ◆ In supporting the proclamation of the Word by others through financial and personal support (II Corinthians 8, 9; Philippians 4:14-19)
- ◆ In encouraging our own people to such service, local and around the world (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:1-4)

- ◆ In committing ourselves to courses of action, with the Lord's help, to expand the work of God, to encourage the growth of new leadership, and to further the spread of the Gospel beyond our immediate boundaries (Matthew 28:19-20)
- ◆ In orienting our children and members about cross-cultural Christian missions (Acts 1:8)
- ◆ In attempting to work with all of our Lord's disciples, where possible, with respect and love (Ephesians 4:1-3)

Again, as we proclaim, practice, and promote the truth in love it is our ultimate goal and hope that one day everyone whom we have had opportunity to touch with the message of God will be presented before Him fully developed in Christ Jesus.

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ARTICLE III Articles of Faith

SECTION A: The Bible

The Bible says all Scripture is given by inspiration of God (lit. God-breathed), that holy men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit using their own individual style and vocabulary to write the very words of Scripture so that what was written was exactly what God wanted written. This divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).

The Scriptures in their entirety are without error, and incapable of error in their original writings (John 10:35). We believe that these writings (divided into 66 books in our English Bible tradition) have been handed down and effectively preserved throughout the centuries (in keeping with the implications of the prophecy in Matthew 5:18).

God intended for the Bible to be understood by those who endeavor to understand its truth. Therefore, we seek a plain straightforward understanding of what is written, giving attention to the Bible's context, culture, and language (John 16:12-15; 2 Timothy 2:2, 14-18; 3:6-8, 14-17).

We believe that the Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work, in His first and second coming. Hence all Scripture, Old and New Testament, is most properly understood as it leads to Him (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23).

The Bible is our final authority in all matters of truth and practice in our lives and in the Church (John 17:17; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11).

SECTION B: God

ONE GOD

We believe that there is only one living and true God. He is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, truth, goodness and love (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4; 1 Timothy 1:17; 2:5; 1 John 4:7-11).

We also believe that God created everything that exists except Himself; that He is Spirit and separate from the material world which He created. Yet He is everywhere present in the world as the upholder of all things (John 1:3; 4:24; 5:26; Acts 17:24-29; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:3; Revelation 4:11).

THE TRINITY

This one true God eternally exists in three distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

These three persons are one God, sharing one divine essence, each having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and each worthy of precisely the same worship, love, confidence, and obedience; and that in keeping with their unique relationship within this one Godhead, each carries out distinct ministries (Matthew 28:19; John 1:1, 14, 18; 3:16; 5:23; 6:27; 14:9; 15:26; 17:26; Acts 5:3-4; I Corinthians 8:6; II Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:1-3, 8).

SECTION C: God the Father

Everything God does involves in some way or another all the persons of the Godhead. Therefore, when we speak of God the Father we are not excluding God the Son or God the Holy Spirit, but simply calling attention to those things which seem to be associated with the Father in a special sense.

God the Father orders and disposes of all things according to His own purpose. As the absolute and highest ruler in the universe, He is sovereign (ultimately responsible) in creation, providence, and redemption.

Regarding creation: He is the source of all things; the reason all things exist (1 Corinthians 8:6).

Regarding providence (His care and supervision of what He has created): He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass, and continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events. In this He in no way is the author or approver of sin, nor does He diminish the accountability of morally intelligent creatures (1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:3-11; Hebrews 4:13; 1 Peter 1:17).

Regarding redemption (His deliverance of what He has created): He has graciously chosen from all eternity those whom he would have as His own; He delivers all who come to Him through His Son (John 1:12-13; 6:37, 44; James 1:17-18).

God the Father relates Himself to His own as their Father. Today, those who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior have received eternal life. They have become His children and the special recipients of His grace, peace, and blessing. They also receive His chastening that they might receive all He desires them to have (Matthew 25:34; Luke 12:22-34; Hebrews 12:3-17; James 1:17-18; 1 Peter 1:17).

SECTION D: God the Son

The Bible teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ is God. He shares equally the same divine nature, attributes, and perfections with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit (John 1:1; Hebrews 1:8).

At a point in time and space He became totally man without ceasing to be fully God. In His becoming "the Son of Man," He was conceived by God the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. He, the infinite God, became a man that He might reveal God to mankind, save people from their sins, and establish God's kingdom on earth (Psalm 2; Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7; Matthew 1:18-25; Matthew 26:63-64; Luke 1:27; John 1:1, 14-18; 1 Corinthians 15:20; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 2:9; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:1-3,8; 1 John 2:2).

The Lord Jesus Christ was altogether holy by virtue of His miraculous birth and sinless life. He voluntarily laid down His life, the Just dying for the unjust, in order to satisfy divine justice and bring all who believe in Him into a personal relationship with the living God (Isaiah 53:4-6; John 10:17-18; Romans 3:21-28; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 3:18).

Furthermore, the Lord Jesus Christ rose bodily from the dead and in this resurrection God confirmed both the deity of Christ and His acceptance of Christ's death on the cross as a satisfaction of divine justice. His bodily resurrection is a guarantee of the future resurrection of all believers (Matthew 28:6; John 14:19; Acts 2:30, 31; Romans 1:4; 4:25; I Corinthians 15:20).

After His resurrection, He ascended bodily into heaven to the right hand of God the Father. As the infinite God-man, He sits as the only true mediator between God and man. He is the head of His body, the Church. He is the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David. And He is the final Judge of all who have not placed their trust in Him as their personal Savior from sin (Isaiah 53:10; Psalm 2:7-9; Luke 1:31-33; 24:39; John 2:19-22; 5:27-29; Acts 1:9-11; Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 1:3; 4:14; 7:25; 1 John 2:1).

SECTION E: God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is a distinct Person and not simply a power that emanates from God. He is God sharing equally with the Father and the Son in the divine essence, having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 2:11; 3:16; 12:11; Ephesians 4:30).

Though as God, the Holy Spirit is omnipresent (and has been from all eternity), He came into this world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost and for the special purpose of testifying to and glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ (John 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:12-15; 17:3). He came to make the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ known to the people of this world. He does this:

- ◆ By bringing to light their sin because they have not believed in the Lord Jesus Christ who died to remove their sin.
- ◆ By bringing to light their lack of righteousness because the Lord Jesus Christ has gone forth from the grave to the Father revealing the kind of righteousness it takes to be received by God -- nothing less than the righteousness of Christ.
- ◆ By bringing to light judgment because the Lord Jesus Christ has, through His death and resurrection, conquered sin and death, leaving Satan and all who are in a state of rebellion against God, powerless and doomed to eternal damnation (John 16:7-11).

The Holy Spirit moves upon the hearts of people enabling them to see the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior in whom they must put their trust. When they believe, they are born again as the Holy Spirit brings forth God's eternal life within them (John 3:7-8; 6:63; 15:26; 16:13-14; 1 John 5:6).

The Holy Spirit comes to make the Lord Jesus Christ known in and through His Church -- that is, in and through His people (John 14:16-17; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19; 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10).

The Holy Spirit "comes upon" all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. This coming upon is often referred to as the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5, 6-8; 2:1-4; 10:43-48; 11:15-17; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13).

As a result of this baptism in the Holy Spirit many things happen to these who have believed, including:

- ◆ They are joined to the body of Christ and therefore are joined to others who believe and to the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-13).
- ◆ They share in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit whose life flows from the Head through every member of the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit indwells each believer and through the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus Christ directs the life of His body. Each member of

the body of Christ, as he is lead by the Holy Spirit, contributes to the building up of this body, which is His church (John 7:37-39; 14:16-17; Romans 8:9, 14; Ephesians 2:19-22; 4:15-16; 5:18; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 12:13; 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10).

- ◆ They are given special abilities (called spiritual gifts) by the Holy Spirit to enable each one to serve and contribute to the Church and to what the Lord Jesus Christ is doing through His Church (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4:11-16).
- ◆ They are sealed with the Holy Spirit unto the day when the believer's body is finally redeemed from the grave (Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30).

