

## **CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led by the Holy Spirit of God to trust the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and to give ourselves wholly to Him, we do now joyfully and solemnly covenant with one another to walk together in Him as one body in Christ. We do, therefore, in His strength and by His grace agree:

That we will exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other, and faithfully warn, exhort and admonish each other, as occasion may require.

That we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but strive for the advancement of this church in the furtherance of the cause of Christ; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to cheerfully and willingly contribute of our material means, according as God has prospered us, for the maintenance of a faithful and evangelical ministry among us for the support of the poor, and to spread the gospel over the earth (I Cor. 16:1,2; II Cor. 9:6,7).

That we will maintain family and secret devotions; train up our children in the fear and admonition of the Lord; to faithfully witness for Christ in seeking the salvation of the lost.

That, as we are the light of the world, and the salt of the earth, we will seek God's power to enable us to deny ungodliness and every worldly lust, and to walk circumspectly in the world, that we may be living testimonies to the praise of His glory; to be just and honest in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and to live, in all conditions, even until death, to the glory of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.

We moreover agree, that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other Bible-believing and Bible-teaching church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Holy Word.

"And may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work, to do His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory, forever and ever. AMEN."

## **DOCTRINAL STATEMENT**

### I. THE SCRIPTURES:

The Bible in its original documents is the inspired Word of God, the written record of His supernatural revelation of Himself to man, absolute in its authority, complete in its revelation, final in its content, and without any errors in its statements (II Tim. 3:16,17; John 10:35; Psalm 89:34; Heb. 6:18; II Pet. 3:16).

### II. GOD:

There is one, and only one, true and living God; He is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:1,2; Deut. 6:4; Is. 7:14; Isaiah 9:6; Jn. 14:9; I Tim. 3:16; I Jn. 5:7).

### III. JESUS CHRIST:

A. His Identity: We believe that Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten Son of God who exists eternally with God, and He is the Saviour whom God sent into the world to redeem the world (John 1:1-34).

B. His Incarnation: We believe that He took upon Himself flesh and dwelt among men here on this earth; that He was at one and the same time both God and man (John 1:14; Phil. 2:6-8).

C. His Virgin Birth: We believe that He came to earth in the flesh by way of the virgin birth, born of a woman who had never been with man, therefore He had no earthly father, but was conceived in the womb of this virgin by the Holy Spirit (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-23).

D. His Death: We believe that He died by way of crucifixion on the cross at a place called Calvary; that He died as man's substitute suffering the full wrath of God, and thereby paid the penalty of sin (Matt. 27:35-54; I Cor. 15:3).

E. His Blood: We believe that His blood, which He shed in death at Calvary, is the only atonement for the sins of man, and that it is sufficient to wash away the sins of every person (Heb. 9:22; Eph. 1:7; I Jn. 1:7).

F. His Resurrection: We believe that He arose bodily from the tomb, and through His resurrection there is a sure hope of immortality and everlasting life (Lk. 24:1-7; I Cor. 15:45; Rom. 4:25).

G. His Ascension: We believe that He ascended back into Heaven from whence He came, and is now at the right hand of the Father, carrying on His ministry of intercession (Lk. 24:50-51; Acts 2:31-33; Heb. 7:25; I Jn. 2:1; Heb. 12:2).

H. His Return: We believe in the personal, pre-tribulational and pre-millennial return of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; His pre-tribulational return in the air for the church and His pre-millennial return to set up His kingdom on earth (I Thes. 1:10; 5:9-11; II Thes. 2:1-8; Rev. 3:10, 19:11-16, 20:1-6; Titus 2:13; Is. 26:19-21; Rev. 4:1).

I. His Lordship: We believe in the Lordship, sovereignty and pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, and that He alone is the Head of the Body of Christ, into which all true believers are immediately baptized at the time of salvation by the Holy

Spirit; that all members of this one spiritual body should assemble and identify themselves in local churches (Acts 2:36; Col. 1:18; I Cor. 12:13; Heb. 10:25 I Pet. 3:22)

#### IV. HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person equal with the Father and the Son and of the same substance and nature; that He convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment; bears witness to the truth; is the agent of the new birth; and that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies, and helps the believer, indwelling every true child of God (Jn. 15:26; II Cor. 13:14; Jn. 14:16,17; Rom. 8:14-27; I Cor. 12:13).

