

**THE CONSTITUTION OF
LINCOLN COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
Adopted July 7, 2003**

ARTICLE I -- GENERAL

The Lincoln Community Bible Church of Lincolnton, North Carolina, chartered under North Carolina law as a nonprofit organization was founded because of the trend today away from the consistent exposition of the Scriptures in the local church. Realizing that God has called Christians to be diligent students of His Word, this local church has been formed to provide a legitimate forum for the understanding of the message of God to mankind.

The Lincoln Community Bible Church is autonomous in the governing of her affairs, exercising complete control of all property in her established leadership.

ARTICLE II -- NAME

The name of this church shall be Lincoln Community Bible Church located in Lincolnton, North Carolina.

ARTICLE III -- PURPOSE

The purpose of this church is to consistently proclaim God's word in an expository manner so that the hearers will be able to participate in the life of God by receiving Jesus Christ as Savior; by growing in His grace and in the knowledge of Him; by serving and worshipping God in love; and by enjoying Christian fellowship without unnecessary conflict. Matt. 18:20; I Thess. 5:11-15; Acts 20:7; Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 10:25.

ARTICLE IV -- DOCTRINE

I. DOCTRINAL STATEMENT.

- A. **THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.** We believe the orthodox protestant Bible, in the original writings of Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic to be the verbally inspired Word of God. It is inerrant, infallible, God-breathed, and of supreme and final authority in all matters of life and faith. II Tim. 3:16; Heb. 4:12; I Pet. 1:23; II Pet. 1:21.
- B. **THE GODHEAD.** We believe in One Triune God, existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, eternal in Being, identical in essence, equal in power and glory, and possessing the same attributes and perfection. Duet. 6:4; Matt. 3:16, 17; 28:19; II Cor. 13:14; Eph. 2:18; 4:4-6.
- C. **THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST.** We believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, Who is the Eternal Word manifested in a human body of flesh. We believe:

1. That He eternally exists as God. Micah 5:2; John 1:1-3, 14; 10:30; 14:9; Col. 1:15-19; and Col. 2:9.
2. That He was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Matt. 1:18.
3. That He was born of the virgin, Mary. Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 2:4-7.
4. That He is true God and true man, and that He was tempted in every way as we are, yet He was without sin. Matt. 4:1-11; Heb. 4:15.
5. That He died for our sins as a substitutionary sacrifice, fulfilling the Scripture. Matt. 27:31-54; Rom. 5:8-10; I Cor. 15:3.
6. That He literally, bodily arose from the dead. Luke 24:1-9; I Cor. 15:3.
7. That He ascended into heaven and is now seated at His Father's right hand, assuring us of the perfection of His work of redemption. Acts 1:9-11; Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 3:1; Heb. 12:2.
8. That He is the Head of His Church and leads in its activities, and on behalf of the individual believer, He now intercedes for our weaknesses and appears as our advocate when we sin. Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:22-23; Heb. 7:25; 9:24.
9. That He will return to rapture or resurrect His saints who are to be active participants in His kingdom. I Thess. 4:13-17; 5:4-9; Rev. 3:10; 6:6-16:17.
10. That He will personally return to earth in glory, to judge the rebellious and establish His millennial reign on earth. Isa. 11; Matt. 24:29; Rev. 19:11-20:15; Matt. 24:30-31.

D. THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.. We believe the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Godhead, convicts men of sin, calls them to salvation, regenerates, baptizes, indwells, seals, and sets believers apart unto a holy life, that He keeps and empowers believers day by day and bestows spiritual gifts for service, that He is the Teacher of the Word of God and Guide for our daily lives. John 3:5-8; 14:16-18, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; I Cor. 12:4-13; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18.

E. THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN. We believe that man was created in the image of God and that he sinned through willful disobedience to God and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which has been imparted to the whole human race. We believe that all human beings are born with the law of sin within them, and are sinners in thought, word and deed. Therefore, all are in need of redemption. Gen. 1:26-27; chapter 3; Psalm 51:5; Isa. 53:6; Rom. 1:18-32; 3:9-18, 23; Eph. 2:1-5; Col. 1:21.

F. SALVATION. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him as Savior are justified on the basis of His shed blood. We believe in justification by faith alone. John 1:12-13; 3:16; Rom. 5:1-9,11; 8:1; 10:9-10; I Cor. 15:3-4; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-9.

1. Salvation is by grace; a free gift of God granted apart from human performance of righteous works. Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5.
2. Salvation is by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. John 3:16; 14:6; Acts 16:30-31.
3. All who receive Him are regenerated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit and become children of God. John 1:12; Rom. 8:9, 14-16.
4. All who are saved will be kept forever. John 3:15-16; 5:24; 10:27-29; Rom. 8:38-39; Phil. 1:16; I Pet. 1:15.