We believe that certain spiritual gifts (among them the gifts of apostleship, prophecy, speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, healing, and performing miracles) were given to confirm the words and work of God through the apostles and subsequently diminished from the life of the Church as it matured. This is not to deny that often, particularly in response to prayer, God does delight in healing or in acting in miraculous ways for the benefit of His people or for the outworking of His purposes upon the earth (Mark 16:17-20; Acts 2:43; 5:12; 1 Corinthians 13:8-13; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 2:20; Hebrews 2:1-4).

SECTION F: Angels

UNFALLEN ANGELS

God created an innumerable company of spiritual beings, known as Angels. These beings have greater power than man, and are highly ordered and organized (Ephesians 3:10; Hebrews 1:14; 2 Peter 2:11; Jude 9).

Angels speak God's word, praise God's person, serve God's purposes, and execute God's judgments. During the present time are sent forth especially to minister on behalf of those who will inherit salvation (Hebrews 1:14; 2:3; Psalm 148:2; Revelation 5:11-12; Psalm 91:9-13; Acts 12:5-10; Acts 12:23; Matthew 13:41).

FALLEN ANGELS

The Bible teaches that one angel, "Lucifer, son of the morning" -- the highest in rank -- sinned through pride, thereby becoming Satan, the adversary of God. A great company of the angels followed him in his rebellion, some of whom became demons and are active as his agents and associates in the carrying out of his unholy purposes, while others who rebelled are confined (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 12:24; 25:41; 1 Timothy 3:6; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). Satan is the originator of sin and evil. God allowed this temporary manifestation of evil as a backdrop against which His infinite glory, including His love, goodness, truth, righteousness, and holiness could be better perceived by all His creation (Psalm 104:31; Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 25:41; John 17:3; Romans 9:14-24; 11:33-36; Ephesians 3:8-12; Colossians 1:15-16).

In view of this, God permitted Satan, through subtle deception, to challenge our first parents to sin. Their acceptance and disobedience resulted in their moral fall and in subjecting them and their posterity to Satan's power and influence (Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 5:12-14; Hebrews 2:14-15).

We believe that Satan, as the enemy of God and the people of God, opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped. In the beginning he said, "I will be like the most High." In his warfare he appears as an angel of light, even counterfeiting the works of God by fostering religious movements and systems of doctrine. These systems are characterized by a denial of the person and work of Christ and of salvation by grace alone (Job 1:12; 2:6; Zechariah 3:1-2; John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 2:10-11; 4:1-4; 11:2-4,13-15; Ephesians 2:2; 6:10-12, 16; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; 1 Timothy 4:1-5; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:10).

Satan was judged at the Cross of Christ. The sentence, however, was not then executed, and he, a usurper of power, now rules as the “god of this world.” At the second coming of Christ Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years. After the thousand years he will be loosed for a little while and then “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone” where he and his angels shall be tormented day and night forever (Matthew 25:41; Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:1-3, 10).

SECTION G: Man

The Bible says that God created man directly from the dust of the ground. That man was God’s special creation, created in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7).

Man was created for intimate fellowship with God. Furthermore, as His image and likeness, man was to be God’s sovereign representative upon earth, filling and ruling over the earth in righteousness to the glory of God (Genesis 1:26-28; 3:8ff; Psalm 8; 1 Corinthians 11:7-9; Colossians 3:16-18; 2 Peter 3:13).

We believe that the first man, Adam, broke this trust by personally choosing to disobey the direct commandment of God. As a result of this willful sin, he immediately experienced spiritual death (separation from God), and eventually physical death (separation of the body and spirit). We also believe that through Adam sin entered the world and, as a result, all mankind has experienced the consequences, being born into this world spiritually dead and physically dying (Genesis 2:15-17, 5:5ff; Romans 5:12-21; Hebrews 7:9-10).

Furthermore, we believe that all men are inherently sinful, being born with a predisposition to sin, and in fact do personally sin. Apart from the salvation which is in the Lord Jesus Christ, all men are eternally lost, being under the wrath of God and destined to certain judgment and an endless existence of being separated from God in the lake of fire (hell) (Psalm 51:5; Luke 19:10; John 3:16-18, 36; Romans 1:18; 3:1-23; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Ephesians 2:1-3; Revelation 20:11-15).

SECTION H: Salvation

Salvation is a gracious work of God whereby believers have been, are being, and will be delivered from their sins (Matthew 1:21).

JUSTIFICATION

Believers have been delivered from the problem and punishment of sin. God eternally saves anyone the moment he puts his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. His salvation ultimately resolves the most basic problem caused by sin: How God can be just and justify sinful people. He does this by imparting His righteousness to each one who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, so that he can declare him “just.” The Bible calls this *Justification*.

This justification from God involves two things, like two sides of one coin. On the one side is the payment for a believer’s sins. On the other side is the creation of new life in the believer.

The Lord Jesus Christ, who lived a righteous life on this earth, died in the place of unrighteous men. He died to pay the penalty for the sins of all men by providing a just satisfaction to God who is enraged over sin and who would justly punish sinful people forever in hell. The Bible calls this *Propitiation*.

The creation of new life in the believer is often referred to as being born again or receiving eternal life. In essence, it is God’s life which God the Holy Spirit brings forth within every person who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ so that he becomes a child of God. The Bible calls this *Regeneration*.

Because a just payment for his sins has been provided and because he has become a new creation of God, God declares the believer righteous and just forever.

However, this is only the beginning of the blessings of this eternal salvation. Without compromising His own integrity, God is able to forgive the believer's sins, reconcile him to Himself, and destine him to spend his life beyond the grave in heaven with Him and His family forever. The Bible calls this *Reconciliation*. Out of this intimate relationship with God comes many more blessings that enrich the life and eternal hope of every believer (John 1:12; 3:1-16; Romans 2:5; 3:10-28; 5:10-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; 1 Ephesians 1:3-14; Peter 3:18; Revelation 20:11-15).

We believe that this eternal salvation is a gift from God out of His grace, not in any sense a result of man's works, and that it can only be received by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Apart from the command to believe, no act of obedience, preceding or following faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (such as baptism, confession, prayer, faithful service, commitment to obey, or sorrow for or turning from one's sins) may be added to or considered a part of faith as a condition for receiving eternal salvation. Such things may and in some cases normally do accompany the believers "salvation experience" but they are not essential to his eternal salvation. Only one thing is essential -- that he believes that Jesus is the Christ, his God and Savior. In the Bible faith is a straightforward response to what God has said. It is nothing more nor less than taking God at His Word. It is the inner conviction that when the Lord Jesus Christ says, "Truly, truly I say to you he who believes in Me has eternal life," He speaks the truth (John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 6:29, 47; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Romans 1:16-17; 3:22, 26; 4:5; Galatians 2:16; 3:22; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).

SANCTIFICATION

Believers in Jesus Christ are being saved from the power and plight of sin. God saves the believer from the power of sin by bringing about a spiritual union with the Lord Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection. Resulting from this spiritual union with Christ is the death of the believer's old self which had been dominated by the power of sin, and the bringing to life a new self, a new inner person, which desires to turn from sin and live for God.

The power and dominion of sin over his life was broken. However, that new person he has become in Christ is still housed in a fleshly body which remains a willing vehicle for the passions of sin. The outcome is a conflict of desires: the inner man wanting to serve God, and the fleshly man wanting to serve sin. God saves the believer from this terrible plight, through the Holy Spirit who lives in the believer, and who leads the believer to victory over sin working through the flesh. As the believer lives in harmony with the Spirit, setting his mind upon the things of the Spirit and letting the Word of God dwell in him, the Holy Spirit brings his mortal body to life for God. The outcome is a human life increasingly devoted to being a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, to following His instructions, to loving Him and His people, making personal sacrifices for Him, suffering with Him, doing good works, and advancing His kingdom in the hearts and lives of others at home and around the world (Matthew 6:33; Luke 8:4-15; John 13:34-35; 14:19-24; 15:1-10; Romans 6-8; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 2:14-3:4; Colossians 2:6-7; 3:16).