#### V. SATAN

We believe in the personality of Satan, that he is not merely an abstract power or influence, but a living, personal being; that he is the god of this world and the prince of the power of the air; that he is constantly going up and down in the earth seeking whom he may devour. He does not possess the attributes of God (Jn. 8:44; II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2; I Pet. 5:8).

Satan is the author of sin and he and his angels shall be eternally punished (Ez. 28:13-17; Is. 14:12-15; Rev. 20:10; Matt. 25:41).

#### VI. MANKIND

We believe that mankind was created by God for the purpose of fellowship with God. That fellowship was broken by sin (Gen. 2:7; Gen. 3:1-13).

- A. Lost State: Each member of the human race is fallen, sinful and lost, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential for salvation. The moment a person receives Christ as his Saviour, immediately the Holy Spirit indwells the believer who is sealed until the day of redemption (Rom. 3:23; John 3:7; Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 6:19; Eph. 1:13,14; Titus 3:5).
- B. Salvation: Man is saved by grace through faith and nothing of man enters into his salvation; it is a free gift. Man's efforts, regardless of how good or well intended before or after salvation, have nothing to do with it. Salvation is by the finished work of Christ and nothing can be added to it (Eph. 2:8,9; Gal. 2:16; Rom. 11:6; Col. 2:13; Titus 3:5; Rom. 3:22).
- C. New Birth: A true child of God has two births; one of the flesh, the other of the Spirit, giving man a flesh nature and a spirit nature. The flesh nature is neither good nor righteous. The Spirit of God in the born-again man does not commit any sin. This results in a warfare between the Spirit and the flesh, which continues until physical death, or the return of the Lord. The flesh nature of the man does not change in any way with the new birth, but can be controlled and kept subdued by the new man (Jn. 3:3-7; Rom. 7:15-25; Rom. 8:8; Gal. 5:17; I John 3:9; I Pet. 1:23; I Jn. 5:18; I Jn. 1:8).
- D. Eternal Security and Fellowship: Every true child of God possesses eternal life, being justified by faith, sanctified by God, sealed with the Holy Spirit, is safe and secure for all eternity, and cannot lose his salvation. However, a Christian can, through sin, lose his fellowship, joy, power, testimony and reward, and incur the Father's chastisement. Relationship is eternal, being established by the new birth; fellowship, however, is dependent upon obedience (I Cor. 3:11-17; 5:1-5; 11:30-32; Heb. 12:5-11).

- E. Conduct: A Christian should live righteously and maintain godly works, not as a means of salvation in any sense, but as the proper evidence and fruit of salvation (Eph. 2:10; Titus 3:8).
- F. Lives Under Grace: The true child of God is not under the law, but under grace. He is saved by grace and disciplined by grace (Rom. 6:14-15; 11:6; I Cor. 10:23-31; II Cor. 3:17).
- G. Priesthood: We believe in the priesthood of all believers. Christ is our Great High Priest, and through Him every born again person has direct access into God's presence without the need of a human priest. The believer has the right and the responsibility to personally study and interpret the scriptures, guided by the Holy Spirit (Rev. 1:6; Heb. 4:14-16; I Tim. 2:5; II Pet. 1:20,21).

## VII. RESURRECTION

There will be a resurrection of the saved and of the lost; of the saved unto eternal life, and of the lost unto eternal conscious punishment (Dan. 12:2; I Thes. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:5-15; Matt. 25:41; 1 Cor 15:23).

## VIII. JUDGMENT

We believe that everyone, saved and unsaved, shall face God in Judgment. According to the scriptures, the judgment of the saved will be separate from the judgment of the unsaved. We believe that the scriptures teach that these judgments shall be as follows:

- A. Judgment of Christians: Christians shall at this time be judged according to their works from the time they received Christ Jesus as their Saviour until the time they stand before Him in judgment. They shall be rewarded or they shall suffer loss according as their works shall be. This takes place at the judgment seat of Christ (I Cor. 3:11-15; II Cor. 5:10).
- B. Judgment of the Unsaved: All unsaved shall at this time be judged according to their works and cast into the lake of fire to suffer forever according as their works shall be. This is called the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15).

