

## **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this organization shall be Bethel Baptist Church of Jamestown, New York.

## **ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

Our purpose is to glorify God by conducting a Baptist church in accordance with the Word of God, the Articles of Faith, the Covenant, and the Constitution of this local church; promoting the worship of our God; edifying believers; teaching the whole counsel of God; administering the ordinances and biblical discipline; seeking to win the lost to Christ through personal witnessing and the preaching of the gospel; carrying on a vigorous missionary program around the world; establishing other Baptist churches; defending the faith; and maintaining a good testimony for Christ in our community by godliness and good works.

## **ARTICLE III - ARTICLES OF FAITH**

### **A. THE SCRIPTURES:**

We believe in the authority and sufficiency of the Holy Bible as originally written, consisting of 39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament books and not including the so-called Apocrypha; that it was verbally and plenary inspired and is the product of Spirit-controlled men, and therefore is truth without any admixture of error. We believe the Bible to be the true center of Christian unity and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creed, and opinions shall be tried. II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:19-21

### **B. THE TRUE GOD:**

We believe there is one and only one living and true God, an infinite Spirit, the Maker and supreme Ruler of heaven and earth, inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. Exodus 20:2, 3; I Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11; I John 5:7

### **C. THE FATHER:**

We believe that the Father is truly God. He appears to function as the administrator of the Godhead. He planned the work of creation and redemption. John 1:14; Hebrews 1:2, 3, 6; Ephesians 1:4-11; Acts 2:23; 4:28

### **D. THE SON:**

We believe that Jesus Christ is truly God; that He is from all eternity, was active in the creation, entered the realm of humanity by means of birth from a virgin human mother having been conceived by the Holy Spirit; that in His humanity He possessed a human nature and human limitations, yet without sin; that He nevertheless did not cease to be God. Hebrews 1:8; John 10:30; Colossians 1:15-17; Jude 1:1-14; Matthew 1:20, 23; Hebrews 4:15

We believe that the purpose of the Incarnation was to provide redemption for men by means of a predetermined, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory death on the Cross; that He bodily rose from the dead and ascended into heaven; and that He will one day return to earth. II Corinthians 5:21; I Peter 2:24; Romans 3:25-26; Hebrews 2:14-16; John 3:1-16; I Peter 3:18; I Corinthians 15; I Thessalonians 4:13-18

Furthermore, we believe that He is presently the Advocate and Great High Priest of His people and the exalted Head of His Church, and the only Mediator between God and man. Hebrews 4:14-16, 7:25; I Timothy 2:5; Ephesians 1:22-23

#### E. THE HOLY SPIRIT:

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the Agent in the new birth; that He baptizes, seals, fills, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses within, sanctifies, and helps the believer. The temporary gifts (such as tongues and healing) were "sign-gifts" until the Scriptures were completed. The gifts ceased at that time. John 14:16,17; Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 9:14; John 14: 26; Luke 1:35; Genesis 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5, 6; Ephesians 1:13,14; Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; Romans 8:14,18,26,27; I Corinthians 12:13; 13:8

#### F. THE DEVIL OR SATAN:

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, the Devil; that he was created by God as an angel, but through pride and rebellion became the enemy of his Creator; that he became the unholy god of this age and the ruler of all the powers of darkness and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire. Matthew 4:1-11; II Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:10

#### G. CREATION:

We believe the biblical account of the creation of the physical universe, angels, and man; that this account is neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate, creative acts of God without any evolutionary process; that man was created by a direct work of God and not from previously existing forms of life; and that all men are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race. Genesis 1, 2; Colossians 1:16,17; John 1:5

#### H. THE FALL OF MAN:

We believe that man was created in innocence, in the image and likeness of God, under the law of his Maker; that by voluntary transgression, Adam fell from his sinless and happy state; that all men sinned in him, in consequence of which all men are totally depraved, are partakers of Adam's fallen nature, and are sinners by nature and by conduct, and therefore, are under just condemnation without defense or excuse. Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 3:10-19; 5:12,19; 1:18,32

#### I. THE VIRGIN BIRTH:

We believe that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner; that He was born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can be born of woman; and that He is both the Son of God and God, the Son. Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1: 18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:4