The Bible does not teach, however, that this obedience will be manifested in all believers, or to the same degree in all believers. If a believer does not live in harmony with the Spirit, but sets his mind upon the things of the flesh, then he will fail. He will become increasingly distant from God, from His people, and from the things that please Him. Sin, expressed through selfishness and fleshly desires, will rule his life. If he remains unrepentant, the result will be a life which ends in ruin and waste -- a life that is of little use to God, a life that God will severely discipline (Luke 8:4-15; John 15:1-9; Romans 8:1-14; 1 Corinthians 2:14-3:4; 10:1-13; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10; Galatians 5:16-6:10; Hebrews 5:12-6:12; 10:26-31; 12:4-11).

Whenever a child of God sins, whether he commits one sin or is living a life of sin, the first step toward reestablishing harmony with God and experiencing victory over sin's power and plight, is

confession. God will forgive sin through the Lord Jesus Christ and restore the relationship between Himself and His child, which has been broken by sin (Romans 8:26-28; 1 John 1:5-2:2).

GLORIFICATION

Believers in Jesus Christ will be saved from the presence and pain of sin. As long as the believer lives in his fleshly body, the struggle to be victorious over sin will be unending. Furthermore, there can be much pain and suffering along the way as the consequences of sin lead to broken dreams, broken hearts, broken homes, broken friendships, and broken bodies, and eventually to death itself. We believe that God has promised to save the believer from this present brokenness and pain of sin as well. We believe that one day God will glorify all those who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. They will share in the Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. They will be raised with a glorious new body like His, into a glorious new home where He lives, to a future full of glorious potential which He provides.

One day the body of every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ will be resurrected from this earth. The believer will enter into his Lord's presence holy and free from the presence and pain of sin, and possessing a glorious new body fashioned like the body of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself after His resurrection.

At the resurrection, he will come together with family and friends he has known and loved in Christ, and together they will always be with the Lord. In eternity he and all the resurrected saints will live with their Lord in a glorious new city called the New Jerusalem (Romans 8:23, 28-30; 1 Corinthians 15:50-57; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 21-22).

After all believers have come together, each will be brought before the judgment seat of Christ where He will examine each life. Those who have persevered in good works, endured hardship or suffered persecution in the name of Christ, who have faithfully invested their lives, their resources, their talents and gifts along with life's opportunities for the sake of Christ, or done anything for him, will be gloriously rewarded in proportion to what they gave or did in His name. Words of appreciation from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, special recognition, eternal privilege, inheriting a portion of Christ's kingdom and reigning with Him are part of His reward (Matthew 5:1-12; Romans 8:17; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 15:58; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:11-13; Revelation 2-3; 22:12).

ETERNAL SECURITY

This is the believer's glorious future, and nothing can keep him from entering into it and taking hold of all God has prepared for him. We Believe that it is a glorious future which God has eternally secured. God the Father has promised it, backing it with all His power and authority. God the Son, in His death, provided the sacrifice that forever satisfies the demands of a just God. (He continues to this day to act as the believer's Advocate with the Father to ensure that no charge be brought against one of God's children.) God the Holy Spirit has pledged Himself as a seal upon and around every believer, guaranteeing that the contents will be unspoiled up to the day that the believer is raised into the glorious presence of God (John 6:39-40; 10:28-29; 17; Romans 8:28-34; 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; Hebrews 9:24-26; 10:11-14; 1 John 2:1-2).

ASSURANCE

Every one who puts his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to save him is assured that he has eternal life which is unending and full of potential. Such assurance is not founded upon any subsequent discovery of his own worthiness or fitness resulting from good works he may have done, but wholly upon his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to save him according to the testimony of God in His written Word (Luke 10:20; John 5:24; 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-8; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 10:22; 1 John 5:9-13).

SECTION I: The Dispensations of God

We believe that according to God's eternal purpose, eternal salvation from sin has always been "by grace, through faith" based on the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:29; Romans 3:21-28; Ephesians 2:8-9).

Today the sole condition for receiving this eternal salvation is faith that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of all who trust in Him. However, prior to His first coming, it is unrealistic to suppose that people living in Old Testament times had as the conscious object of their faith the Lord Jesus Christ. Through Divine prophecies and illustrations, including the animal sacrifices they brought, the people came to believe God would save them from their sins. Undoubtedly in time many came to understand that the Messiah would provide eternal salvation. However, they did not fully understand how God would save them, that is through the shed blood of the Messiah. Neither did they know who the Messiah would be. Nevertheless, because they believed the revelation God provided, and trusted the Lord God to save them from their sins; their faith was "accounted to them for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6; Romans 3:4; 1 Peter 1:10-12). Thus, the times before Christ differed from the times after Christ. These times, or ages, with their marked differences, the Bible calls "dispensations" (Ephesians 1:11, 3:2 KJV and NKJV).

During different dispensations God administers things differently, regulates worship differently, and orders life differently. Some things remain the same such as how His people are eternally saved, but significant differences are clearly evident. We believe in these "dispensational" distinctions.

Three of these dispensations are the subject of extended revelation in the Scripture. They are the past dispensation of the Mosaic Law, the present dispensation of grace, and the future dispensation of the millennial kingdom (Matthew 13; John 1:17; 4:20-24; 1 Corinthians 9:17; 2 Corinthians 3:7-9; Ephesians 1:10-11; 2:11-13; 3:1-13; Colossians 1:25).

A fundamental distinction also is made between the nation of Israel and the Church. Israel is an earthly people who were schooled under the law of Moses in the past dispensation and will one day be the central nation through whom all the nations of the earth will be blessed. This will be in the future dispensation of the millennial kingdom of Messiah Jesus (Romans 9-11).

SECTION J: The Church

THE WHOLE CHURCH

During the present dispensation of grace, God is calling out of this world a special group of people referred to as the Church. We believe that all who trust the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior are united together by God the Holy Spirit into this one spiritual body, of which Christ is the head (1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 2:19-22; 3:4-6; 5:25-27; Philippians 3:20; Colossians 1:18; Revelation 21:1-2).

This spiritual body began on the day of Pentecost, following the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ into heaven. It will be completed when He returns to take away the Church to be with Him forever (Matthew 16:18; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:4-11; 2:1-4; 46-47; 11:15; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-15).

THE LOCAL CHURCH

In addition to the spiritual union which extends to the entire body of Christ, the members of this one spiritual body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies. It is these fellowship groups, meeting in identifiable locations, that make the church visible in the world. (1 Corinthians 16:19; Hebrews 10:25).

The church exists in the world to hold up before believers and unbelievers the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ. What the first local church did to hold up this truth continues to be a profound example to all local churches.

Acts 2:42 (NKJV) And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

Just as people differ so do local churches which are made up of people. The community life of one church differs somewhat from the community life of another church. God uses one local church to reach and minister to some people while using another local church to reach and ministers to others. The many different kinds of churches and styles of ministries that are made up of devoted followers of our Lord Jesus Christ and His word generally contribute to the health of the whole body of Christ.

However our Lord Jesus Christ has ordered all local churches to observe two ordinances in response to the grace of God received by every believer.

BAPTISM: We believe He has commanded every believer to be baptized (immersed in water). Water baptism does not save us from our sins, but serves as a vivid testimony that the believer's sins have been washed away by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as a visible identification with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection. Water baptism should be a first step in the believer's new life in Christ. Beginning with baptism, it is a life that is to be characterized by obedience and discipleship (Matthew 26:28; 28:19-20; Acts 8:35-39; 10:43-48; 16:31-33; 18:8; Romans 6:1-6).

THE LORD'S SUPPER: The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded every believer to regularly partake of "the Lord's supper," also referred to as "the Breaking of Bread" in Scripture. The ingredients of the Lord's Supper are simple: bread and the cup containing the "fruit of the vine." Just prior to His death the Lord Jesus gave them special meaning. The bread speaks of His body which was "broken for us," and the cup speaks of His blood which was "poured out for us" for the remission of sins. Together these elements help the church remember "the Lord's death until He comes" back to take His church to be with Him forever (Matthew 26:26-30; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34).

