

P R O P O S E D

Constitution, Bylaws and Relational Commitments

for First Baptist Church Holding Company
of Orange City, Florida, Inc.

Covenant Members of the Journey at First Baptist Orange City,

Through the years, we have seen God move in many powerful ways amongst our church as more and more people are accepting the Gospel of Jesus Christ and progressing on the Road of Faith. As we continue to experience God's blessings, we must also continue to work through the challenges that come with the many new opportunities He has presented to us. It is exciting to see how God continues to provide the resources to meet these opportunities so that He is glorified.

Over the past six years, we have seen many changes in our church as we have carefully strategized how we can best be used by God to reach and disciple more people so that they become fully devoted Christ followers. One of the changes that has become very obvious is related to the structure of our church Constitution and Bylaws. Understanding these are important documents, we organized a team of talented, godly professionals to form our Constitution and Bylaws Committee. This committee is made up of a mixture of people, each providing a variety of insights. They have worked for over a year to produce the documents included in this publication.

The primary and most important reason we need to revise these documents is so that we are accurately reflecting the manner in which we conduct civil business in accordance with laws of the State of Florida and the United States of America. While we are first and foremost a church of Jesus Christ, we also exist as a nonprofit corporation that desires to be in agreement with the laws and regulations described in Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and the Florida Nonprofit Corporation Act, Chapter 617, Florida Statutes. These laws provide many specific benefits for nonprofit organizations, which we enjoy on a daily basis. It is important for us to maintain our integrity by properly documenting how we conduct our civil business in accordance with these laws.

At the same time, the days where we could gather on a monthly basis to handle the daily business of the church and take a church-wide vote to make those decisions, are long behind us. It is imperative we develop a leadership structure that is effective in legally conducting business in the 21st century while still fully honoring the biblical guidelines for congregational authority and pastoral leadership that God has given to us in Scripture. We want to preserve our Baptist identity and polity, while also being in conformity with the laws of our city, state and nation insofar as it is practicable for us to do so. In this effort, this committee has revised the Constitution, Bylaws and created the Relational Commitments that we are asking you to review and approve.

The first document you will read is the revised Church Constitution. It is important to know that the purpose of the Constitution is to clarify our church's primary beliefs, purpose and legal business name as a nonprofit corporation so that we may be in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida and the United States of America. This document focuses on our primary beliefs and also states the various ways our church name can be used in doing business as a nonprofit corporation. Please understand that this does not change the name of the church, which many do not realize is legally named, "First Baptist Church Holding Company of Orange City, Florida, Inc." The new Constitution will allow us to use various forms and abbreviations of this name, including "the Journey." This is very important as it pertains to financial deposits of offerings in the form of checks that rarely, if ever, state our full legal name.

Second, we have revised our Bylaws to be in accordance with the Florida Nonprofit Corporation Act and United States Internal Revenue Code. This was a major revision, designed to be a proper civil document. It is imperative for us to understand that it is purely a civil document and that is why it does not address many of the traditional topics that were previously defined in our Bylaws. For example, the selection of Deacons and

Sunday school teachers, the appointment of members to the flower committee or kitchen committee, etc. are no longer detailed in the Bylaws. These issues are ecclesiastical decisions that are handled through our church as it interprets the Scriptures rather than a civil process that needs to be clarified and handled through the legal documents we give to the State of Florida. What you will find instead in these Bylaws is a focus on how we can conduct civil business issues as a nonprofit corporation such as calling official meetings, considering sales, purchases, or leases of equipment or even land; how we would decide to incur debt; how we handle the day to day business, and even how we establish our annual church operating budget. We have been careful to ensure that all major decisions are made either by a church-wide vote or by those that have been elected by the church to make such decisions. A system of checks and balances is established, while still providing for scriptural authority to be granted to our Lead Pastor so that he can make daily decisions, directing the ministry God holds him accountable for and we have entrusted to him.

Third, we have developed a new document called our Relational Commitments. This document was prepared to be an official church document that will help us serve together and relate to one another as a covenant community of faith. This document is not a civil document nor does it apply to us as a nonprofit corporation, but is solely a document that we have created for our church. It is important for our church to express how we will relate to each other in regards to what we believe, the structure of our ministry, and the expectations of each member. It is designed to be the guideline for how we operate as a church and express how we relate to each other as members.

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee has sought the input of many of our godly leaders as we have written these proposals. It is with great joy that the proposed Constitution, Bylaws and Relational Commitments have received a unanimous vote of approval and support from the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, the Pastoral Staff and the Deacons.

As you read these documents we ask that you prayerfully review them in relation to their purposes. Remember, the Constitution is a statement of our core beliefs and purpose, the Bylaws are for civil business, and the Relational Commitments are for us to clearly describe how we should relate together as members of the church.

We will provide three opportunities for you to discuss any questions you have on any of these documents. Pastoral staff, Constitution and Bylaw Committee, and Deacons will be available. It is our desire that every question is answered and every concern is put at ease. On October 20, at 6:30 p.m., we will hold a church-wide special business meeting that is being called by both Pastor James and the Deacons, for the purpose of discussing and voting to approve the proposed Constitution, Bylaws and Relational Commitments. It is our hope you will come and celebrate with us all that God is doing in our church on this night.

Sincerely,
The Constitution and Bylaws Committee

| | |
|--|--|
| Q&A Schedule (all will take place in the Pastor's Study, located in the Worship Center) | |
| Sunday, October 10 | 10:30-11:00 am (following the 9 am service) 12:30-1:00 pm (following the 11 am service) |
| Wednesday, October 13 | 6:30-8:00 pm |
| Sunday, October 17 | 10:30-11:00 am (following the 9 am service) 12:30-1:00 pm (following the 11 am service) |

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Constitution | 6 |
| Preamble | 6 |
| Article I: Name | 6 |
| Article II: Purposes | 7 |
| Article III: Strategy..... | 7 |
| Article IV: Statement of Faith..... | 7 |
| Article V: Affiliation | 12 |
| Article VI: Distribution of Assets | 12 |
| Article VII: Amendments | 12 |
| | |
| Bylaws | 13 |
| Preamble | 13 |
| Article I: Church Organization and Government | 13 |
| Article II: Ecclesiastical Membership | 14 |
| Article III: Civil Membership..... | 18 |
| Article IV: The Executive Elder Team | 21 |
| Article V: Indemnification of Elders, Officers, Employees and Other Agents..... | 22 |
| Article VI: Amendments to Articles and Bylaws | 24 |
| | |
| Relational Commitments | 25 |
| Introduction | 25 |
| Commitment to Peacemaking and Reconciliation | 27 |
| Commitment to Preserving Purity and Marriages..... | 29 |
| Commitment to Protecting Our Children | 31 |
| Commitment to Biblical Counseling | 32 |
| Commitment to Confidentiality | 33 |
| Commitment to Accountability and Church Discipline..... | 34 |
| Commitment to the Road of Faith..... | 37 |
| Commitment to Doctrinal Integrity | 39 |
| Becoming a Member of the Journey | 44 |
| Church Covenant of the Journey | 45 |

**CONSTITUTION OF
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HOLDING COMPANY OF ORANGE CITY, FLORIDA INC
A FLORIDA NONPROFIT CORPORATION**

PREAMBLE

This church is first and foremost an ecclesiastical body, a local body of the Church of Jesus Christ. It is a body of believers governed by the authority of Christ by the Word of God, the Bible.

Second, this church is a nonprofit corporation governed by the laws of the State of Florida and the laws of the United States of America. We have Articles of Incorporation, a Constitution, and Bylaws that define our church as a nonprofit corporation that has a legal relationship with the State of Florida and the United States of America. At no point do the laws of Florida or the United States or any civil magistrate take precedence over the only infallible rule of faith and practice, which is the Bible. However, we seek, under the guidance of Scripture (Romans 13:1), to be in subjection to the civil magistrate and to be in conformity with the laws of our city, state, and nation insofar as it is practicable for us to do so.

Accordingly, this Constitution will serve as a civil document that will guide our church to operate as a nonprofit corporation in accordance with the Florida Nonprofit Corporation Act, Chapter 617, Florida Statutes, (the "Act").

**ARTICLE I
NAME**

This nonprofit corporation shall do business as "the Journey at First Baptist Church of Orange City." Whenever it is desirable to abbreviate the name of this corporation, reasonable portions may be used. Acceptable abbreviations are: "the Journey," "the Journey at First Baptist," "the Journey at First Baptist Orange City," and "the Journey Church." This corporation may be further referred to in this document as "the church" or "the corporation." The church maintains its principle office at 975 East Graves Avenue, Orange City, FL. The Board of Directors shall have authority to change the location of the principle office. Any change of this location shall be recorded as required by law.

ARTICLE II PURPOSES

Believing in the Bible as the God-inspired, inerrant and infallible Word of God and as the sole authority for faith and practice, and in submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the object of this body shall include the following purposes:

- A. The foundation of this church is the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11), and its code of guidance in all its affairs is the Bible. We affirm that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God (Mark 13:31).
- B. The object of this church shall be to worship God according to His Word, to be a local church of our Lord Jesus Christ consistent with the Bible, practicing the ordinances of the Lord's Supper and Believer's Baptism, teaching all that is contained in the Holy Scriptures, to preach the gospel and to propagate the Christian faith among all peoples: the Gospel of Salvation which is by personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
- C. We exist to glorify God in worship (John 4:23), strengthen believers in Christian nurture and instruction (1 Corinthians 14:26, 2 Peter 3:18), and spread the gospel by evangelism, by missions, adorned with loving deeds (1 Peter 2:9, 3:15; Matthew 28:18-20; 5:16).

ARTICLE III STRATEGY

The purpose of the church is to glorify God. This purpose is fulfilled by encouraging and expecting our members to become fully devoted Christ followers, progressing on the Road of Faith. The Christian community exists to provide support and encouragement to help people grow in Christian maturity. As Christ followers we have a clear destination: "until Christ be formed in you..." (Galatians 4:19). The Road of Faith is our strategy for helping our people follow Christ. The Road of Faith creates specific, practical steps for Christ followers to grow in faith by the power of the Holy Spirit and to become mature in the Christian faith. The end of the journey is that we might grow to become more and more like Christ.

ARTICLE IV STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Bible is the God-breathed, inerrant, infallible Word of God and is the only authority for our faith practice. A succinct statement of the beliefs of this church is that found in "THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE," a statement adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention, June 14, 2000. All civil and ecclesiastical members of the Journey must affirm the following doctrines:

4.1 About the Scriptures. We accept the Bible, including the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament, as the written Word of God. Men, moved by the spirit of God, wrote the books of the Bible so that the Bible, while containing the words, styles, and the language of men, is still completely the Word of God, without error in fact or in doctrine. It will remain to the end of the world. It is the center of Christian unity, and the supreme standard by which all Christian conduct, creeds and opinions should be tested. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation, and by whom the Father is known.