#### J. SALVATION:

We believe that the salvation of sinners is divinely initiated and wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who by the appointment of the Father, voluntarily took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin, and honored the divine law by His personal obedience, thus qualifying Himself to be our Savior; that by the shedding of His blood in His death He fully satisfied the just demands of a holy and righteous God regarding sin; that His sacrifice consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's sins in His own body on the tree; that having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in Heaven, and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior. We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation. Repentance is a change of mind and purpose toward God prompted by the Holy Spirit and is an integral part of saving faith. Jonah 2:9; Ephesians 2:8; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24,25; John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7,8; Hebrews 2:14-17; Isaiah 53:4-7; I John 4:10; I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21; I Peter 2:24

#### K. RESURRECTION AND THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST:

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ and in His ascension into heaven, where He now sits on the right hand of the Father as our High Priest, interceding for us. Matthew 28:6,7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; I Corinthians 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:5-7, 31; Acts 1:9-11; Revelation 3:21; Hebrews 8:6, 12:2, 7:25; I Timothy 2:5; I John 2:1; Hebrews 2:17; 5:9,10

#### L. GRACE AND THE NEW BIRTH:

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth, the one dead in trespasses and in sin is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about by our sovereign God in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with the divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith, and newness of life. John 3:3; II Corinthians 5:17; I John 5:1; Acts 16:20-33; Romans 6:23; II Peter 1:4; Ephesians 2:1, 2:5; Colossians 2:13; John 3:8

#### M. JUSTIFICATION:

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

#### N. SANCTIFICATION:

We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God accomplished in a threefold manner: first, an eternal act of God, based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he trusts the Savior; second, a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to his life; third, the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord's return. Hebrews 10:10-14, 3:1; John 17:17; II Corinthians 3:18; I Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 5:15,26; I Thessalonians 4:3,4; 5:23,26; Ephesians 5:27; I John 3:2; Jude 24,25; Revelation 22:11

#### O. THE SECURITY OF THE SAINTS:

We believe that all who are truly born again are kept eternally by God the Father for Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6; John 10:28, 29; Romans 8:35-39; Jude 1 ASV

P. THE CHURCH:

We believe in the unity of all true believers in the Church which is the Body of Christ, which was established on the Day of Pentecost; and that all believers, from Pentecost to the Rapture, both Jews and Gentiles, are added to this Church by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that His Church is manifested through the local church which is a congregation of immersed believers associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; and that its primary officers are Pastors and Deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures. We believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity. We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; that the one and only Superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; that each local church is sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; and that on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, and of benevolence, the will of the local church is final. Ephesians 3:1-6; I Corinthians 12:12,13; Acts 2:41, 42; I Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22,23; 4:11; Acts 20:17-28; I Timothy 3:1-7; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23,24; Acts 15:13-18

Q. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER:

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, under the authority of the local church, to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, through Whom we died to sin and rose to a new life; that baptism is prerequisite to the privilege of church membership. We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. We believe that the biblical order of the ordinances is baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and that participants should be immersed believers. Acts 8:36,38,39; John 3:23; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 3:16; Colossians 2:12; I Corinthians 11:23-28; Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 2:41,42

R. SEPARATION:

We believe in obedience to the biblical commands to separate entirely from worldliness and ecclesiastical apostasy unto God. II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; I Thessalonians 1:9 & 10; II John 9-11, I Timothy 6:3-5; Romans 16:17

S. CIVIL GOVERNMENT:

We believe that the civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for and conscientiously honored and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord of the conscience and the coming King of Kings. Romans 13:1-7; II Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21,22; Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:29; 4:19,20; Daniel 3:17,18

T. ISRAEL:

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people; that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ; and that she will be regathered in the Holy Land and, after the completion and rapture of the Church, will be saved as a nation at the second advent of Christ. Genesis 13:14-17; Romans 11:1-32; Ezekiel 37

#### U. THE RAPTURE AND SUBSEQUENT EVENTS:

We believe in the imminent, premillennial return of Christ for His Church; and that at that moment the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death, and all shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the seventieth week of Daniel. I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15:42-44, 51-54; Philippians 3:20,21; Revelation 3:10

We believe that the tribulation period which follows the rapture of the church, will be culminated by the revelation of Christ in power and great glory to sit upon the throne of David and to establish the millennial reign. Daniel 9:25-27; Matthew 24:29-31; Luke 1:30-33; Isaiah 9:6,7; 11:1-9; Acts 2:29,30; Revelation 20:1-4,6

#### V. THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED:

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that only those who are justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His esteem; that all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse; and that this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in the lake of fire. Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17,18; I John 5:19; Romans 6:23; Proverbs 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matthew 25:34-41; John 8:21; Revelation 20:14,15