SECTION K: Last Things

As we look ahead, we believe the Bible speaks specifically about several important trends and events that clearly define the future times and seasons highlighting God's prophetic program.

GROWING APOSTASY

We believe that in these last days, beginning with the first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, apostasy, defection from the orthodox teachings of the New Testament, and spiritual and moral decline will grow widespread, increasing in intensity in the visible church. Paradoxically, this same visible church will grow to gigantic proportions, become more unified, embrace common beliefs, and sense little need of the very one whose name they pledge allegiance, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 13; 1 Timothy 4:1-5; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 4:3-5; Hebrews 1:2; 2 Peter 2-3; Revelation 2-3; 17).

THE BLESSED HOPE: THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH

We believe that the next great event in God's prophetic program will be the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the air to receive unto Himself His church -- consisting of all Christians who have died as well as those who are alive when He comes. This special event, which is often referred to as the Rapture (the "catching up") is the blessed hope for which Scripture instructs us to be constantly looking (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-58; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14).

REWARD OF THE FAITHFUL

We believe that following the Rapture, the whole church will be together with the Lord. Following this gathering, each believer will be rewarded based on his or her personal faithfulness during his or her life on earth (Luke 19:11-27; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 9:24-27; 2 Corinthians 5: 9-11; 2 Timothy 2:11-13; 1 John 2:28).

TRIBULATION ON EARTH

We also believe that the Rapture of the church will be followed by a seven year period of tribulation during which the righteous judgments of God will be poured out on the earth (Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24:1-29; 25:14-30; Revelation 6-19).

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe that this period of tribulation upon the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth in power and great glory, to destroy His enemies and to establish His Kingdom upon earth (Zechariah 14:1-11; Matthew 24:29-31; Acts 1:11; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Hebrews 2:8; 10:12-13; Revelation 19-20).

THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

We believe that for a thousand years (a millennium) following His second coming, the Lord Jesus Christ will reign, along with His saints, over Israel and the nations of this earth in righteousness and justice with peace. We also believe that during this period Satan will be bound and placed in the abyss. The curse which now rests upon the whole creation will be lifted and the earth will become very prosperous. Israel will be restored to her own land and will experience God's covenant promises. And the whole world will come to the knowledge of God.

However, in spite of such privilege and blessing, men, unchanged in themselves and not possessing the life of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, will rebel against God. At the end of this millennial age, being inspired by the Devil who will be released for a short time, an innumerable company of people from all over the earth will actually attempt to overthrow the throne of Messiah Jesus only to meet with utter failure and destruction (Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1-16; 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Acts 15:16-17; Romans 8:19-23; 11:25-27; Revelation 20:1-10).

HEAVEN OR HELL

We believe that at death the spirits of those who have been eternally saved pass immediately into the presence of God in heaven. There they remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of their glorified body. The Bible calls this the first resurrection. It began with the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; it will continue with the resurrection of the dead in Christ at the Rapture of the church; and it will conclude with the resurrection of all the remaining righteous saints just prior to the Millennium. From that point on, their spirit and body being reunited shall live with the Lord Jesus Christ and with the triune God forever in glory (Daniel 12:1-2; Luke 23:42-43; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; 51-58; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20:1-7; 21-22).

We also believe that at death the spirits of those who have not believed will go to Hades, a place for the spirits of the dead apart from God. There they remain conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final resurrection and judgment at the great white throne following the Millennium. At that resurrection and judgment their reunited spirit and body will be cast into the lake of fire (Hell), not to be annihilated, but, in proportion to their unrighteous and wicked deeds and self serving motives, to be appropriately punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from His heavenly glory and power, forever and ever (Daniel 12:1-2; Matthew 11:20-24; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 1:6-7; Revelation 20:1-7; 11-15; 21:8).

A NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH

We believe that having fulfilled His mission to save His people from their sins and to firmly establish the kingdom promised to His father David, that the Lord Jesus Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, that the triune God may be all in all, that His servants may reign with Him, and righteousness prevail in the new heavens and on the new earth forever and ever (2 Samuel 7:12-17; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Hebrews 12:25-29; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 20-22).

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Article IV Membership

Section A: The Universal Church and the Local Church

The universal church consists of all who have put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior from the day of Pentecost to the day of our Lord's return for His church. No local church can confer or withdraw this membership. The Bible clearly demonstrates, however, that each Christian needs to give his love, loyalty and commitment to a local group of believers (Acts 2:38-49; Hebrews 10:23-25). There is a lifetime of growth to be found in developing the relationships and ministry opportunities that God has for each of us within such a fellowship. Therefore, we believe that regular participation in the life of a local church is vitally important for every believer, and we encourage each one to make this type of personal commitment.

Section B: Non-Members

Any person who has trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and who associates through regular participation with us will most likely be regarded in our hearts as part of our church family. Such people will find us more than ready to include them in a variety of ways in the life of the church.

However, in endeavoring to do things "decently and in order" within the church and out of respect for accepted practices in other churches, as well as civil organizations in general within our nation, we believe that being openly recognized as a member of Coast Bible Church is a prudent step for those in our church family to take as soon as it is reasonable to do so. This membership is explained below. In effect, it is an open recognition that a particular believer is a member of our local church body, and responsive to the leadership of the church under the head of the body, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is also a recognition that this member expects to both receive from and contribute to the edification of this local body of Christ.

Section C: Application

Any person who has trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior may indicate to the Pastor or any church leader their desire to become a member of Coast Bible Church. After their desire has been made known to the Elders, they will be contacted and a time will be arranged for them to visit with the Elders.

Section D: Requirements

All applicants for membership upon their confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, and after an informal visit about some of the highlights of their personal life, including their spiritual journey, and their current spiritual condition, with the approval of the Elders shall become members.

The ordinance of water baptism shall not be a requirement for membership. However, those who have never been baptized as believers are strongly urged to be baptized. Baptism by immersion shall be administered by this church at the request of those who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

For reasons of harmonious relations among the membership and orderliness in conducting the affairs of this church, applicants for membership must signify their willingness to abide by the articles and by-laws of the constitution and to respect the articles of faith.

Section E: Children and Young People

Children and young people are encouraged to be openly recognized as members of the church, provided they are able to independently articulate their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. They are able to have voting privileges at age 18, after they have met with the Elders and reaffirmed their belief in the Lord Jesus Christ and their willingness to abide by the articles and the by-laws of the constitution of Coast Bible Church.

Section F: Expectations

Members are expected to live according to the light revealed to them by the Holy Spirit in the Word, to separate themselves from evil, to love one another fervently from a pure heart, not to gossip or slander, to recognize the diversity of gifts, to prefer others before themselves, to faithfully study the Word, to put away all bitterness and wrath and anger and quarreling and evil speaking and malice, to be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, and to live soberly and righteously and godly in this present age.

Members are further expected to faithfully attend the worship services of the church, to receive support and encouragement from the church, and to give of themselves their time and their financial resources to support the church and its ministries, and to regularly partake of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

If at any time a member finds that he cannot continue to respect the statement of faith and abide by the articles and by-laws, he shall voluntarily withdraw from membership in the church.

Section G: Special Considerations

The Board of Elders shall revise the membership records once each year, and after due notification shall remove the names of all inactive members. Members who are planning to move their membership to another church can request that they be considered "members in-transition." In this case, voting privileges would be suspended, but they would still be regarded as members in good standing until such time (no more than one year excepting special circumstances) that they find a new church home and request a letter transferring their membership.

Members can, because of special circumstances (e.g. a ministry assignment overseas, educational pursuits, attending to family in a distant location) request that they be regarded as members in good standing but temporarily inactive due to those special circumstances. In such cases, voting privileges will be suspended until they return to active status. (The Elders could,

knowing of special circumstances, decide to place someone in this or the “members in transition” category without being requested to do so.)

The Elders will exercise reasonable discretion in determining the active voting memberships of Coast Bible Church for purposes of establishing a quorum and majority voting percentage.