4.2 About the Triune God. We believe in one God who eternally exists in three persons; that the persons of the Godhead are equal in every perfection, and that they execute distinct and harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption. All creatures owe each person of the Godhead the highest love, reverence and obedience. God is an intelligent, spiritual and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present and future, including the future decisions of all people and the end of the world. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature; equal in essence and being.

4.3 About God the Father. We believe that God, as Father, reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures and all of human history, according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving and all wise. God is True Father to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is benevolent, giving gifts of grace to all men.

4.4 About God the Son. We believe in Jesus Christ, who is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He is fully God and fully man. He was always with God and is God. Through Him all things came into being and were created. He was before all things and in Him all things are held together by the Word of His power. He is the image of the invisible God, and in Him dwells the fullness of the godhead bodily. Jesus perfectly obeyed the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands, limitations and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind, yet without sin. He fulfilled the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross, He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead, His body arose glorified and He appeared to His disciples and others. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator between God and man. He is fully God and fully man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to complete His work of redemption. He now dwells within all believers as the living and ever-present Lord. He is the Head of His body, the Church, and should be adored, honored, obeyed and worshiped as God the Second Person of the Trinity.

4.5 About God the Holy Spirit. We believe in the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Word of God. Through illumination He enables men in this day to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, righteousness, and judgment. Through the proclamation of the gospel He persuades men to repent of their sins and to confess Jesus as Lord and Savior. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism and service. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify the Son, who in turn came to glorify the Father. He will lead the Church into a right understanding and rich application of the truth of God's Word. He is to be adored, honored, obeyed and worshiped as God the Third Person of the Trinity.

4.6 About Mankind. We believe that mankind was created in the image of God to have fellowship with Him. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race and into all creation. Through the temptation of Satan man disobeyed the command of God, and fell from innocence. His nature and will are inclined to sin. Being estranged from his Maker, yet responsible to Him, he became the object of divine wrath; inwardly depraved and apart from a special work of grace, utterly incapable of returning to God. This depravity is radical—extending to every word, thought and deed—infesting the whole of human life so that no one is righteous. Unregenerate man lives under the rule of sin and Satan. He is at enmity with God; he is both hostile toward God, and hateful of God. Fallen, sinful man, is lost and without hope apart from salvation in Christ. Only the sovereign grace of God can restore man into fellowship with God and enable man to fulfill God's purpose for His life. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every man of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

4.7 About the Gospel. We believe Salvation comes solely by the grace of God. The Gospel is revealed to us in doctrines that faithfully exalt God's sovereign purpose to save sinners by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, to His glory alone. The good news of the Gospel is revealed in Christ's birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension. Christ's crucifixion is the heart of the gospel, His resurrection is the power of the gospel, and His ascension is the glory of the gospel. Christ's death is a substitutionary and propitiatory sacrifice to God for our sins. It satisfies the demands of God's holy justice and appeases His holy wrath against sin. It also demonstrates His mysterious love and reveals His amazing grace. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man. There is no other name by which men must be saved. At the heart of all sound doctrine is the cross of Jesus Christ and the infinite privilege that redeemed sinners have in glorifying God. Therefore, we want all that takes place in our hearts, churches and ministries to proceed from and be related to the cross. The church is commissioned to preach and teach this Gospel to all nations.

4.8 About Salvation. We believe that Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. The blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the cross, provides the only means for the forgiveness of sin. Jesus Christ is the divinely appointed Mediator between God and man. Having taken upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, He perfectly fulfilled the law, suffered and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners. Those who repent and forsake sin and trust Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit and become new creatures, delivered from condemnation and receive eternal life. Therefore, salvation occurs only by grace when people place their faith in the death and resurrection of Christ as sufficient payment for their sin. Salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. Regeneration is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

4.9 About Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, Baptism is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is an act of obedience whereby baptized believers, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, and in that ordinance remembering His death until He comes again.

4.10 About the Church. We believe the New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a self-governing and independent local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation is subject to Christ and operates under the Lordship of Christ who is the Head. The church is led by elders whom God has called and gifted to pastor, teach, oversee and equip the church for the work of ministry.

The church is served by Deacons whom God has called to care for the physical needs of God's people, work to maintain the unity of the body of believers, and support the ministers of the church who preach the Word. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of Elder is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The ecclesiastical members of the church are those who have trusted by faith in the finished work of Christ and who worship together, minister together, encourage each other, equip each other, teach the Word of God together, bind together through covenant, and share their lives together. In such a congregation each ecclesiastical member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, people and nation.

4.11 About the Christian Life. We believe that every Christian should live for Christ and not for himself. A Christian should live for the glory of God and the well-being of his fellow man. By obedience to the Word of God and daily yielding to the Spirit of God, every believer's conduct should be blameless before the world; be a faithful steward of his possessions; and seek to realize for himself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ and being conformed into the image of Christ.

4.12 About the Family. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. In the first book of the Bible, God began the first and primary institution for discipleship by creating the family. In the first books of the New Testament, a second institution, the church, was established also with the job of disciplining. Families and the church must work hand-in-hand surrounding each other with truth and godly models to follow in order that we may glorify God. This calls for cooperation and partnership between the church and the family. The family is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. The family is the primary agent for discipleship in a child's life. The best way for children to be more involved in and serious about their faith communities is to get their parents involved in and serious about their faith communities. It is the parents' primary role to shepherd and teach their children to love God and to glorify Him. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. It is the church's role to equip parents to be the spiritual teachers of their children. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

ARTICLE V
Affiliation

This church is self-governing and independent of any denominational control by the authority that God has given the church acting through its faithful membership. Recognizing, however, the benefits of cooperation with other churches to assist us in ministering and spreading the gospel locally, nationally and worldwide, this church voluntarily affiliates with the Southern Baptist Convention, the Florida Baptist Convention, and the Seminole Baptist Association.

ARTICLE VI
DISTRIBUTION OF ASSETS

No person, firm or corporation shall receive any dividends or profits from the undertaking of this corporation and upon dissolution of this organization all of its assets remaining after payment of all costs and expenses of such dissolution shall be distributed to the Florida Baptist Convention, an organization which has qualified for exemption under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE VII
AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution may be introduced by a majority of the Executive Elders through written motion at a special called meeting. Amendments shall not be acted on until the next special called meeting four to six weeks later. A two-thirds majority of those ecclesiastical members present at the meeting and voting shall be required for acceptance; provided, however, that at least forty percent (40%) of the ecclesiastical membership of the church on the date upon which the vote is taken be present at such meeting, and that notice of the proposed change or amendment be given verbally to the entire worshipping assembly in all worship services no less than 14 days prior to the meeting and in writing to the active ecclesiastical membership in the interim period between the meetings.

Written notice shall be provided to each ecclesiastical member's mailing address as a hard copy print, separate from other documents so that it is clearly identifiable. Notice shall be mailed/sent at least seven days before the vote so that ecclesiastical members will have a reasonable opportunity to receive and review the proposed change before the vote. Electronic delivery (email, etc.) or notice posted on the church website of the written notice can be used as a supplemental delivery method but shall not replace the hard copy delivery. Ecclesiastical membership rolls shall be determined as described in the Bylaws for purpose of notification and voting. The Lead Elder or Moderator shall appoint a clerk to determine if a quorum is present and record minutes in a permanent record of the meeting.

**BYLAWS OF
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HOLDING COMPANY OF ORANGE CITY, FLORIDA INC
A FLORIDA NONPROFIT CORPORATION**

PREAMBLE

This church is first and foremost an ecclesiastical body, a local body of the Church of Jesus Christ. It is a body of believers governed by the authority of Christ by the Word of God, the Bible.

Second, this church is a nonprofit corporation governed by the laws of the State of Florida and the laws of the United States of America. We have Articles of Incorporation, a Constitution, and Bylaws that define our church as a corporation that has a legal relationship with the State of Florida and the United States of America. At no point do the laws of Florida or the United States or any civil magistrate take precedence over the only infallible rule of faith and practice, which is the Bible. However, we seek, under the guidance of Scripture (Romans 13:1), to be in subjection to the civil magistrate and to be in conformity with the laws of our city, state, and nation insofar as it is practicable for us to do so.

Accordingly, this set of Bylaws will serve as a civil document that will guide our church to operate as a nonprofit corporation in accordance with the Florida Nonprofit Corporation Act, Chapter 617, Florida Statutes, (the "Act").

ARTICLE I

Church Organization and Government

1.1 General. The name of this church is the Journey at First Baptist Church Orange City. As set forth in the Constitution, the church shall be a congregational church, not subject to the control or jurisdiction of any ecclesiastical body or organization.

1.2 Governance. The government of the Journey, is established and headed by Jesus Christ, who is the head of the church. The church is first and foremost an ecclesiastical body of believers, the supreme governing document of which is the Bible. The church is secondarily a civil corporation, the governance of which is established by its Articles of Incorporation, Constitution and Bylaws. The Articles of Incorporation, Constitution and Bylaws, however, are subordinate to the Bible and must be interpreted in light of the Scriptures. Except as otherwise provided in the Church Constitution, these Bylaws shall govern the organization and governance of the Church as a civil corporation.

1.3 Clarification of Membership. Since the church is both an ecclesiastical body and a civil corporation, a distinction shall be made between ecclesiastical members and civil members.

The Board of Directors shall be the civil members of the corporation for purposes of the Florida Nonprofit Corporation Act, Chapter 617, Florida Statutes, (the "Act"). Except as otherwise explicitly stated in these Bylaws, the term "ecclesiastical member" is a spiritual and theological term for a member of the body of Christ that has completed the membership process at the Journey, remains in good standing, and shall not mean an Elder, a member of the Board of Directors or a member for purposes of the Act.

ARTICLE II Ecclesiastical Membership

2.1. Ecclesiastical Members. The term "Ecclesiastical Member" or "Member" under Article II shall not have any civil effect for purposes of state law or the Act but will denote a person who has decided to unite with the church as an active participant in progressing on the Road of Faith by their attendance (Mark 6:39, 40; Luke 15:1; Acts 1:15; Acts 10:27), service (Luke 9:62; Luke 12:34-35; Romans 15:7; 2 Corinthians 9:12; Revelation 2: 19), and giving (2 Corinthians 8:23; Philemon 1: 17). Such person must have repented of his/her sins, confessed Jesus Christ publicly as Savior and Lord, thereafter followed him in baptism by immersion, and given evidence of regeneration by living consistent with his or her profession and the views of faith, doctrine, and practice of this church. Such person shall be qualified to be a member of the church, subject to the provisions set forth herein to the Bylaws of this church.