G. THE CHURCH. We believe the church:

1. In her invisible form is the true body of Christ on earth and all who are born again of the Holy Spirit of God are true members regardless of their organizational affiliation. I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-30.
2. In her visible form is composed of those who organize according to the Word of God, or associate themselves for the purpose of worship, edification and service. Matt. 18:20; I Thess. 5:11-15; Heb. 10:24-25.
3. Has been commissioned by Christ to propagate and proclaim the Gospel unto the uttermost parts of the earth, and it is the personal responsibility of each of her members to do this by means of prayers, giving of their means and witnessing. Matt. 28:19-20; II Cor. 5:18-20; 9:6-8; Col. 4:2-3.

H. THE FUTURE. We believe in the personal premillennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth. Acts 1:10-11.

1. Jesus Christ will return for His saints, to gather them unto Himself. I Thess. 4:13-17.
2. Jesus Christ will return with His saints, to judge the nations and to establish upon the earth His Messianic Kingdom. Matt. 24:29-30; II Thess. 1:6-10; Rev. 19:11; 20:6.
3. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just to eternal abode in the glory of His presence, and the eternal damnation of the wicked in the lake of fire. I Cor. 15; Rev. 20:4; 22:5.

I. CHRISTIAN LIVING. We believe Christian living includes Christian worship and service and that every believer should seek to live a holy life and separate himself from all that dishonors God. I Cor. 3:9-16; Rom. 6:11-13; Gal. 5:16-21; Eph. 4:17-29.**J. ORDINANCES.** We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed by the Church during the present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means of salvation. Matt. 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; I Cor. 11:23-32.

1. Water baptism is for those who have received Jesus Christ as their own Savior and have requested to be baptized. The mode of baptism is immersion.
2. The Lord's Supper is for every true believer in Christ who is walking in the light. This ordinance is open to every believer in Christ regardless of church membership.

ARTICLE V -- GOVERNMENT

I. AUTHORITY For purposes of carrying out our Lord's will in the life of this church, the decision making authority will reside in recognized and qualified elders in the church who shall govern as a Board of Elders. The Board of Elders shall select its own chairman, and shall have responsibility for, and the authority over, all of the functions of the Church. The operating procedures for the Church and the Board are contained in and further elaborated in this constitution.

II. FISCAL YEAR. The fiscal year of this congregation shall be from January 1 through December 31.

III. MEMBERSHIP.

1. **MEMBERS** - Any person who has, by faith, received Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior; gives assurance of his or her desire to trust the Lord for a biblical Christian life; is willing to abide by this constitution; and will, except for extenuating circumstances, attend the services of the church will be eligible for membership in the church.
2. **ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP** - Candidates for membership shall make that desire known to the Board of Elders. They shall give personal testimony to the Board or its representatives as to their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and as to their Christian experience; affirm their willingness to abide by this constitution; give positive testimony to their willingness to submit to the statement of faith and state their place of permanent residence. Being satisfied as to their qualifications, the Board of Elders shall accept them into membership, and they shall be publicly welcomed on a Sunday following this meeting.

ARTICLE VI -- OFFICERS

I. **IDENTIFICATION OF THE OFFICERS.** The leaders of the congregation shall consist of the elders and any other leader or leaders duly appointed by them.

II. **QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS.**

A. **Elders**

1. The Elders are the spiritual and administrative leaders of the congregation (Acts 20:28; Gal. 6:1; I Tim. 3:1-7; 5:17; Tit. 1:6-9) and function as the executive, policy making board of the membership. They shall be in substantive agreement with the doctrinal statement and constitution of this church. Any areas of disagreement must be made known prior to their establishment as elders. To them is given the general oversight of the spiritual life and function of the congregation. They shall guard the purity of the doctrine and life of the congregation and, if necessary, discipline the membership in accordance with God's Word (cf. Matt. 5:23-24; Matt. 18:15-17). They shall examine or appoint representatives to examine all candidates for membership and shall act for the church in the reception and dismissal of members. They shall minister to believers with spiritual advice, counseling, visiting and comforting the flock. They shall be an example to the church in their walk with the Lord, shepherding the congregation according to the will of God (I Pet. 5:1-4) and keeping watch over the souls entrusted to their care (Heb. 13:7, 17).
2. The Elders will function before the law as trustees of the Church. They shall authorize and oversee the expenditure of all funds. They shall act as search committee for anyone who is needed to function as a pastor/teacher, hire and define the duties of any needed employees, and, in general, establish and carry out the policies of the church as found in the Scriptures and this constitution. They shall maintain a current list of members. They shall, in accordance with Scripture and this constitution, recommend candidates for elder, deacon and deaconess for confirmation by the congregation. They shall also appoint as many other leaders as the needs of