Section H: Discipline

In order to preserve the orderly and consistent testimony of the local church, the Elders shall have the power, after prayerful and diligent inquiry, and in strict conformance with the Word, and with due consideration of all members as belonging to the same body, to counsel with members in matters of idleness (II Thessalonians 3:6-15), contention (Romans 16:17-20), and open sin (I Corinthians 5:9-13), to rebuke such members at a special church board meeting called for that purpose, and if necessary, to rebuke them publicly before the membership (I Timothy 5:20).

If any member, by voluntary continuance in open sin and by testimony of action and of word, indicates his unwillingness to follow Christ, it shall be the further duty of the Elder Board and the church membership to remove him from membership in our local church.

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ARTICLE V Government

The government of Coast Bible Church is vested in three interdependent entities:

1. The congregation or whole church family represented by the voting membership of the church.
2. The Elders of the church, who with the help of committees, ministry teams, ministry leaders and administrative staff, oversee the church family. This oversight includes leadership, Pastoral care, ministry, and wise stewardship of the church’s spiritual, physical, and financial resources.
3. The Pastor, who with the help of other ministry staff, and administrative staff, serves as a Pastoral leader in much the same sense that Timothy served the church at Ephesus in I and II Timothy.

SECTION A: The Congregation

The role of the congregation in the governing of Coast Bible Church shall be limited to the voting membership. Each qualified member in good standing shall be entitled to one vote at any meeting of the membership.

Voting by proxy will be permitted only under two conditions:

1. The motion which is to be placed before the church and voted upon, is well known, has been discussed informally, and can be written out and distributed two weeks prior to the meeting.
2. The person wishing to vote by proxy is able to provide a reasonable excuse for having to miss the meeting.

Consideration of a request to vote by proxy and the handling of proxy ballots are to be overseen by the Elders.

SECTION B: The Elders

1. **VOLUNTARY SERVICE:** Subject to the limitations of the articles of incorporation and these by-laws and or pertinent restrictions of the corporations code of the state of California, all the activities and affairs of this corporation shall be exercised by and under the oversight of the Board. The Board of directors shall also be known as the "Elders." Every Elder including the Pastor serves on the Board without remuneration. Serving on the Board is entirely a voluntary service to the church.
2. **RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Elders are not to act independently of the church, but must always consider themselves, the Pastor, and the church as interdependent. They must act in concert with the Pastor and the congregation in leading the church. This means they need to gain the support of the congregation in any decision they make or action they take. If it is a significant decision or action and it is questionable how the congregation might receive it, they should bring it before the congregation in an honest and open manner for their approval and support.
3. **DUTIES:** The primary duty of the Elders is, in concert with the Pastor, to oversee the church in fulfilling its purpose of being "a pillar and ground of truth," "that every person might be presented fully developed in Christ Jesus." The shape this oversight is to take in the church might be viewed in two ways:
 - a. The Elders are to "lead" in the sense of "taking care of the church." They are to be like fathers leading their families (I Timothy 3:4-5).
 - b. The Elders are not to act like "overlords" but are to shepherd the flock of God (Peter 5:1-4; cf Psalm 23).

Specifically, Elders are to meet regularly for prayer. Out of their devotion to God they are to oversee the church's Christian education ministries, its outreach ministries, and its missions ministries. They are also to oversee the leadership structures and to work alongside the Pastor in overseeing areas of ministry for which he is responsible. They are to be active in cultivating and seizing opportunities for personal evangelism. They are to be involved in the lives of the people by being involved in specific ministries themselves. They are to have their finger on the pulse of the congregation at all times. They are to learn the names and backgrounds of new attendees to the church, helping to integrate them into the fellowship and cultivate their spiritual lives. They are to examine and receive new members into the church. They are to administer church discipline when needed. They are to be ready to counsel and help anyone in need in the church family. And when necessary they are to carry out, in a scriptural manner, any instructions from the whole church.

4. **QUALIFICATIONS:** As outlined in I Timothy 3:1-7, he is to be blameless (not sinless, but there should be nothing in his character which people in or out of the church can point to and say he is unfit to serve). He is to be a "one woman kind of husband." He is to be spiritually clear-thinking, sensible, and well-ordered. An Elder is to be hospitable (reaching out to strangers), able to teach (able to gather the teaching of scripture together to make a point and to communicate it to others). He should not be given to wine, not violent, and not greedy for dishonest gain. An Elder is to be gentle, not quarrelsome (argumentative), and not in love with money. He should be a man who leads his own home well, having children who are not in a state of rebellion, but who are teachable, being influenced by the weightiness of their father's character. An Elder should not be a new Christian. He should have a good testimony with those outside. Paul adds in Titus 1:6-9 that an Elder is not to be self-willed nor quick-tempered. He is to be a lover of what is good, just and holy. He is to be self-controlled.

In addition to these basic qualifications defining the character and qualities of an Elder, it is important that any man being considered for Elder have had an effective "Pastoral-like" ministry, either formally or informally, in the lives of the people of Coast Bible Church. This is

important, since a man who is not actively involved in lives in a Pastoral-like manner is likely to make decisions that are out of touch with the real needs of the people. Likewise, to remain qualified it is important that an Elder continue to be involved in a Pastoral sense with the lives of the people. There is no place in the Bible for a purely "administrative" type Elder!

5. **AGE:** An Elder is to be approximately 40 years of age or older. The word "Elder" itself means "older man." Although chronological age is not specified, an Elder obviously had maturity and experience. Forty years of age seems like a reasonable guideline. Exceptions can be made at any time by the Elders themselves.

6. **SELECTION:** The Scriptures do not state how Elders should be selected or appointed. We know that Paul and Barnabas appointed Elders (Acts 14:23), and Timothy and Titus must have appointed Elders (I Timothy 3:1 and Titus 1:5).

The problem for us today, however, is that we are not "apostles," nor do we have men appointed by apostles, such as Timothy and Titus who stayed in certain locations and helped develop local churches.

Nevertheless, there is a principle that emerges to guide us. In a new church, Elders may be appointed by someone who is already recognized as a qualified spiritual leader.

As covered above, in the New Testament the whole church shared the responsibility for what was done in the church. Therefore, it seems appropriate and wise to gain the approval of the whole church in the selection of the Elders. It does not seem appropriate to "vote" in the sense that the selection is made between or among possible candidates. Rather, it seems that the people should "approve" or "disapprove" of an individual who has been recommended to the position based on his qualifications. In other words, if a man is recommended by other qualified leaders in the church, it seems wise to gain the approval of the body at large. In view of these principles, we have set up the following procedure:

a. Except in exceptional circumstances, the Pastor is considered an Elder of Coast Bible Church.

b. Elders are to be recommended by the other Elders and the Pastor and approved by an overwhelming majority of the church (75% of the voting members present at a regular meeting of the church. Voting is to be by secret ballot).

After the approval of the church, the Elder(s) that have been approved, will serve one year in a provisional sense. During that year in addition to their duties as an Elder, it is suggested that they review what they believe and their understanding of the church. Toward the end of the year at some point they are to be reviewed before the church as to their personal life and beliefs and their understanding of the church. Following this, they are to be confirmed and ordained as Elders of Coast Bible Church. The confirmation should be in the form of a response from the congregation present for the review. The ordination is to be done by the existing Elders. (Other Christian leaders can be invited to participate as well).

7. **NUMBER OF ELDERS:** The principle of multiple leadership in the New Testament is very clear. At Coast Bible Church, we would like to have a minimum of seven Elders and a maximum of twelve serving on the Board at any given time. However, we are to have no more than are qualified and willing to serve. Through experience, we have also learned that too large a group is ineffective in the decision-making process. It is much easier to come to a unified decision through discussion when the group is small than when it is large.

8. **TERM OF SERVICE:** The Bible implies that once a man becomes an Elder it is an open-ended opportunity, and he can serve in this position as long as he has time to do so and remains qualified.

However, this creates some serious problems in our present culture when our churches grow to be large. One problem is that in order to keep the opportunity for Eldership open, the Elder Board becomes subject to growing so large that it cannot function effectively in the decision-making process. And it must also be stated that when a "closed" Elder system is adopted, serious problems can result. First, there is the danger of becoming "ingrown." Second, this system does not present the opportunity for other men in the body to serve as Elders.