2.2 Voting Rights of Members. Members who are sixteen (16) years or older shall be entitled to vote on the following matters:

- A. Approval of Church Budget;
- B. Disposition of all or substantially all of the assets of the church;
- C. Merger or dissolution of the church;
- D. Acquisition of real property and related indebtedness; or
- E. Election or removal of the Lead Elder, as defined within the Bylaws.
- F. Other matters presented to the members by the Executive Elders.

2.3 Voting and Quorum. Those ecclesiastical members present and voting at a conference or meeting duly noticed and called shall constitute a quorum of the membership for transaction of business unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws. A majority vote shall constitute approval unless specified otherwise within these Bylaws.

2.4 Notice Requirement. Whenever members are required or permitted to take any action at a meeting, notice shall be given to members no less than two (2) weeks prior to a meeting. Notification of membership meetings shall be given in any of the following manners which shall be deemed to be a reasonable method of calling a membership meeting:

- A. Distribution of written material to the congregation in attendance at all regular worship services;
- B. Announcement of the meeting to the congregation at all regular worship services; or

C. Delivery by the United States mail to each member identified on the membership roll.

2.5 Qualifications for Membership. In order to be qualified as a member, a person must be a member at the time of the adoption of these Bylaws or the following conditions must be met:

- A. A personal commitment of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. A desire to unite solely with this church congregation in a covenant relationship and no other.
- C. Be received through (i) baptism, (ii) letter of transfer, or (iii) statement of faith.
 - i. Baptism refers to a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord through believer's baptism by immersion.
 - ii. A person shall be received on the promise of letter of transfer from another church of like faith and desires to unite with the church congregation.
 - iii. If a letter of transfer is not available, a Statement of faith demonstrating a previous public profession of faith through believer's baptism by immersion is acceptable.
- D. Completion of the Journey's Core Class 101: New Connections (membership class).
- E. Provide an oral or written statement of one's salvation experience before at least one designated church member in which the candidate member makes a confession or reaffirmation of their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- F. Commit in writing to abide by the covenant of membership of this church and accept the Church Constitution, Bylaws and Relational Commitments.

2.6 Reception of New Members. Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, desiring to unite with the church congregation, and meeting the qualifications of membership as given in section 2.5 shall be received as a candidate for membership. The candidate for membership shall then, upon recommendation of the Elders, be presented to the members of the church body at one of the regular worship services. The members of the church may then receive the candidate presented to them, whereupon the candidate becomes an ecclesiastical member.

2.7 Transfer of Members. An application for a letter of transfer to join another church of like faith and order shall be granted, if the member is in good standing, having fulfilled their obligations to the church, or satisfactorily arranged the same with the Elders. The name of the person requesting transfer shall be removed from the membership roll. All letters of transfer shall be addressed to the leadership of the church with which the member expects to unite. Letters of transfer constitute recommendations from the church to another church and shall not be deemed to be individual property. The name of any member who unites with another church shall be removed from the membership roll. Members leaving the church are expected and earnestly urged to unite promptly with a church of like faith.

2.8 Relational Commitments: Relationships in the church will be guided and governed by the biblical principles set forth in a document entitled "Relational Commitments," which is incorporated into these Bylaws by reference. This document establishes our commitments related to peacemaking and reconciliation, preserving marriages, protecting children, biblical counseling, doctrine, ministry strategy, confidentiality, accountability and church discipline. These commitments shall apply to both members and attendees of our church. The Elders are authorized to develop, amend and implement the commitments in the Relational Commitments.

2.9 Discipline of Members. The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church, to edify believers by deterring sin, and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct.

- A.** When a member's life and conduct is not in accordance with the statement of faith in such a way that the member hinders the ministry influence of the church, the member may be brought up for church discipline following the example of Matthew 18:15-20. Church discipline shall be carried out by the Elders in accord with the Constitution and Bylaws and as explained more thoroughly in our Relational Commitments. A person who has been fully disciplined shall be removed from the membership roll and he or she shall no longer be a member of this church.
- B.** Members of the Journey and all who attend or fellowship with this church who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by any two or more Elders, shall be subject to church discipline. Each potential case of discipline will be weighed on its own merits and dealt with according to Scripture.
- C.** Members of the church are not guaranteed confidentiality regarding issues of church discipline, and understand that in submitting themselves to the authority of the church, issues of a sensitive or personal nature may become known to others. This includes, but is not limited to, notification of authorities of criminal activity especially involving the protection of children. State law requires notification of authorities in cases of child abuse and no right of confidentiality exists in such matters. State law also requires the notification of authorities in cases in which there exists the reasonable suspicion that a person presents a danger to themselves or to others, and there is no right of confidentiality in such cases. Members and non-members who seek spiritual counsel from the professional staff, qualified members, and representatives of the church, are not guaranteed confidentiality in matters which touch on church discipline and the purity of the church.
- D.** A person dismissed from the church for disciplinary reasons may be reinstated to full membership if the person's repentance is accepted as genuine by the Elders after the person has made a confession of his or her errors and gives satisfactory evidence of repentance.
- E.** Each member of this church, and all who attend or fellowship with this church, agree that there shall be no appeal to any court because of a discipline process or dismissal. A member who is under discipline by the church, as defined in the previous paragraphs, forfeits and waives the right to resign from the church. Resignation is possible only by a member who is in good standing and who is not under any disciplinary action.
- F.** Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of any two or more Elders, a member, non-member, regular participant in church activities, or other individual, may be notified that he or she is not to be present upon church premises or at church activities for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others and unity of the church. Such required absence may, but need not, be concurrent with church discipline of that person.

2.10 Duties of Member. Each member is urged and expected to progress on the Road of Faith; to live a life under the Lordship of Jesus Christ; to walk with God by devotion, prayer, and service; to love one another; to pray for one another and forgive one another as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us; to do the work of reconciliation; to strive for holiness; to seek to build one another up in love; and to fulfill, as much as is possible, the commands of Scripture, and by faith to live by the promises contained therein. Members should adorn the Gospel of Jesus Christ by their lives. They should live all their days with faith, hope, and love. And in all things to give thanks and glory to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. These commitments are given expression in the Church Covenant and Relational Commitments.

2.11 Membership Status. The church shall maintain a roll of all individuals who have been received as members of the church. Upon being received as a member of the church, an individual shall be included on the roll. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, any member who has failed to attend either a Life Group or a regular worship service for six (6) consecutive months may no longer be a member, unless they are providentially hindered, on active military duty, or granted special exemption from the Elders. Subject to the discretion and approval of the Elders, such persons may be removed as members of the Journey.

2.12 Membership Renewal. To retain membership, each member must indicate a desire to remain a member by completing and returning to the church a yearly membership renewal form or such other document as approved by the Elders. Membership shall be terminated in the event that the member fails to execute the annual renewal commitment in the appropriate time given on the renewal form.

2.13 Membership Reinstatement. Effort shall be made to reinstate and restore expelled members to an active participation in the church. The church body shall restore, forgive and demonstrate love toward any such repentant person (2 Corinthians 2:5-11). If a person who has become disqualified from membership wishes to return as a member within the first year after being terminated from membership, he or she must meet the membership qualifications and seek reinstatement approval from the Elders. If such person is approved by the Elders, he or she will once again be restored as an active member after the person commits to complete the membership renewal form and commits to abide by the covenant of membership of this church and acceptance of the Church Constitution, Bylaws, and Relational Commitments. If an expelled member has not been a member for one year or more and desires to become an active member again, such a member must reapply for active membership in the same manner required of new members and meeting the qualifications given in section 2.5.

Article III Civil Membership

3.1 Powers and Purpose of Civil Members. The Board of Directors shall serve as the civil members of the church and have all corporate powers as outlined for members in the Florida Nonprofit Corporation Act, Chapter 617, Florida Statutes, as amended from time to time (the "Act"), and subject to the provisions and limitations of the Act and any limitations in the Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws. Except for those powers reserved for Executive Elders, the Board of Directors shall have the power to determine all business issues regarding the Journey, including, but not limited to:

- A.** Establish policies and procedures necessary to govern the affairs of the organization in consonance with the laws and regulations described in Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- B.** Affirm and recommend to the ecclesiastical members for a vote of the annual operating and capital budgets. Upon agreement of both the Executive Elder Team and the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors may make adjustments to the approved annual budgets that are deemed reasonable and necessary for the continued ongoing operation of the church.
- C.** Approval of the annual salary and benefits of the Lead Elder.
- D.** Affirm and recommend the candidate of Lead Elder to the ecclesiastical members when the Lead Elder position is vacant.
- E.** Affirm and recommend to the ecclesiastical members for a vote on the purchase, management and sale of all land, buildings or other major assets for use by the Journey, and the construction of new buildings and major renovations of existing buildings.
- F.** Borrow money and make and issue bonds, notes, contracts and other evidence of indebtedness therefore and, by the proper resolution duly adopted by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors.
- G.** Apply for and aid in the processing of all applications for patents and copyrights; receive or purchase patents and copyrights, inventions, processes and discoveries; hold, manage, use and develop the same; sell, license or otherwise dispose of the same; and collect royalties thereon.

3.2 Size. The size of the Board of Directors shall be no less than six people and no more than sixteen people, the specific number to be established from time to time by the Executive Elder Team. In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Directors, the remaining Directors, even if less than a quorum, may by majority vote elect a successor for each vacancy to fill the unexpired term.

3.3 Composition. The Board of Directors shall consist of:

- A. Executive Elders Team—two to seven members elected by the Lead Elder.
- B. Elected Directors—three to eight members recommended by the Executive Elder Team and affirmed by the ecclesiastical members by a majority vote.
- C. Church Administrator—the Church Administrator shall serve as a non-voting member and also fulfill the office of Treasurer, maintaining proper books of account for the church.

The above composition shall be subject to the following additional requirements:

- A. At least two of the Elected Directors shall be financially independent from the Journey, that is, neither he/she nor any member of his/her immediate family shall be an employee or independent contractor with respect to the Journey.
- B. The number of Elected Directors shall always be at least one more than the number of Executive Elders.

3.4 Terms of Office. The Elected Directors will serve for a term of two years and may succeed themselves in office. To facilitate the orderly rotation of members of the Board of Directors, the terms of office shall be arranged as evenly as possible so that approximately one-half of the terms of office will expire each year on January 31. The term of office for each Elected Director shall begin on February 1. Each member shall hold office until his successor is elected and qualified. The Executive Elder Team shall be permanent members of the Board of Directors.