- the congregation dictate and delineate their duties and responsibilities. They shall post a monthly report of their activities for the benefit of the congregation and make an annual report to the congregation.
3. Scripture indicates that a man is an elder as long as he is in conformity with the biblical qualifications as found in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Tit. 1:6-9. Because of this, an elder shall be eligible to serve on the Board of Elders if he is an active member of the congregation, as long as he evidences a conscientious attempt to meet and maintain a satisfactory level of conformity to those biblical qualifications.
 4. The normal regular meeting of the Board of Elders shall be once a month, and a quorum shall be at least 2/3 of its members.
 5. The Board of Elders may have deacons join with them in their deliberations at their discretion but must do so if the number of elders serving on the Board of Elders is less than three. The number of members serving on the various boards and committees shall be determined by the Board of Elders.
 6. An elder who is no longer able to serve regularly because of age, infirmity or similar reasons, may be designated Elder Emeritus by the Board of Elders and after initial confirmation by the congregation, may serve on the Board whenever able to do so.

B. Deacons and Deaconesses -

1. Deacons and deaconesses are to be confirmed by the congregation upon recommendation by the Board of Elders. The lives and Christian experience of such men and women shall conform to the biblical qualifications as found in 1 Tim 3:8-13. Deacons and deaconesses shall serve on the Board of Deacons, if they are active members as long as they evidence a conscientious attempt to meet and maintain a satisfactory level of conformity to those biblical qualifications.
2. The deacons and deaconesses are spiritual leaders in the church and are entrusted with such delegated responsibilities as the elders determine.

- C. The Treasurer** shall be appointed by the Board of Elders. The Treasurer shall care for and keep a record of all monies, receipts and expenditures in a legally recognized form or book and pay all authorized bills promptly, funds permitting. The Treasurer shall make regular monthly reports to the Board of Elders and shall, upon authorization by the Board of Elders, provide such financial information and data to other boards and committees as they may request. The treasurer shall make both a monthly and annual financial report to the congregation. An annual audit of the treasurer's books shall be made by someone other than the treasurer.

III. SELECTION OF ELDERS

Men shall become elders of the church when they become recognized by the church as living in harmony with the requirements that are placed upon elders in Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus. The manner of this recognition shall be determined by seated elders.

IV. INSTALLATION OF LEADERS

As soon as practicable after selection and during a Sunday morning service, all who are to be designated as leaders in the church shall be installed into their ministries by the incumbent elders in a manner determined by them.

ARTICLE VII - TERMINATION OF MEMBERS AND/OR LEADERS

I. MEMBERS

- A. **Request.** Any member may request to have his or her name removed from membership or transferred to another church and such requests shall be handled by the Board of Elders.
- B. **Inactivity.** Any member who has been absent from the church for an extended period and who does not manifest an interest by attending services or contributing to the church's support, may be subject to disciplinary rejection from membership in the church by the elders.
- C. **Other Matters of Discipline.**
 - 1. Discipline in the congregation shall be conducted in accordance with the steps outlined in Matthew 18:15-17, where it is understood that "the church" means, first of all, its spiritual leaders, the Board of Elders, and, ultimately, if necessary, its membership.
 - 2. No action of church discipline shall be brought against any member until there has been a determined effort on the part of the Board of Elders, assuming the first two steps mentioned above have failed, to reconcile said member to the Lord through personal prayer, counsel, and loving effort. Action by the Board of Elders shall take place when it is evident that failure to act will result in harm to the church or any of its members.

II. LEADERS

- A. If a man who is exercising the gift of pastor/teacher for the benefit of the body should be led to resign, he must give the Board of Elders sufficient notice to allow them to make provision for the hole he will be making in the soul of the church. However, he is not required to give more than 60 days notice.
- B. If any officer or leader is to be dismissed, he shall be given clear Scriptural grounds for his dismissal, relative to his moral and spiritual qualifications and/or his quality of ministry to the church.

ARTICLE VIII -- FINANCES

This church shall be financed according to the Scriptures - "Every man according to he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." (II Cor. 9:7).

ARTICLE X -- AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this constitution will be considered and made by the Elder Board.

ARTICLE XI -- INTERPRETATION OF THIS CONSTITUTION

Questions concerning the interpretation of the meaning of this constitution shall be resolved by action of the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE XII -- DISSOLUTION OF ASSETS

This Constitution directs that upon dissolution of Lincoln Community Bible Church any and all assets are to be transferred in accordance to North Carolina G.S. 55A-14-03 to a Christian organization whose doctrinal statement is in harmony with the constitution of Lincoln Community Bible Church.