With this in mind, and as the number of Elders begins to exceed 10-12, the Elders will create out of this larger group of Elders, a smaller, front-line Board of Elders who will meet regularly, while the larger group will meet only once or twice a year to pray and consider the direction, objectives, and any overall needs of the church.

9. **OFFICES:** The Elders shall elect from among themselves a Chairman and a recording secretary at the beginning of each fiscal year. It shall be the duty of the Chairman to preside over the meetings of the Elders. The Pastor can serve in this capacity in the absence of the Chairman, or the Elders can appoint a Vice-Chairman. It shall be the duty of the recording secretary to keep an accurate record of acts and proceedings at all meetings of the Elders. Each year he shall properly file these records. It is highly recommended that both these positions be rotated annually for the sake of providing leadership experience and sharing the burden of taking the minutes.

SECTION C: The Pastor

1. **RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Pastor as a church leader is never to act independently of the church or the Elders, but must always consider himself, the Elders, and the church as interdependent. He must act in concert with the Elders and the congregation in leading the church. This means he needs to gain the support of the Elders and the church in any decision he makes or action he takes. If it is a significant decision or action and it is questionable how the Elders or congregation might receive it, he should bring it before the Elders first and if necessary before the congregation in an honest and open manner for their approval and support.

2. **DUTIES:** The primary duty of the Pastor is, along with the Elders, to lead the church in fulfilling its purpose of being "a pillar and ground of truth" "that every person might be presented fully developed in Christ Jesus." Therefore, the Pastor shall devote himself to a life of prayer and study of the Word of God and seek earnestly in his life to lead the church including its leadership in conduct and in word according to God's revealed truth. Most visibly, the Pastor preaches and teaches the Word of God. He shall also share with the Elders responsibility for the oversight of the church. He is not to "rule over" the Elders, but is to be an example to them of fatherly leadership and Pastoral care. (An excellent model and guide as to his duties and relationship to the Elders and the church is Timothy, the apostles' Pastoral representative at Ephesus, and the letters to Timothy written by Paul.)

Specifically, the Pastor shall, in concert with the Elders and the church, be directly responsible for the regular worship, teaching, and prayer services of the church. He shall also be responsible for the administration of the ordinances of the church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. This does not preclude utilizing other qualified men to lead the services or administer the ordinances. Along with the Elders, he shall also devote time to leading the church to do its part in helping to fulfill "the great commission" of our Lord: "Therefore, having gone make disciples of all nations, baptizing ... teaching them all things that I have commanded you..."

In view of the wide scope of the Pastor's ministry and the need to be in touch with all aspects of church life, the Pastor shall be regarded as an exofficio member of all boards and committees. He shall excuse himself from sensitive discussion and decision situations which could affect him negatively or which might inhibit others from contributing (such as in matters of compensation).

3. QUALIFICATIONS: Like any Elder/Overseer, he needs to fulfill the requirements of I Timothy and Titus 1 highlighted under the qualifications for Elders. He also needs to have definite leadership and Pastoral skills, so as to fulfill a Pastoral role not unlike that of Timothy.

4. SELECTION: In the event the church is without a Pastor, the Elders shall serve as a "Pastoral search committee." They shall also be responsible to see that during the interim, duties normally performed by the Pastor are cared for either by sharing the responsibilities among themselves, or by seeking temporary help from outside the church. During this time, the Elders shall devote themselves to prayer and evaluation of possible candidates for Pastor. Likely candidates should be visited and interviewed by one or more Elders in the context of their present ministries. Random interviews should also be conducted in a discreet manner by these visiting Elders of people who have been under the influence of this potential Pastor's ministry. When a man is found and examined by the Elders, and determined to be the right candidate to present to the whole church, he and his wife shall come at least once to the church to preach and take part in the activities of the church for a full week, including two Sundays if possible. They should stay in as many homes and dine with as many people in the church as time permits. After his visit(s), the Elders will determine if he is to be recommended to the church for the position of Pastor. If they recommend him, the church is to conduct a secret ballot "vote," approving or not approving the recommendation. He shall be called with a seventy-five percent (75%) majority of fifty percent (50%) of the voting membership.

5. TERM OF SERVICE: A Pastor can resign at any time he feels unable to function as he should in the church. The church would request that he give at least one month's notice and that, as he is able, he leave supporting the church and its ministries, and loving its people. Except in matters of fundamental doctrine, he should never leave the church divided or wounded in spirit. If he senses insurmountable problems between himself and the leadership and the church over his personality or style of ministry, he should step aside in love, and the church should graciously help him to leave without wounding his spirit or damaging his potential for a future ministry.

Of course, this is the ideal and sometimes leaders have to be removed because of moral or personal failure, or because they have grown indifferent to the church. In such cases, the Elders are to counsel with the Pastor regarding their conviction that he needs to resign. If he fails to resign, the Elders are to recommend to the congregation that the Pastor be appropriately terminated. A simple majority of fifty percent (50%) of the voting membership will clearly indicate that the Pastor no longer has the majority support of the church and is effectively terminated.

6. COMPENSATION: The Pastor's compensation package will be evaluated by the financial planning committee each year, considering any recommendations made by the Elders (see above). Any changes are given to the Elders for their approval. The changes become effective at their discretion. As mentioned above, the congregation can question and make recommendations on any part of the budget, including the Pastor's compensation, at the annual meeting.

SECTION D: The Ministry Staff

(Ministry staff serve the church in specialized capacities demanding time and abilities that would be more typical of vocational Christian workers and are usually compensated appropriately.)

1. RESPONSIBILITIES: All ministry staff are directly responsible to the Pastor, and will meet with the Pastor on a regular basis to pray, evaluate their ministry, establish goals, make plans and work out problems. Ministry staff are not to try to circumvent the Pastor's authority by going on their own to the Elders for approval of something they want to do or that they want done. They must consider themselves part of a ministry team, and therefore need to support all of those striving to serve, including the Pastor. This does not preclude working with key Elders critical to their area of ministry.

Ministry staff that have been “home grown,” having been in the church for a number of years are eligible to become ministry leaders, church officers or Elders provided there is no conflict of interest and the Pastor approves.

Ministry staff coming from outside the church should serve in the church for approximately five years before being considered eligible for a church office. This will enable them to become fully integrated into the church family and to have achieved the sensitive balance necessary to serve as staff and hold an office in the church at the same time. Such a decision should be made by the Pastor in consultation with the Elders.

2. **DUTIES:** As outlined by the Pastor with the Board of Elders.

3. **QUALIFICATIONS:** As staff servant/leaders they need to fulfill the qualifications as outlined in Scripture for men and women as servant-leaders (I Tim 3:8-13; Titus 2:3). If men will be serving in a “Pastoral” role, they need to fulfill the qualifications for personal character mentioned above for Elder.

4. **SELECTION:** Part-time ministry staff are appointed by the Pastor subject to the approval of the Elders. Full-time ministry staff are recommended by the Pastor, evaluated and approved by the Elders, and then recommended to the church by the Pastor and the Elders for their approval. A full-time staff member shall be called with a seventy-five percent (75%) approval of at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the membership.

5. **NUMBER:** The number of staff should not exceed the ability to remunerate them in a fair and reasonable manner.

6. **TERM OF SERVICE:** Ministry staff can resign at any time they are unable to function as they should or can be terminated at any time by the Pastor in consultation with the Elders, but always in a spirit of love and grace. The principles above under Pastor’s term of service should be considered in this process.

7. **COMPENSATION:** Ministry staff can be volunteers or they can be paid. All compensation will be set by the Finance Committee in consultation with the Pastor and the Elders. Compensation packages will be reviewed yearly by the Finance Committee.

SECTION E: The Administrative and Specialized Staff

Administrative staff such as secretaries, bookkeepers, administrators, musicians, et al, will be recommended by those who will be depending upon these administrative staff and approved by the Elders and Pastor. Prior to their being offered the position, they will be given a job description outlining their responsibilities, duties, qualifications and the procedures for resignation or termination.