3.5 Resignation. Any Director may resign at any time by delivering notice to the Lead Elder, or by giving oral or written notice at any meeting of the Board of Directors. Any such resignation shall take effect at the time specified therein, or if the time is not specified, upon delivery thereof and, unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

3.6 Removal. At a meeting of the Board of Directors called expressly for that purpose and at which a quorum is present, one or more Elected Directors may be removed from office, with or without cause, by the two-thirds vote of Board of Directors. A Director shall be entitled to vote on the issue of his/her own removal.

3.7 Quorum. Two-thirds of the members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum.

3.8 Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held during the month of February. If in the judgment of the Board of Directors the meeting cannot be then held, it shall be held as soon as feasible thereafter. The Board of Directors may specify by

resolution the time and place, either within or without the State of Florida, for holding any other regular meetings, which may be held without notice other than such resolution.

3.9 Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Directors shall be held upon the call of the Lead Elder or one-third of the Board of Directors. Notice of the meeting shall be sent in sufficient time to be received no less than 24 hours prior to the meeting and a written record of the date and time notice was given. Notice of any meeting of the Board of Directors may be waived in a record by any Director at any time or by a Director's presence at the meeting, except where the Director attends the meeting with the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened. Neither the business to be transacted, nor the purpose of any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors or any committee designated by the Board of Directors need be specified in the notice or waiver of notices of such meeting unless required by these Bylaws.

3.10 Voting. Each Director shall be entitled to cast one vote at any election or on any subject before any meeting of the Board. For an issue to meet the approval of the Board of Directors, it must receive a simple majority vote unless otherwise prescribed in these Bylaws.

3.11 Participation by Telephone. Directors of the corporation may participate in a meeting of the Board by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting.

3.12 Action Without a Meeting. Any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the Board of Directors may be taken without a meeting if a consent, in the form of a record, setting forth the action to be taken is executed by all of the Directors. Any such consent shall be inserted in the minute book as if it were the minutes of a Board meeting.

3.13 Loans to Directors Prohibited. No loan shall be made from the church to any Director. Any Director who assents to the making of such a loan shall be jointly and severally liable for its repayment.

3.14 Committees. The Board of Directors may designate and appoint by resolution adopted by majority of the Directors, one or more standing or temporary committees, each of which shall consist of two or more Directors. Such committee or committees, to the extent provided in such resolution, shall have and exercise the authority of the Board of Directors in the management of the corporation, subject to the limits of Florida Nonprofit Corporation Act, Chapter 617, Florida Statutes, as amended from time to time. A majority of the number of Directors composing any committee shall constitute a quorum, and the act of a majority of the committee members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the committee. Any committee member may be removed from committee by a majority vote of the Board.

Article IV
The Executive Elder Team

4.1 Purpose and Powers. The primary governing body for the Journey shall be its Executive Elder Team. Except for those powers reserved for the Board of Directors, the Executive Elder Team shall have the power to determine all issues regarding the Journey, including, but not limited to:

- A.** Provide the overall vision and direction of the church.
- B.** Establish the structure of ministry.
- C.** Guard the doctrine and purity of the church.
- D.** Oversee and coordinate the day to day ministry.
- E.** Supervise and direct the daily business operations of the church.
- F.** Recognize and enlist Pastoral and teaching ministries, along with the selection, hiring, and dismissal of Elders, ministry Directors, and additional staff members for the development and advancement of ministry.
- G.** Develop the organizational structure.
- H.** Execute contracts and any other document that may be required on behalf of the church except requiring indebtedness by extended terms.
- I.** Select church staff to accomplish the administrative affairs of the corporation.
- J.** Call for a special church conference of ecclesiastical members.

4.2 The size of the Executive Elder Team shall be no less than two men and no more than seven men.

4.3 The Executive Elder Team shall include the Lead Elder who will serve as the principal teacher/preacher of the church and function as the organizational head, leading over the meetings of the Executive Elder Team, the Board of Directors, and the rest of the church in effectively obeying God's leading as revealed in Scripture.

4.4 The Lead Elder shall serve as the President of the corporation and shall act as moderator. He shall appoint a member of the Executive Elder Team to serve as Vice President for purposes of the Florida Nonprofit Corporation Act. The Vice President will serve the role of President during the absence of the President. The President is the principal executive officer of the corporation.

4.5 The Lead Elder shall appoint the other members of the Executive Elder Team who will then be affirmed by the ecclesiastical members by a majority vote at a special called church conference. The name of the proposed candidate shall be announced from the platform at least two weeks in advance at a regular worship service. At least ten percent of the ecclesiastical members must be present as a quorum.

4.6 The Executive Elder Team will serve indefinitely until resignation, death or dismissal by the Lead Elder. Vacancies on the Executive Elder Team shall be filled as soon as practical by the Lead Elder. In the event that there is no Executive Elder Team the Board of Directors may appoint a temporary acting Lead Elder until the position of a Lead Elder is filled as set forth in section 4.8.

4.7 The Lead Elder will serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request either of the Lead Elder or the church. In either case, at least thirty (30) days notice shall be given of termination of the relationship, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, with both Lead Elder and church seeking to follow the will of God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit. The church may dissolve the Lead Elder relationship by a three-fourths vote, by secret ballot, of the ecclesiastical members at a special church conference that is called by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors. At least two weeks notice by mail from the Board of Directors of such proposed action shall be given to the ecclesiastical members and announced from the platform at least two weeks in advance at a regular worship service. At least twenty percent of the ecclesiastical members must be present as a quorum. In the event of a staff vacancy during a Lead Elder vacancy, ministerial staff positions will be filled on an interim basis until such time as a permanent Lead Elder is called.

4.8 When the position of Lead Elder is vacated, the Board of Directors will take appropriate action to secure a qualified candidate to serve as Lead Elder. The Board of Directors will recommend a candidate for Lead Elder and shall bring the candidate to the consideration of the ecclesiastical members, one man at a time for an affirmative vote. A special called church conference will be held for this purpose. The Board of Directors shall give, at least, a two week notice by mail of such proposed action to the ecclesiastical members and announce the name of the proposed candidate from the platform at least two weeks in advance at a regular worship service. At least twenty percent of the ecclesiastical members must be present as a quorum, and an affirmative vote by at least seventy-five percent of those voting will be required for a call. Election shall be by secret ballot. In any period when the church is without a Lead Elder, the Executive Elder Team will arrange for a temporary teacher/preacher until a Lead Elder is elected.

Article V

Indemnification of Elders, Officers, Employees and Other Agents

5.1 Definitions. For the purpose of this Article, "Agent" means any person who is or was a Director, officer, trustee, employee or other agent of the church, or is or was serving at the request of the church as a Director, officer, trustee, employee or agent of another foreign or domestic church, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, or was a Director, officer, employee or agent of a foreign or domestic church that was a predecessor church of the church or of another enterprise at the request of such predecessor church. "Proceeding," means any threatened, pending or completed action or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative. "Expenses" include, without limitation, all reasonable

attorneys' fees and any other expenses incurred in the defense of any claims or proceedings against an Agent by reason of his position or relationship as Agent and all reasonable attorneys' fees, costs, and other expenses incurred in establishing a right to indemnification under this Article.

5.2 Successful Defense by Agent. To the extent that an Agent of the church has been successful on the merits in the defense of any proceeding referred to in this Article V, or in the defense of any claim, issue, or matter therein, the Agent shall be indemnified against Expenses actually incurred in connection with the claim. If an Agent either settles any such claim or sustains a judgment rendered against him, then the provisions of sections 5.3 through 5.5 of this Article shall determine whether the Agent is entitled to indemnification.

5.3 Actions Brought by Persons Other than the Church. Subject to the required findings to be made pursuant to sections 5.4 and 5.5, below, the church shall indemnify any person who was or is a party, or is threatened to be made a party, to any proceeding (other than action brought by, or in the right of, the church) by reason of the fact that such person is or was an Agent of the church, for all expenses, judgments, fines, settlements, and other amounts actually and reasonably incurred in connection with the proceeding.

5.4 Action Brought by or on Behalf of the Church.

- A. Claims Settled Out of Court.** If any Agent settles or otherwise disposes of a threatened or pending action brought by or on behalf of the church, without court approval, the Agent shall receive no indemnification for either amounts paid pursuant to the terms of the settlement or other disposition or for any expenses incurred in defending against the proceeding.
- B. Threatened Pending or Completed Actions Against Agent.** The church shall indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action brought by or in the right of the church, to procure a judgment in its favor, by reason of the fact that the person is or was an Agent of the church, for all expenses actually and reasonably incurred in connection with the defense or settlement of that action, provided the determination of good faith conduct required by section 5.5 below is made in the manner provided for in that section.

5.5 Determination of Agent's Good Faith Conduct. The indemnification granted to an Agent as referred to in this Article V, conditioned on the following:

- A. Required Standard of Conduct.** The Agent seeking reimbursement must be found, in the manner provided below, that he acted in good faith, in a manner he believed to be in the best interest of the church, and with such care, including reasonable inquiry, as an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would use in similar circumstances. The termination of any proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the

person did not act in good faith or in a manner which he reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church or that he had reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful. In the case of a criminal proceeding, the person must have had no reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful.

- B. Manner of Determination of Good Faith Conduct.** The determination that the Agent did act in a manner complying with this section 5.5 shall be made by the Board of Directors by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the Board of Directors who are not parties to the proceeding.

5.6 Advance of Expenses. Expenses incurred in defending any proceeding may be advanced by the church before the final disposition of the proceeding on receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the Agent to repay the amount of the advance unless it is determined ultimately that the Agent is entitled to be indemnified as authorized in this Article.

5.7 Insurance. The Board of Directors may adopt a resolution authorizing the purchase and maintenance of insurance on behalf of any Agent of the church against any liability asserted against or incurred by an Agent in such capacity or arising out of an Agent's status as such.

5.8 Survival of Benefits. Any repeal or modification of this Article shall not adversely affect any right of any person existing at the time of such repeal or modification.

5.9 Severability. If any provision of this Article or any application thereof shall be invalid, unenforceable or contrary to applicable law, the remainder of this Article, or the application of such provision to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it is held invalid, unenforceable or contrary to applicable law, shall not be affected thereby and shall continue in full force and effect.

5.10 Applicable Law. For purposes of this Article, "applicable law" shall at all times be construed as the applicable law in effect at the date indemnification may be sought, or the law in effect at the date of the action, omission or other event giving rise to the situation for which indemnification may be sought, whichever is selected by the person seeking indemnification.