## IX. THE WORLD TO COME

We believe that the end of this present world will come by fire, and the world to come will be eternal; that in the world to come there will be two eternal places: a place of endless joy for all the people of God who have been saved by His grace, and a place of endless punishment for all who have never been reconciled to God by the blood of Christ. These two places are known as heaven and hell.

- A. Heaven: A place of beauty and bliss, wherein dwelleth righteousness, where God will dwell with His people forever (II Cor. 12:2-4; 5:1; I Pet. 1:3-5; Rev. 21; 22).
- B. Hell: A place of ceaseless torment, characterized by fire and brimstone, a place where all who have scorned God's love will suffer forever (Lk. 16:19-31; Matt. 5:22,29,30; Matt. 23:33; Rev. 21:8).

## X. THE LOCAL CHURCH:

We believe in the importance of the local church and that it is an assembly of born-again baptized believers united in organization to practise New Testament ordinances, to meet together for worship, prayer, fellowship, teaching, and a united testimony; and to actively engage in carrying out the Great Commission (Matt. 16:18; Acts 13:1-3; 15:4; 16:5; I Cor. 11:2).

- A. State Government: We believe in the separation of church and state, with each having definite and distinct spheres of responsibility (Matt. 22:17-21).
- B. Ecclesiastical Government: We believe in the independence and autonomy of the local church, and that no religious hierarchy has any scriptural grounds to dictate and run the affairs of any local church (Acts 13:1-3).
- C. Ordinances: We believe the ordinances given to the local church are two, baptism and the Lord's supper. Baptism is by immersion of believers, thus portraying the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Lord's supper is the partaking of the bread and cup by the believer as a continuing memorial of the broken body and shed blood of Christ, until He returns (Rom. 6:3,4; I Cor. 11:2,23-26).
- D. Leadership: We believe that men are not depicted as being superior to women in the Scriptures. However, God has ordained the leadership role of pastor and deacon in the local church to men only. (I Cor. 14:34,35; I Tim. 3:10-12)

## XI. THE SIGN GIFTS

We believe that the sign gifts, namely "healing," "working of miracles," "tongues" and the "interpretation of tongues" were temporary in nature. The function of these gifts of the Holy Spirit was confirmatory. God was authenticating the authority and message of His servants by "bearing them witness" through the manifestations of supernatural power. Since we now have the completed scriptures to authenticate the claims of Christ, we believe the sign gifts are no longer valid for today (I Cor. 13:8-13; I Cor. 14:22; Heb. 2:3-4).

## XII. THEOLOGICAL MOVEMENTS

A number of theological movements in our day have created considerable confusion; therefore, Open Door Baptist Church, Melton, would like to clarify its position on the following contemporary issues:

- A. "Hyper Calvinism": We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died as a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the whole world (I Jn. 2:2), and, therefore, we do not embrace any position which negates or eliminates human responsibility in either the proclamation or reception of the gospel message.

We believe the saved are the elect of God chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and that God's sovereignty does not negate man's freedom and responsibility, so that all men are invited genuinely to believe and be saved (Eph. 1:4; Jn. 3:16).

- B. "The Ecumenical Movement": The ecumenical movement seeks the eventual union of all religions into one super church. This means that every church, religion or religious body participating in the merger must compromise its beliefs in areas of faith and practice to conform to the will of the whole body.

We are opposed to the World Council of Churches and its affiliates as they are the leaders of this movement. We are opposed to the ecumenical movement and to any dialogue with these groups. We purpose to stand true to the purity of the scriptures, the deity of our Lord and the Christian Faith as outlined in the New Testament (I Cor. 6:11-18).

- C. "Neo-Orthodoxy": is a subtle form of liberalism involving alteration of Biblical terms without strict adherence to the truth of the scriptures. We oppose this movement. We believe and teach that the Word of God is completely without error, and its authority does not depend upon its acceptance or rejection by man (Jude 3; Eph. 5:11).
- D. "Neo-Evangelicalism": is a movement which seeks to modify the Word of God through the substitution of man's reason for God's Revelation, placing love above sound doctrine as a basis for Christian fellowship, and advocating the rethinking of the fundamentals of the faith. We take a firm stand against New Evangelicalism and that which promotes this position (Col. 2:8; I Jn. 5:2,3).