SECTION F: Church Officers and Formal Committees

Church officers and formal church committees form a vital part of the church government structure. The Elders are responsible for the appointment of church officers and with the coordination of the Pastor and ministry staff have the authority to add or remove church structures as needed. The church office of Treasurer and the Finance Committee are two special government structures designed to care for the financial management of the church.

1. **TREASURER:** It shall be the duty of the church Treasurer to receive, credit, and disburse all moneys and properties received by the church. All disbursements not planned for in the budget and over one-third of one percent (.33%) but under one percent (1%) must be unanimously approved by two of the following: the Chairman of the Finance Committee, the Chairman of the Elders or the Pastor. Expenditures over one percent (1%) but under five percent (5%) must be

approved by the Elders and the Pastor. These limits are flexible and can be changed as needed by the Elders up to five percent (5%) of the annual budget. Unplanned expenditures over five percent (5%) of the budget shall be brought before the whole church for their approval. The requirement for approval is a simple majority of a quorum of church members.

The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all transactions and submit a monthly summary to the membership, with a full accounting annually.

He or she shall have charge of all legal papers and records pertaining to church property and finances, and his records shall be available to the church at all times. However, if necessary, the majority of the work can be delegated out to someone else in the church or to a paid bookkeeper, but only under the watchful eye of the appointed Treasurer. As Treasurer he needs to be constantly aware of the church's financial situation.

As an important leader, the Treasurer needs to fulfill the qualifications as outlined in Scripture for men and women as servant-leaders (I Tim 3:8-13; Titus 2:3).

2. FINANCE COMMITTEE: The Elders will appoint two church members, two Elders, the Treasurer, and the Pastor to constitute a Finance Committee. The church members appointed must fulfill the qualifications as outlined in Scripture for men and women as servant-leaders (I Tim 3:8-13; Titus 2:3).

First, the committee will review the church's financial performance of the past year and will meet annually with all paid staff and leaders of ministries requiring significant funding. This committee will then prepare a proposed budget for the new fiscal year to be approved by the Elders and the whole church. The congregation can question and make recommendations on any part of the budget at meetings of the church. Significant concern over any one item in the budget should provoke the Finance Committee and Elders to further evaluation and possible changes. However, to avoid excessive debate over specifics, the congregation will be asked to deal with the budget in total - whether to approve, disapprove, or approve with specific reservations the budget in total. If they disapprove, the Finance Committee and Elders will meet together, rework the budget and resubmit it at another meeting of the congregation. If the congregation approves the budget with reservation, the Finance Committee and Elders will consider the concerns expressed by the congregation, making any appropriate adjustments they deem are in the best interest of the church. The budget will not be resubmitted.

Second, the Finance Committee will also work on special financial projects that it senses are necessary to help the church with its financial needs or are recommended to it by the elders. This may include, but is not limited to, special capital campaigns, debt analysis and assistance to the Treasurer in various tasks related to the finances of the church.

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ARTICLE VI Meetings

Section A: The Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall be from January 1 to December 31.

Section B: The Annual Meeting

The annual congregational meeting shall be held within three weeks after the close of the fiscal year on a date fixed by the Elders and announced to the congregation each of the three preceding weeks at a regular Sunday service. The Chairman of the Board of Elders (or an Elder appointed by the Board of Elders) shall lead the congregational meeting.

The annual meeting shall consist of the reading of the minutes of the preceding annual meeting and of any called meetings during the preceding year, the Treasurer's report including a review of actual expenses in light of the previous year's budget, and approval of the new budget prepared by the Finance Committee and approved by the Elders. The Elders should provide a summary report on the condition of the church and any other matters they deem important. It is highly recommended that the Pastor or one of the Elders precede the meeting with a message challenging the church in areas of need. Also as needed, there will be reports from selected leaders and ministries within the church. Furthermore, at this meeting the congregation will be asked to approve or disapprove recommendations for Elders as well as to confirm Elders who have served and been examined after one year. Decisions involving individual people should be made by secret ballot. The meeting shall conclude with a time of prayer as appropriate.

Section C: Special Meetings

Special meetings of the congregation may be held at the request of the Elders and/or the Pastor, or the written request of at least ten percent (10%) of the membership. Notice of such meetings shall be announced to the congregation each of two preceding weeks at a regular Sunday service.

Special meetings of the congregation are generally called by the Elders and Pastor for purposes of gaining approval and support from the congregation for matters of business that would have a widespread or lasting impact upon the whole church and that would most likely be questioned by some. For example, a large purchase, a building project, a planned addition to full-time staff, a significant change in the ministry that would affect a lot of people (e.g. going to two Sunday morning services), approving the calling or removal of a full-time staff member, the removal of an Elder, the discipline of an unrepentant member. Ten percent (10%) of the congregation could call a meeting for similar reasons; but it would be expected that they first discuss the situation with the Board of Elders.

Section D: Selection of Leadership

Sixty days prior to the annual congregational meeting the Board of Elders shall make available to the congregation a "suggestion for leadership form," and encourage the congregation to suggest names of people they believe to be qualified for leadership and in what capacity. The Elders shall seriously consider all suggestions. In some cases these people might immediately be recognized and approved or disapproved by the Elders, in other cases, time may be needed to evaluate the suitability of someone for leadership. In all cases the Elders are to initially select those who are recommended or appointed and then they are to be brought before the congregation for approval or disapproval.

Section E: A Quorum

A quorum at any annual or special meeting of the congregation shall be twenty-five percent (25%) of the voting members. Decisions of the quorum shall be final in all matters except in the disposition of church property, the calling or removing of a Pastor, or amendments to the constitution, by-laws, or articles of faith, which shall require a quorum of fifty percent (50%) of the voting members and a seventy-five percent (75%) majority vote.

However, as congregations grow in size, oftentimes the willingness of people to participate in the business of the church declines. While we hope this does not happen, the following plan is to be instituted if it does. If after one attempt to get out fifty percent (50%) of the membership fails, another meeting will be called in which only forty percent (40%) of the membership will be required to form a quorum. If forty percent (40%) of the membership fails to show up at this meeting, then another meeting is to be called at which only thirty percent (30%) will be required to form a quorum. If thirty percent (30%) of the membership fail to show, then another meeting is to be called in which only twenty-five percent (25%) of the membership will be required for the

exceptional decisions as is true for most matters. However, a seventy-five (75%) majority of those present is still required to approve a decision involving one of the exceptions mentioned above. No new or other business may be brought up at these recalled meetings.

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ARTICLE VII Amendments

This constitution may be amended by at least a seventy-five percent (75%) majority vote of fifty percent (50%) of the voting membership. Such amendment shall take place at any regular or special meeting of the membership, provided that the proposed amendment has been distributed in writing to members at least three weeks prior to the meeting and that such amendments are in agreement with the Word of God. Alterations that do not change the essential meaning of the constitution may be made by the Elders at any time (e.g. corrections of spelling, punctuation and grammar as well as the rewording of a sentence or paragraph, or minor additions or subtractions for the sake of clarity). A list of such changes is to be distributed at the annual meeting. 10% of the voting membership present at the meeting can request that a specific change of this nature be put to a vote, in which case the rules for amendments must be followed.

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ARTICLE VIII Dissolution

No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall ever accrue to the benefit of any donor, member, director or officer of the Corporation or to any private individual, and no donor, member, director, officer of the Corporation, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the Corporation assets. Upon dissolution, any assets of the Corporation will go to one or more non-profit organizations that agree with our doctrinal statement. Such organizations are to be recommended by the Elders and approved by a seventy-five percent (75%) majority of fifty percent (50%) of the voting membership.

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APPENDIX A

NAME:

Coast - In the times of the New Testament churches were identified by location. The word “coast”, in our area, locates our congregation as coming primarily from the Pacific Coast region known as South Orange County.

Bible - The word “bible” in our name simply signifies that we put much emphasis on bible teaching, as we believe we come to know our Lord Jesus Christ through His Word.

GLOSSARY:

Evangelical - Webster’s dictionary says the term pertains to that group of Protestant churches which hold to the doctrines of Christ’s teachings, salvation by faith and personal conversion, and the superiority of preaching over ritual; spiritually minded; zealous for practical Christian living; seeking the conversion of sinners; evangelistic.