ARTICLE VI

Amendments to Articles and Bylaws

Proposed amendments to the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws shall be approved by the Executive Elder Team prior to submission to the Board of Directors for consideration. Upon Board of Director approval, the Elders shall recommend the change to the ecclesiastical members for vote at a special church conference. The nature of the proposed change shall be announced from the platform at least two weeks in advance at a regular worship service and the actual wording shall be made available at time of announcement to interested members in hard copy or electronic form. At least ten percent of the ecclesiastical members must be present as a quorum and a two-thirds majority vote shall be required for adoption.

RELATIONAL COMMITMENTS OF THE JOURNEY AT FIRST BAPTIST ORANGE CITY

Introduction

The following Relational Commitments and Church Covenant are designed to help the people who attend the Journey relate to one another in a way that honors God and promotes authentic relationships. These Commitments cover important relational issues, such as peacemaking and reconciliation, marriage and divorce, protecting children from abuse, counseling, confidentiality, and mutual accountability.

These Commitments are intended to help us build a strong community of faith. By *community*, we mean a group of people who have voluntarily joined together to encourage and support one another to become fully devoted Christ followers progressing on the Road of Faith. This is done as we live to glorify God, passionately worship God, grow in our understanding of His love for us, and seek to tell others about the salvation and peace they, too, can find through faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.¹

We know that true community isn't easy to achieve. Each of us brings our own expectations and agendas into the church. This diversity usually leads to rich discussions and creative ministries; but sometimes it can lead to conflict. As James 4:1-2 warns, "What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it."

There exists within every believer the warring between our sinful passions and our desire for godliness. At times, no matter how hard we try to build a close community of faith, our desires and expectations still clash. That's where these Relational Commitments come in. They pull together key principles from God's Word and serve as the relational guidelines for our church. These Commitments accomplish several important purposes:

- They remind us of our mutual commitment to work together to pursue unity, maintain friendships, preserve marriages, and build relationships that reflect the love of Christ.
- They help to prevent surprises, disappointed expectations, confusion and conflict by describing how we expect to relate to one another within the church.
- They provide a clear track for us to run on when conflict threatens to divide us, and they remind us how to move quickly toward reconciliation.
- They establish guidelines for how our leaders will counsel others, guard confidential information, and protect our children from abuse.
- They define and limit the spiritual authority of church leaders and thereby pursue the fair treatment of all members.²
- Finally, they reduce our church's exposure to legal liability by clearly establishing our relational practices and by affirming our mutual commitment to resolve conflict biblically.

¹Unless indicated otherwise, the words "we" and "us" refer to both the members and leaders of the Journey.

²When we use the term "leader" in these Commitments, we are referring to the Directors and Elders of our church. When we use the term "member" in these Commitments, we are referring to ecclesiastical members

As you read our Relational Commitments, we encourage you to study the Bible passages that are cited next to particular provisions. We want you to be confident that these Commitments are based solidly on the Word of God. If your study does not answer all of your questions and concerns, please do not hesitate to approach our leaders, who will be happy to talk with you about these principles.

We encourage you to expressly embrace these Commitments and formally join our church by completing our membership process, Core Class 101, acknowledging your faith in Christ, and agreeing to live by these Relational Commitments, Bylaws and Church Covenant provided at the end of this document.

If you are not yet ready to become a member, you and your family are certainly welcome to attend our worship services, find fellowship in a Life Group, and seek assistance from our leaders while you continue to consider the wisdom and biblical faithfulness of what membership at the Journey involves. Please realize that if you continue relating to us in any of these ways, we will assume that you have consented to these Commitments, even if you have not yet formally joined the church. However, please know we do take membership seriously. If you, with a clear, biblically informed conscience, cannot be a member at the Journey, we hope in due time you will be a committed member at another Bible-believing church where you can thrive in the fullness of all that church membership means.

As followers of Christ, we will do all we can to encourage you to grow in faith and godliness and to live a disciplined life that honors our Lord Jesus Christ and enhances the witness of His church in order to bring God glory.

The Leaders and Members of the Journey at First Baptist Orange City
Adopted on

These Relational Commitments are adapted from *The Peacemaker Church*.
Used by permission of Peacemaker Ministries. Edition 1.1

which is the spiritual and theological term for a member of the body of Christ who has completed the membership process at the Journey and remains in good standing, and shall not mean an Elder or a member of the Board of Directors or a member for purposes of the Florida Nonprofit Corporation Act, Chapter 617, Florida Statutes.

³See www.PeacemakerChurch.net for information on how these Commitments can help to prevent conflict and reduce exposure to legal liability in our church.

⁴Embracing these Relational Commitments does not imply that you affirm each and every explanatory comment, biblical interpretation, or resource mentioned in this document, but rather that you agree to support and follow the specific action steps set forth in sections entitled "Commitment to...." If your conscience prevents you from affirming a particular concept or commitment in this document, you may request a special waiver of that provision from an Elder in writing. The waiver is required to be signed by both you and the Elder. Once signed, one copy will be given to the Elder for church records and one copy should be kept by you for your own record keeping.

Commitment to Peacemaking and Reconciliation

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. Matthew 5:9

Our church is committed to building a “culture of peace” that reflects God’s peace and the power of the gospel of Christ in our lives. In the light of the cross, we realize that bitterness, unforgiveness and broken relationships are not appropriate for the people whom God has reconciled to Himself (John 13:34-35; Ephesians 4:29-32; Colossians 3:12-14).

Scripture guides us to respond to conflict in a way that will honor God, promote justice, reconcile relationships, love one another, and preserve our witness for Christ. We are committed to actively teaching and encouraging one another to live out the following principles of peacemaking and reconciliation:

Personal Peacemaking

- Whenever we face conflict, our highest goal is to glorify God with our thoughts, words and actions (1 Corinthians 10:31).
- We take the “logs” out of our own eyes before focusing on how others may have wronged us (Matthew 7:3-5).
- We overlook minor offenses (Proverbs 19:11).
- We will refrain from all gossip, backbiting and slander (Ephesians 4:29). If we have a problem with others, we will talk *to* them, not *about* them.
- We commit ourselves to believe the best about each other until we have facts that prove otherwise (1 Corinthians 13:7).
- If a person offends us in a way that can not be overlooked, or if we think someone may have something against us, we will promptly seek reconciliation without delay (Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15).
- We will graciously and gently offer correction to others out of love, seeking to restore and help them, never to hurt or shame them (Proverbs 12:18; Ephesians 4:29; Galatians 6:1).
- As we seek to resolve differences with others, we will look out for their concerns and interests as well as our own (Philippians 2:3-4).
- When someone tries to correct us, we will ask God to help us resist prideful defensiveness and to welcome correction with humility (Psalm 141:5; Proverbs 15:32).
- We will ask God to give us grace to forgive those who have offended us as God has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32).

Assisted Peacemaking

- When two of us cannot resolve a conflict privately—whether it’s personal or has church, business or even legal implications—we will obey God’s command to “be eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3) by looking to our church for assistance and cooperating with our leaders or wise people they recommend to resolve the matter through biblical mediation or arbitration (Matthew 18:16; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8). If our dispute is with a church leader, we will look to other leaders for assistance.

- When informal mediation does not resolve a dispute, we will seek formal assistance from our church leaders or people they appoint, and we will submit to their counsel and correction (Matthew 18:17-20).
- When we have a business or legal dispute with another Christian, we will make every reasonable effort to resolve the conflict within the body of Christ through biblical mediation or arbitration, rather than going to civil court (1 Corinthians 6:1-8). If the other party attends another church, our leaders will offer to cooperate with the leaders of that church to resolve the matter.
- If a person coming to our church has an unresolved conflict with some-one in his former church, we will require and assist him to make every reasonable effort to be reconciled to the other person before joining our church (Matthew 5:23-24; Romans 12:18).
- When a conflict involves matters of doctrine or church discipline, we will submit to the procedures set forth in our *Commitment to Accountability and Church Discipline*.
- If we have a legal dispute with or within our church and cannot resolve it internally through the steps given above, we will obey God's command not to go into the civil court (1 Corinthians 6:1-8). Instead, we will submit the matter to mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration, in accordance with the *Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation, a division of Peacemaker Ministries.⁵

Above all, we pray that our ministry of peacemaking will bring God glory by helping people become fully devoted followers of Christ, progressing on the Road of Faith.

⁵Nothing in this section (Commitment to Peacemaking and Reconciliation) requires individuals to relinquish their legal rights. It simply affirms that each of us is committed to obeying God's teaching in passages like Matthew 18:16, Ephesians 4:1-3, Romans 12:18, and 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 and will make every biblically appropriate effort to resolve our differences within the body of Christ before resorting to any other processes, including civil litigation.

Commitment to Preserving Purity and Marriages

*So they are no longer two but one. Therefore, what God has joined together,
let man not separate. Mathew 19:6*

God designed sex and marriage to bring Him glory. Marital intimacy reflects the beauty and permanence of Christ's loving relationship with His bride, the Church (Ephesians 5:22-33; Revelation 19:7). Therefore, He established that sex and marriage to be a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman (Matthew 19:4-6). We are committed to living faithful and pure lives before God and before others in fidelity to our marriage vows or chastity in our singleness.

We agree by God's grace, to walk in holiness as an act of worship to Jesus Christ by practicing complete chastity before marriage and complete fidelity in heterosexual marriage by abstaining from practices such as cohabitation, pornography and fornication (Job 31:1; Proverbs 5; Romans 13:12-14; 1 Corinthians 6:9-7:16; Hebrews 13:4). We believe that God designed intimacy and marriage to provide mutual companionship through life's joys and difficulties, to create stability for raising and nurturing children, and to give strength and cohesiveness to society in general.

In our society, marriages fail under a wide range of circumstances. Many people have gone through a divorce before having a relationship with Christ, and others have experienced divorce through no desire or decision of their own. Still others may have divorced because of their own wrongful choices, but have since repented and have been forgiven through the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. We want all of you to know that you are welcome in our church.

We recognize the divine origin of marriage and the devastating effects of divorce. We are deeply committed to preserv-ing marriages and preventing divorce. We therefore require and provide thorough premarital counseling for couples so they may enter into marriage better prepared for its many challenges. We also encourage couples to nurture their marriages by participating in weekly Life Groups. in which people can grow together in their love for God and for one another (Hebrews 10:24-25). As relationships deepen within these groups, we urge and expect husbands to spur each other on in loving and cherishing their wives, and wives to encourage one another in respecting and loving their husbands (Ephesians 5:33).

Our leaders provide counsel and support to couples who face marital difficulties. We discourage couples from using divorce as a way to avoid difficult issues instead of resolving them through Spirit-guided counseling, repentance, forgiveness and discipleship.