Constitution - An established and binding arrangement explaining how the church or corporation is to be governed and organized.

By-laws - A specific point of order or rule of the church or corporation in the constitutional arrangement regulating its own local and internal affairs, its dealings with others, or for governing its own members.

Articles - A distinguishable and separately marked section of the constitution explaining the various by-laws.

Proprietary - Ownership.

Inter vivos - Between living persons; from one living person to another.

Preamble - A preliminary statement.

Quorum - The number of members of any body that must be present to legally transact business.

Amendment - The act of changing, improving, or correcting the constitution for the better.

Dissolution - Dissolving the church.

APPENDIX B

HISTORY:

On Sunday, July 2, 1967, Colonel Ridge Ryan and his wife Margo began a Bible study in their San Juan Capistrano ranch home that would soon become Coast Bible Church. Col. Ryan was a retired officer in the U.S. Air Force, and former student at Dallas Theological Seminary.

On June 7, 1968 the church was formally organized under the direction of a newly formed Board of Deacons with Col. Ryan as Pastor. They began meeting in an auditorium secured from Marco Forster Junior High School. This rented facility was used for seven and one half years.

In time, Deacon Al Eaton found a five and one half acre orange grove, which the church purchased on March 9, 1970 for \$80,000. The church began a building campaign. Meanwhile, two mobile units provided additional space for Sunday School classes, AWANA and a nursery.

On May 9, 1976 the church building was completed. Col. Ryan invited his friend, Dr. J. Vernon McGee of "Thru the Bible Hour" radio program, to lead the dedication service.

After Colonel Ryan retired, Dirk Van Proyen was called to serve as Pastor on November 1, 1981. Pastor Van Proyen served as Pastor until 1983.

On November 3, 1984, the church called Arch Rutherford to serve as Pastor, a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary. Pastor Rutherford and his wife, Carolyn, served twenty-two faithful years. Pastor Rutherford was given the distinguished title of Pastor Emeritus in honor of his many years of dedicated service.

In 1986, Coast Bible Church began a partnership with Stoneybrooke Christian School. From 1995-1996, the church and school cooperated together to renovate the sanctuary and build a new education wing.

On October 1, 2006, the church called Neil Anderson to serve as Pastor, a graduate of Talbot School of Theology at Biola University. Pastor Anderson and his wife, Casey, had come to the church as members in 2002, later serving as Associate Pastor in 2005 and called to serve as Pastor in 2006 when Pastor Arch & Carolyn Rutherford moved to Colorado Springs to serve with Biblical Education by Extension (BEE) Ministries.

Through the years Coast has been consistent in its commitment to proclaim the truth of God's Word, to reach out to the community, and to share in worldwide missions.

APPENDIX C

A WORD ABOUT OUR GOVERNMENT:

The following explanation is from Pastor Arch Rutherford in June of 1995 regarding the revision of our constitution in the matter of church government.

In recent years in evangelical church circles, there have been numerous proposals and attempts, particularly among young Pastors fresh out of seminary, to move churches from a congregational form of church government, in which the congregation runs the church, to a federal form of church government, in which a Board of Elders runs the church, often with this young Pastor "Elder" at the helm. Therefore, this Pastor Elder has only a handful of usually hand-picked men to account to, which is a much more secure feeling than having to account to the whole church with its "difficult" personalities. This is usually perceived as being more "Biblical" or "New Testament."

A lot of these attempts have failed, some miserably, so as to leave the church "split" and the young Pastor irreversibly discouraged. Being aware of this early on in my own ministry, I determined to say very little about church government and to work with whatever government existed. As long as a church had some organization, I would learn to work within that organization. As a result I have served in churches in which a large percentage of the congregation decided what color to paint the men's room. And I have served in churches in which only a modest percentage of the congregation showed up for business meetings. There are churches that have "successfully" changed from a congregational style church, in which the congregation had some regular "say" as to what went on in the church, to a federal style church, in which the Elders have the total "say" as to what goes on, having in essence only to report to the congregation. The great danger is that many people in these churches soon feel

discouraged and powerless to "say" anything to the Elders, while sometimes talking behind their back. There is little accountability to the congregation at large, and what is worse, the Elders often lose touch with the congregation or at least with a large segment of the congregation.

Therefore, as we come together to consider changing our church government, it is imperative that we work together to hammer this out, and that the church itself needs to overwhelmingly support it. What I am proposing is a "form" of church government which is not inspired, but which reflects my sentiments and the sentiments of the present Board, and which in many ways reflects the "informal" way we have come to do things here at Coast Bible Church in recent years. In my opinion, it also reflects the sentiments of the Bible. Of course, the Bible is very specific about the kind of leaders the church needs and what they are supposed to do, but when it comes to the "form" of government, the Bible is not nearly as specific. However, there are patterns of "form" that reflect some Biblical "sentiments", which, although they are not binding, could help us stay balanced in this matter.

In the Bible a good point can be made that in many cases, local church "government" involved three interdependent entities. Each depended upon the other and acted in concert with each other to lead the church. These entities were:

- ◆ The "whole church" (Matthew 18:17; Acts 14:27; 15:22; Revelation 2-3)
- ◆ The "Elders" (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:4-5; Hebrews. 13:7, 17, 24; I Peter 5:2-3)
- ◆ The apostles and eventually their Pastoral representatives like Timothy and Titus (1 Timothy 1:1-4; 4:11-16; II Timothy 2:1-2, 22-26; 4:1-5; Titus 1:5)

It seems clear that as local churches matured, the third entity, the apostles Pastoral representative, was no longer needed. However, it is also likely that, although their work was spread around to all the Elders who were to shepherd the flock of God, one Elder surfaced as the primary Pastoral leader. This was a well-known practice in the ancient synagogue of Israel which had a number of Elders but among those Elders there was a chief Elder who influenced the others and who spoke for the group.

Although our current practice of calling a Pastor and appointing him as the primary leader of the church has its roots more in the Episcopal type church (Roman Catholic), it does seem to loosely parallel the Biblical patterns mentioned above. It parallels the "Pastoral representative" of the apostles' concept in that he is usually ordained by a group of churches and/or Christian leaders and is called from outside a particular local church to Pastor and oversee that church. On the other hand, as he settles into the church, working with the leadership, he usually earns the respect of the leaders, being regarded as the primary leader of the church.

Therefore, in trying to respect our current practices and the sentiments of the New Testament, I would like to propose the following changes to our constitution.

APPENDIX D

MARRIAGE:

The Bible teaches that marriage is the union of a man and a woman (Gen. 1:27-28; 2:20-24; Mark 10:6-9; 1 Cor. 7; Eph. 5:22-33; 1 Pet. 3:1-7). God ordained marriage for the purpose of procreation (Gen. 1:28), support and companionship (Gen. 2:20) and morally fulfilling sexual relationship (1 Cor. 7:2-5, 9).

Marriage is to be heterosexual in nature (Gen. 2:24). The Bible does not endorse any other kind of marital union other than a heterosexual union.

Marriage is to be perpetual in duration (Mark 6:9). In marriage, the man and the woman become one flesh (Gen. 2:24), which is to say their union becomes more essential to their being than their independence. It is God's desire that no marriage covenant be broken (Matt. 19:8). But divorce is permitted in cases of sexual immorality (Matt. 19:9). The Bible considers an unbiblical divorce and remarriage as tantamount to adultery (Matt. 19:9).

Marriage is to be an earthly example of Christ's relationship to the church (Eph. 5:22-33). The husband, like Christ, is to exercise guidance and leadership. But his authority is to be grounded in love, being careful to show understanding and honor toward his wife (1 Pet. 3:7). The wife, like the church, is to exhibit a respectful and submissive spirit.

Out of our love for, respect of and commitment to God's Word, Coast Bible Church cannot sanction, support, host, or participate in any marital union that usurps the Scriptural parameters and admonitions for marriage. In the event that the law of our land renders legislation contrary to our beliefs and compels us to comply, we, like Peter and John before us, will respond: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20).