God hates divorce and desires that marriage be a lifelong commitment (Malachi 2:16). Therefore, we believe that the dissolution of a marriage is a chargeable offense and subject to church discipline. When a spouse has been sexually involved outside the marriage (Matthew 5:31-32), or when an unbelieving spouse abandons a marriage (1 Corinthians 7:12-16), or when there is serious or protracted life endangerment exists, in such cases church discipline would not be sought. We believe Jesus calls us in this way to radically display His unbreakable covenant commitment with His Church.

While divorce may be permissible in limited situations, it is not required. God patiently bears with our sins, repeatedly calls us to repentance, and freely forgives us when we turn back to Him (Psalm 103:8-12; Isaiah 55:7). When divorce seems inevitable, an offended spouse can imitate God's love by offering a straying spouse these same evidences of grace (Ephesians 5:1-2). This may involve patiently bearing neglect or lovingly confronting serious sin (Colossians 3:12-14; Galatians 6:1). In some situations, love may require asking the church to initiate formal discipline to rescue a spouse and a marriage from the devastating effects of unrepentant sin (Matthew 18:12-20).

Just as church leaders are involved in beginning a marriage, they should be involved when it ends. Therefore, when someone is considering divorce, he or she is expected to bring the situation to our leaders and cooperate with them as they determine whether grounds exist, promote repentance and reconciliation, and exhaust redemptive discipline, if appropriate.

Separated spouses who have filed for divorce should consider themselves married and they should remain faithful to their marriage vows in fidelity and purity until the day a civil court issues a divorce decree. Because of this commitment they should refrain from dating or any other activity that is inconsistent with being married in accordance to Scripture.

Every member who contemplates remarriage is urged to struggle in prayer and study the Scriptures, to consider fairly both the arguments against remarriage and for it. We affirm the goodness and beauty of a life of singleness in God's service both before marriage and after divorce or death (1 Corinthians 7:7, 11, 32-35).

When it is possible, we will help divorced people restore their previous marriage. We will support a decision to pursue a second marriage to a different person only when that choice is determined that it is biblically valid and there is evidence of true repentance and real forgiveness of the sins that contributed to a previous divorce.

We rejoice that divorce never diminishes God's free offer of love, grace and forgiveness. He cherishes and loves every person who has been an innocent party in a divorce, as does our church. God graciously extends this same love to those who have broken their marriage covenant without justification. That love moves Him (and us) to call them to repentance, to encourage and aid reconciliation when possible, and to joyfully restore those who have done all they can to rebuild broken relationships.

Commitment to Protecting Our Children

The prudent see danger and take refuge. Prov. 27:12a

Children are a blessing from God, and He calls the church to support parents in their responsibility to train children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Therefore, the church will set safeguards in place that we pray will make our church a safe and blessed place for children, where they can grow, play, form friendships and learn to experience and share the love of Christ.

We are committed to taking every reasonable precaution to protect our children from foreseeable harm. These commitments include, but are not limited to, the following steps:

- We do not allow anyone to work regularly with our children or youth, unless he or she is a member.
- We require all of our children or youth workers to complete a detailed application and screening process.
- We require that, whenever practicable, children and youth workers serve in teams of two or more and be visible to other workers.

If a child is harmed in our church, we will immediately inform the parents, accept responsibility for our role in the situation, and hold all offenders fully responsible for their actions, including notifying law enforcement as required by law. We will continually evaluate our practices and procedures and consider changes to reduce the likelihood of such harm to children under our care.

Commitment to Biblical Counseling

I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another. Romans 15:14

All Christians struggle with the effects that sin has on our lives and our relationships. Believers should love and encourage one another. Those that are strongest should help the weak. Those that are down cast should find comfort in the scriptures. Those who have sinned should hear a loving rebuke and the application of grace, mercy and forgiveness. Christian counseling is not therapy, nor is it based on secular psychology or psychiatry, it is helping people understand and apply the Bible to their sorrows, struggles and sins. None of those who counsel in this church are trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals, nor should they be expected to follow the methods of such specialists. The goal of our counseling is to help the counselee move to a maturity in faith, increase in the knowledge of God's will, become more conformed to the likeness of Christ, and experience the joy of the Lord (Romans 15:14; Galatians 6:1-2; 2 Timothy 4:1-2; Hebrews 13:17; James 5:16).

We encourage people to seek counsel from and confess sins to each other and to our leaders. Those giving counsel should treat counselees with respect and courtesy, and avoid any appearance of impropriety or impurity during counseling (Ephesians 5:3). To honor the counseling relationship, counselees will be asked that they not compel our counselors to testify in legal proceedings or divulge confidential information they receive in the counseling relationship (Proverbs 11:13, 25:9). State law requires church professionals to report abuse and other crimes to law enforcement.

Our church staff must give first priority to serving our members. We provide pastoral care to any who ask, when time is available, but our first responsibility must rest with those who have become members of the Journey (Galatians 6:10). We may serve those who only attend the church by referring them to another source of godly counsel.

Commitment to Confidentiality

A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret. Proverbs 11:13

The Bible teaches that Christians should carefully guard any personal and private information that others reveal to them. Protecting confidences is a sign of Christian love and respect (Matthew 7:12). It also discourages harmful gossip (Proverbs 26:20), invites confession (Proverbs 11:13), and thus encourages people to seek needed counseling. Since these goals are essential to the ministry of the gospel and the work of the local church, all members and attendees are expected to refrain from gossip and to respect the confidences of others. In particular, our leaders will carefully protect all information that they receive through pastoral counseling, subject to the following guidelines.

Although confidentiality is to be respected as much as possible, there are times when it is appropriate to reveal certain information to others. In particular, when our leaders believe it is biblically necessary, they may disclose confidential information to appropriate people in the following circumstances:

- When a leader is uncertain of how to counsel a person about a particular problem and needs to seek advice from other leaders in our church or, if the person attends another church, from the leaders of that church (Proverbs 11:14);
- When the person who disclosed the information, or any other person, is in imminent danger of serious harm unless others intervene (Proverbs 24:11-12);
- When a person refuses to repent of sin and it becomes necessary to promote repentance through accountability and redemptive church discipline (Matthew 18:15-20); or,
- When leaders are required by law to report suspected abuse (Romans 13:1).

Commitment to Accountability and Church Discipline

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Hebrews 10:24

A. Accountability and Discipline Are Signs of God's Love

God has established the church to reflect His character, wisdom and glory in the midst of a fallen world (Ephesians 3:10-11). His ultimate purpose for His church is to present her as a gift to His Son; thus Scripture refers to the Church as the "bride" of Christ (Revelation 19:7). For this reason the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are continually working to purify the Church and bring her to maturity (Ephesians 5:25-27). We confess our common struggle with sin and our mutual need for God's continual mercy and grace. We spur one another on toward maturity by encouraging and holding each other accountable to love, seek after, and obey God with all of our hearts, souls, minds and strength, and to love others as we love ourselves (Mark 12:30-31; Hebrews 10:24-25).

The Bible sometimes refers to this process of mutual encouragement and accountability as "discipline." True discipline originates from God Himself and is always presented as a sign of genuine love. "The Lord disciplines those He loves" (Hebrews 12:6). "Blessed is the man you discipline, O LORD, the man you teach from your law" (Psalm 94:12). "Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline" (Revelation 3:19).

God's discipline, like the discipline in a family with growing children, has a corrective purpose. When we forget or disobey what God has taught us, He corrects us. This process, which is sometimes called "corrective" or "restorative" discipline, is likened in Scripture to a shepherd seeking after a lost sheep.

If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. Matthew 18:12-13

Thus, restorative or corrective discipline is never to be done in a harsh, vengeful or self-righteous manner. It is always to be carried out in humility and love, with the goals of restoring someone to a close walk with Christ (Matthew 18:15; Galatians 6:1), protecting others from harm (1 Corinthians 5:6), and showing respect for the honor and glory of God's name (1 Peter 2:12). Therefore, we as a church are committed to help one another obey God's command to be "self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined" (Titus 1:8).

B. Most Corrective Discipline Is Private, Personal and Informal

Discipline always begins as a personal matter as each of us studies God's Word, seeks Him in prayer, and draws on His grace to identify and change sinful habits and grow in godliness. But sometimes we are blind to our sins or so tangled in them that we cannot get free on our own. This is why the Bible says, "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently" (Galatians 6:1). In obedience to this command, we are committed to giving and receiving loving correction within our church whenever a sin (whether in word, behavior or doctrine) seems too serious to overlook (Proverbs 19:11).

If repeated private conversations do not lead another person to repentance, Jesus commands that we ask other brothers or sisters to get involved. “If he will not listen, take one or two others along” (Matthew 18:16). If informal conversations with these people fail to resolve the matter, then we may seek the involvement of more influential people, such as a Life Group Leader, ministry team leader, Deacon or any person deemed as a leader by the Elders. If, even these efforts fail to bring a brother or sister to repentance, and if the issue is too serious to overlook, we will move into what may be called “formal discipline.”

C. Formal Discipline May Involve the Entire Church

If an individual persistently refuses to listen to personal and informal correction to turn from speech or behavior that the Bible defines as sin, Jesus commands us to “tell it to the church” (Matthew 18:17a). The process begins by informing one or more church leader about the situation. If the offense is not likely to cause imminent harm to others, our leaders may approach the individual privately to personally establish the facts and encourage repentance of any sin they discover. The individual will be given every reasonable opportunity to explain and defend his or her actions. If the individual recognizes his sin and repents, the matter usually ends there, unless a confession to additional people is needed.

If an offense is likely to harm others or lead them into sin, or cause division or disruption, our elders may accelerate the entire disciplinary process, move promptly to protect the church, and even inform law enforcement when necessary (Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; Titus 3:10-11).

As the disciplinary process progresses, our Elders may impose a variety of sanctions to encourage repentance, including but not limited to private and public admonition, withholding of the Lord’s Supper, removal from office, withdrawal of normal fellowship, and, as a last resort, removal from membership (Matthew 5:23-24; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; Matthew 18:17).

If the straying individual does not repent in response to private appeals from our Elders, they may inform others in the church who may be able to influence that individual or be willing to pray for him or her, or people who might be harmed or affected by that person’s behavior. This step may include close friends, a small group, a Life Group, a Pathways Class, or the entire congregation if our leaders deem it to be appropriate (Matthew 18:17, 1 Timothy 5:20).⁶

⁶If our leaders inform our entire congregation about a disciplinary situation, they have discretion whether to divulge the individual’s name. This decision usually will depend on a variety of factors, such as: how widely known the situation already is; whether there might be people in the congregation who could persuade the individual to repent; or whether the congregation needs to be on guard against potential harm he might cause. Even if our leaders decide it is not necessary to identify an individual specifically, they may still inform the congregation of the general situation and the disciplinary steps they have followed. This general information can help to enlist wide prayer support, let the congregation know that our leaders are obeying the Lord’s command to seek after those who stray, and warn people who may be flirting with secret sin that they, too, may face discipline if they do not turn back to God.

If, after a reasonable period of time, the individual still refuses to change, then our leaders may formally remove him or her from membership and normal fellowship. They also may inform the church body of their decision and instruct the congregation to treat the individual as an unbeliever. This means that we will no longer treat him or her as a fellow Christian. Instead of having casual, relaxed fellowship with the individual, we will look for opportunities to lovingly bring the gospel to him or her, remind him of God's holiness and mercy, and call him or her to repent and put his faith in Christ (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Timothy 1:20).

We realize that our natural human response to correction often is to hide or run away from accountability (Genesis 3:8-10). To avoid falling into this age-old trap and to strengthen our church's ability to rescue us if we are caught in sin, we agree not to run away from this church to avoid corrective discipline. Therefore, we waive our right to withdraw from membership or accountability if discipline is pending against us. Although we are free to stop attending the church at any time, we agree that a withdrawal while discipline is pending will not be given effect until the church has fulfilled its God-given responsibilities to encourage our repentance and restoration, and to bring the disciplinary process to an orderly conclusion, as described in these Commitments (Matthew 18:12-14; Galatians 6:1; Hebrews 13:17).

If an individual leaves the church while discipline is in effect or is being considered, and our leaders learn that he or she is attending another church, they may inform that church of the situation and ask its leaders to encourage the individual to repent and be reconciled to the Lord and to any people he or she has offended. This action is intended both to help the individual find freedom from his sin and to warn the other church about the harm that he or she might do to their members (Matthew 18:12-14; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 3 John 1:9-10).

Loving restoration always stands as the goal and hope of the disciplinary process. If an individual repents, and our leaders confirm his or her sincerity, we will rejoice together and gladly imitate God's forgiveness by restoring the person to fellowship within the body (Matthew 18:13; Luke 15:3-7, 11-32; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11; Colossians 3:12-14).

People who have been disciplined by another church will not be allowed to become members at the Journey until they have repented of their sins and made a reasonable effort to be reconciled, or our Elders have determined that the discipline of the former church was not biblically appropriate.

As we pursue the blessings of accountability and church discipline, we will hold fast to the promise of Scripture: "God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in His holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:10-11).

Commitment to the Road of Faith

“Without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him.” Hebrew 11:6

We live in an increasingly fragmented and isolated world, and this has influenced the way we approach our relationship with God. We often see faith as a solo pursuit, yet God has designed us to pursue Him together with other Christ followers as part of a covenant community of faith. God desires that every Christ follower build their life around a local church in order to pursue Him. We believe that the Christian community exists in order to provide support and encouragement to one another so that people may grow in Christian maturity and glorify God.

At the Journey, we hold that being a member of a church is more than having your name in a database. We are people who, through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, have a desire to passionately pursue intimacy with God and are committed to discipleship lived out in Christian community. We are devoted “to the fellowship”—to our specific local body of Christ followers as described in Acts 2:42. We are committed to God’s plan and purpose through the church.

The mission of our church is to glorify God. This mission is fulfilled by our vision to develop fully devoted Christ followers progressing on the Road of Faith. As Christ followers, the cooperative journey into spiritual growth and development has a clear destination: “until Christ be formed in you...” (Galatians 4:19). The Road of Faith is our strategy as a church for aiding people to become fully devoted Christ followers. The Road of Faith is designed to create environments that help give specific, practical steps for Christ followers to grow in Christ and to become mature in the Christian faith.

We as a church are committed to the following steps that make up the Road of Faith:

- **Reaching** People for the Road of Faith. “Creating Christ Followers” We are dedicated to building relationships with those that are not Christ followers in order to bring them to Christ (Colossians 4:5, Romans 10:17, 1 Peter 3:15).
- **Connecting** People to the Road of Faith. “Connecting Christ Followers” We are dedicated to helping people connect with the church as a covenant community of faith and understand the importance of the local church (Ephesians 1:5, Ephesians 2:19).
- **Growing** People together on the Road of Faith. “Doing Life Together” We are dedicated to doing life together in the context of Life Groups, where accountability, support and encouragement are given (Matthew 22:37-39, Hebrews 10:23-25).
- **Serving** People along the Road of Faith. “Finding Your Role” We are dedicated to aiding people to discover, develop, and utilize their spiritual gifts in the church for maximum impact for the advancement of God’s Kingdom (Romans 12:1-8, 1 Peter 4:10-11, 1 Corinthians 12:12-30).

- **Guiding** People Through the Road of Faith. “Learning More About God” We are dedicated to directing people to increase their knowledge of God through in-depth learning (Colossians 1:9-10, 2 Peter 3:18, John 8:31-32).
- **Sending** People on the Road of Faith. “Being Jesus to the World” We are dedicated to mobilizing people to be sent out to engage in missional opportunities to transform the world for Christ through planting/aiding churches, showing mercy and fighting social injustices (John 17:18, Matthew 28:16- 20, Mark 16:15-16).

Commitment to Doctrinal Integrity

“But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.” Titus 2:1

In regard to doctrine, theology, culture, traditions, lifestyles, politics, behavior, etc., the Journey takes a “closed-hand/open-hand” approach. The closed hand hangs onto the non-negotiable tenets of Christian orthodoxy: sin is the problem, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the answer, the Bible is true, and one day everyone will stand before God to give account of their life. The open hand, however, allows room for differences when it comes to secondary matters; we allow freedom for conscience and wisdom to guide where the Bible seems silent. The open hand fosters unity among the diversity of expressions found at the Journey. Our goal must always be to love and show concern for our friends so that we don’t enjoy our freedom at the expense of their faith. In this way, we are seeking to simultaneously heed the Bible’s commands to have sound doctrine (1 Timothy 4:16; Titus 1:9, 2:1), to love our Christian brothers and sisters (1 Peter 4:8; 1 John 4:7-21), and to avoid unnecessary divisions (Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 1:10, 12:25; Titus 3:10).

The following beliefs represent the core of central orthodox beliefs from a biblical and historical perspective. While a full understanding and the ability to adequately articulate these beliefs is not required, the explicit rejection of any one of these particular beliefs disqualifies one from membership and subject to church discipline. Members must understand that it is their responsibility as part of covenant membership to have read these doctrines in their entirety and address any questions, comment, or concerns with an Elder or church leader before becoming a member. All members of the church must affirm the following non-negotiable doctrine.

About the Scriptures

We accept the Bible, including the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament, as the written Word of God. Men, moved by the spirit of God, wrote the books of the Bible so that the Bible, while containing the words, styles and the language of men, is still completely the Word of God without error in fact or in doctrine. It will remain to the end of the world. It is the center of Christian unity, and the supreme standard by which all Christian conduct, creeds and opinions should be tested. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation, and by whom the Father is known.

About the Triune God

We believe in one God who eternally exists in three persons; that the persons of the Godhead are equal in every perfection, and that they execute distinct and harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption. All creatures owe each person of the Godhead the highest love, reverence and obedience. God is an intelligent, spiritual and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present and future, including the future decisions of all people and the end of the world. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature; equal in essence and being.

About God the Father

We believe that God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and all of human history, according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving and all wise. God is True Father to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is benevolent, giving gifts of grace to all men.

About God the Son

We believe in Jesus Christ, who is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He is fully God and fully man. He was always with God and is God. Through Him all things came into being and were created. He was before all things and in Him all things are held together by the Word of His power. He is the image of the invisible God, and in Him dwells the fullness of the godhead bodily. Jesus perfectly obeyed the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands, limitations and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind, yet without sin. He fulfilled the divine law by His personal obedience and in His substitutionary death on the cross, He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead, His body arose glorified and He appeared to His disciples and others. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator between God and man. He is fully God and fully man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to complete His work of redemption. He now dwells within all believers as the living and ever-present Lord. He is the Head of His body, the Church, and should be adored, honored, obeyed and worshiped as God the Second Person of the Trinity.

About God the Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Word of God. Through illumination He enables men in this day to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, righteousness and judgment. Through the proclamation of the gospel He persuades men to repent of their sins and to confess Jesus as Lord and Savior. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism and service. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify the Son, who in turn came to glorify the Father. He will lead the Church into a right understanding and rich application of the truth of God's Word. He is to be adored, honored, obeyed and worshiped as God, the Third Person of the Trinity.

About Mankind

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God to have fellowship with Him. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought

sin into the human race and into all creation. Through the temptation of Satan, man disobeyed the command of God, and fell from innocence. His nature and will are inclined to sin. Being estranged from his Maker, yet responsible to Him, he became the object of divine wrath; inwardly depraved and apart from a special work of grace, utterly incapable of returning to God. This depravity is radical—extending to every word, thought and deed—infesting the whole of human life so that no one is righteous. Unregenerate man lives under the rule of sin and Satan. He is at enmity with God; he is both hostile toward God, and hateful of God. Fallen, sinful man, is lost and without hope apart from salvation in Christ. Only the sovereign grace of God can restore man into fellowship with God and enable man to fulfill God's purpose for His life. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every man of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

About the Gospel

We believe Salvation comes solely by the grace of God. The Gospel is revealed to us in doctrines that faithfully exalt God's sovereign purpose to save sinners by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, to His glory alone. The good news of the Gospel is revealed in Christ's birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension. Christ's crucifixion is the heart of the gospel, His resurrection is the power of the gospel, and His ascension is the glory of the gospel. Christ's death is a substitutionary and propitiatory sacrifice to God for our sins. It satisfies the demands of God's holy justice and appeases His holy wrath against sin. It also demonstrates His mysterious love and reveals His amazing grace. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man. There is no other name by which men must be saved. At the heart of all sound doctrine is the cross of Jesus Christ and the infinite privilege that redeemed sinners have in glorifying God. Therefore, we want all that takes place in our hearts, churches and ministries to proceed from, and be related to, the cross. The church is commissioned to preach and teach this Gospel to all nations.

About Salvation

We believe that Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. The blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the cross, provides the only means for the forgiveness of sin. Jesus Christ is the divinely appointed Mediator between God and man. Having taken upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, He perfectly fulfilled the law, suffered and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners. Those who repent and forsake sin and trust Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit and become new creatures, delivered from condemnation and receive eternal life. Therefore, salvation occurs only by grace when people place their faith in the death and resurrection of Christ as sufficient payment for their sin. Salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification and glorification. Regeneration is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are

inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

About Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, Baptism is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is an act of obedience whereby baptized believers, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, and in that ordinance remembering His death until He comes again.

About the Church

We believe the New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a self-governing and independent local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation is subject to Christ and operates under the Lordship of Christ who is the Head. The church is led by Elders whom God has called and gifted to pastor, teach, oversee, and equip the church for the work of ministry. The church is served by Deacons whom God has called to care for the physical needs of God's people, work to maintain the unity of the body of believers, and support the ministers of the church who preach the Word. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of Elder is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The ecclesiastical members of the church are those who have trusted by faith in the finished work of Christ and who worship together, minister together, encourage each other, equip each other, teach the Word of God together, bind together through covenant, and share their lives together. In such a congregation each ecclesiastical member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, people and nation.

About the Christian Life

We believe that every Christian should live for Christ and not for himself. A Christian should live for the glory of God and the well-being of his fellow man. By obedience to the Word of God and daily yielding to the Spirit of God, every believer's conduct should be blameless before the world; be a faithful steward of his possessions; and seek to realize for himself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ and being conformed into the image of Christ.

About the Family

We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. In the first book of the Bible, God began the first and primary institution for discipleship by creating the family. In the first books of the New Testament, a second institution, the church, was established also with the job of disciplining. Families and the church must work hand-in-hand surrounding each other with truth and godly models to follow in order that we may glorify God. This calls for cooperation and partnership between the church and the family. The family is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. The family is the primary agent for discipleship in a child's life. The best way for children to be more involved in and serious about their faith communities is to get their parents involved in and serious about their faith communities. It is the parents' primary role to shepherd and teach their children to love God and to glorify Him. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. It is the church's role to equip parents to be the spiritual teachers of their children. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Secondary Beliefs

While the above doctrines are those that are recognized to be universal and primary within the Church and must be affirmed by all members, there are a number of secondary beliefs about which the leadership of the Journey is passionate. Complete agreement is not required for the sake of membership, but it should be known that the Elders of the Journey will preach, teach and counsel in accordance with these theological convictions. For instance:

- Divine sovereignty and the doctrines of sovereign grace.
- The gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- The role of men and women in the church and home.
- The contextualization of Scriptural teaching, worship and church structures.
- The relationship of God's glory to man's joy.

We Invite You to Journey with Us by Becoming a Member of Our Church

When we talk about our church being a journey, we are not referring to isolated individuals on different paths heading in whatever direction that suits their whims. We are talking about individuals who make up a community of believers who are committed to heading toward one central location. That is the heart and passion behind our church. Our church is more than a building, an organization, a man or a Sunday. We are a community of unique persons from diverse backgrounds united by a relationship with Jesus Christ. We are a people that seek unity with one another and intimacy with God. We strive to worship God and glorify Him in every aspect of our lives. We are a community on a journey of faith - imperfect people with big dreams and an insatiable hunger to know God and make Him known to our world. We are a modern church in a complex culture following hard after a timeless God. As a church we treat membership very sincerely.

We believe that God wants every Christian to become a member of a local church. Scripture calls us a body; a family; a household. Being a Christian is not a solo effort. Jesus works through the church (Eph. 2:10), the church is Jesus' body (1 Cor. 12:27), and apart from Jesus, you can do nothing (John 15). Becoming a committed member of a church is a life-changing decision. The preaching, teaching, fellowship, opportunities to use your gifts, and mutual accountability that you experience in a church can dramatically change your relationship with Christ and with the people He places in your life. At the Journey, members are not just names in a database—they are the core of the church committed to maturing in Christ and discipleship lived out in community. Members here are devoted “to the fellowship”—to a specific local body as described in Acts 2:42. It is our mission at the Journey to glorify God in all we do (1 Corinthians 10:31). It is our vision to develop fully devoted Christ-followers progressing on the Road of Faith.

By joining our church, you will demonstrate in a concrete way your desire to unite with us to advance Christ's mission in our world and in your life. Membership also will allow you to enjoy ministry opportunities and privileges that are not available to people who merely attend our church, including the following:

- You may participate and vote in special church conferences, where we seek to discern and plan how to follow God's vision for our church.
- You can seek more opportunities to use your spiritual gifts, including those of teaching, serving and leading within the body.
- Affirm the approval of church budget; disposition of all or substantially all of the assets of the Church; merger or dissolution of the Church; and acquisition of real property and related indebtedness.
- If you need counseling or support from our leaders when their time is limited, your request for assistance will take precedence over requests from people who have not joined the church.

If you would like to learn more about the importance of church membership, please schedule to attend Core Class 101: New Connections. This class is designed to be the first point of connection for those considering the Journey as their church home, for a season or for a lifetime. Completion of Core Class 101 is required to become a member at the Journey. In this class we will examine our foundational theology, values, mission and purpose. Whether you became a Christian yesterday, or have a Masters in Divinity, there are no exceptions. Everyone considering the Journey for their home is required to attend in order to continue the membership process.

Church Covenant of the Journey

As Christians, we are members of God's household (Ephesians 2:19) called to function, participate, and minister in a particular place within the body of Christ. A healthy body requires that each member do its part well. A healthy church requires the same: members who are sacrificially committed and well-equipped to do the works of service that God has prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10; 4:12). The Journey holds her members in high regard; we expect them to lead as missionaries of the gospel to the culture in which they live. God, in His sovereignty, placed us in this city, among these people, in this century, for a reason (Acts 17:26-27). All members are disciples of Jesus, unified by their identity in Christ. This unity is expressed in the way they collaborate in loving God, loving fellow Christians, and loving non-Christians. Members who enter into a covenant with their local church are called to a higher degree of responsibility and service. At the same time, the Elders and leaders are covenanted to assist members first and foremost, to love and lead, provide counsel and aid, and pray for, teach and guide them so that they mature in the faith.

Through this covenant, we obligate ourselves to one another in such a way that the obligation of one party is not dependent on the faithfulness of the other (Ezekiel 20:44; 36:22; Psalm 76:11; Hosea 2:19-20; 3:1; 2 Timothy 2:13). The Journey Covenant includes the obligations of the Journey to her members, and the obligations of members to the Journey. While focusing primarily in language on the responsibilities between the individual parties, the corporate church body, her Elders and her individual members, the Covenant is first and foremost a promise made to God as a commitment to His glory and the good of the body and bride of His Son. (Ephesians 5:25).

Biblical Obligation of the Journey to her Members

- To appoint Elders who meet the criteria assigned to them in the Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17-22; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- To prayerfully seek God's will for our church community and steward her resources to the best of our ability based on our study of the Scriptures and following the Spirit (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- To create environments where the power of God allows you to progress by faith to become a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 4:15-16, Colossians 1:28).
- To help you grow in grace, truth and love through authentic biblical community (Acts 2:42-47).
- To equip the members of the church for serving in ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16).
- To provide teaching and counsel from the whole of Scripture so that you are guided in the truths of God (Acts 20:27-28; Galatians 6:6; 1 Timothy 5:17-18).
- To send people out to engage in missional opportunities to transform the world for the glory of God through Jesus Christ (John 17:18, Matthew 28:16-20, Mark 16:15-16).
- To be on guard against false teachers and teachings (Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 1 John 4:1).
- To lovingly exercise discipline when necessary, for the glory of God, the good of the one disciplined and the health of the church as a whole (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20).
- To pray for you regularly, particularly when you are sick or weak in the faith (James 5:14).
- To set an example and join members in fulfilling the obligations of church membership (Philippians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7-8; 1 Peter 5:3).

Biblical Obligation of the Members to the Journey

Having, as I trust, been brought by divine grace by the Spirit of God through the Gospel, to repent and believe in the Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and to give up myself to Him, and having been baptized upon my profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, I do now, in the presence of God, and the members of the Journey, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with the Journey as one body in Christ. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members of this church to do the following:

1. I will protect the unity of my church

- by submitting to the authority of the Scriptures as the final arbiter on all issues. “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16–17
- by acting in love toward other members. “Have a sincere love for other believers, love one another earnestly with all your heart.” Ephesians 4:29
- by refusing to gossip, but instead use my words to give grace to those who hear them. “A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret.” Proverbs 11:13
- by following the authority of the church leaders. “Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you.” Hebrews 13:17
- by following the biblical procedures for church discipline in my relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ, to humbly submit to righteous discipline when approached biblically by brothers and sisters in Christ, and to humbly submit to discipline by church leadership if the need should ever arise. “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.” Matthew 18:15-17

2. I will share the responsibility of my church

- by growing in Godliness and pursuing the Lord Jesus Christ through regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship and the practice of spiritual disciplines. “I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 3:14
- by progressing on the Road of Faith. “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” 2 Corinthians 5:7
- by praying for its ministry. “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” Acts 2:42
- by pursuing intentional, transparent relationships with non-Christians in my sphere of influence so that I may live out the gospel of Jesus Christ. “I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.” 1 Corinthians 9:22–23
- by sharing the gospel both locally and globally. “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20
- by showing mercy and love to those who are hurting. “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Matthew 22:34

- by fighting social injustices in our culture. “You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden...In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:13-16

3. I will serve the ministry of my church

- by discovering my gifts and talents. “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:10
- by being equipped to serve by my Elders and church leaders.
- by developing a servant’s heart. “Each one of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus; Who...[took on] the very nature of a servant.” Philippians 2:3-7

4. I will support the testimony of my church

- by living out the mission and vision of the Journey by becoming a fully devoted Christ follower, progressing on the Road of Faith. “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” 2 Corinthians 5:7
- by becoming a diligent, faithful disciple of Jesus, that my identity would be in him, my worship would be for him, my fellowship would be through him, and my interaction with others would be for his glory.
- by attending our weekly worship services faithfully and engaging in biblical community. “Let us not give up meeting together...but let us encourage one another.” Hebrews 10:25
- by living a godly life that is in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ. “Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.” Philippians 1:27
- by walking in holiness in all areas of life by God's grace through the power of the Holy Spirit, as an act of worship to Jesus Christ, striving to put certain attitudes and actions to death, while stirring and stimulating love and good deeds through the Spirit. “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.” 1 Peter 1:14–15
- by refraining from such activities that the Scriptures would deem foolish or tempt others to sin. “Let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual up building.” Romans 14:19
- by being a faithful steward of the resources God has given me, including my time, talents, resources and finances. This includes regular financial giving, service and participation in community that is sacrificial, cheerful and voluntary. “On every Lord’s Day, each of you should put aside some amount of money in relation to what you have earned and save it for this offering.” 1 Corinthians 16:2
- by confessing my sins immediately when I fall short and having other Christian brothers or sisters hold me accountable to help put my sin to death. “For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.” Romans 8:13

I submit myself to the government and discipline of the Journey, and promise to pursue its purity and peace as a covenant member. I acknowledge my faith in Christ and that I have read the Relational Commitments and Bylaws of this church and agree to live by them and this Church Covenant.



386.775.3500 ♦ **theJourneyOC.net**
975 E Graves Ave ♦ Orange City, FL 32763