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Providence Baptist Church
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Lecanto, FL 34460

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ARTICLES OF AMENDMENT
to
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
of

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Providence Baptist Church of Lecanto, Inc.

Pursuant to the provisions of section 617.1006, Florida Statutes, the undersigned Florida nonprofit corporation adopts the following articles of amendment to its articles of incorporation.

FIRST: Amendment(s) adopted: (INDICATE ARTICLE NUMBER(S) BEING AMENDED, ADDED OR DELETED.)

Articles numbered 1 through 10 of our present Articles of Incorporation are hereby deleted and the Attached Articles numbered 1 through 14 shall be added to take their place.

SECOND: The date of adoption of the amendment(s) was: Sunday, August 26, 2001

THIRD: Adoption of Amendment (CHECK ONE)

- ☒ The amendment(s) was(were) adopted by the members and the number of votes cast for the amendment was sufficient for approval.
- ☐ There are no members or members entitled to vote on the amendment. The amendment(s) was(were) adopted by the board of directors.

Providence Baptist Church of Lecanto, Inc

Corporation Name

Martin K. Hoffman

Signature of Chairman, Vice Chairman, President or other officer

Martin K. Hoffman

(352) 465-7844

Typed or printed name

Pastor / Director

Title

August 27, 2001

Date

CONSTITUTION OF PROVIDENCE BAPTIST CHURCH

Lecanto, Florida
Adopted August 26, 2001

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INTRODUCTION

We can sincerely say that the Bible is our constitution (II Timothy 3:16-17). This document is simply a verbal expression of our heart commitment (Romans 15:5-6) and principles of conscience. It is a means of clarifying to others the Scriptural principles by which we seek to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. By expressing ourselves in writing, this allows others to read, consider, pray, search the Scriptures and privately deliberate before the Lord before joining with us. Our goal is certainly not to replace the Scriptures, but to clarify and facilitate understanding, as well as bear witness to the important truths of Christ and His church.

We realize the obvious limitation of such a document, namely, that every problem and its solution we will face cannot be spelled out in advance, nor are we trying to do so. Our trust is in the Living God. Another limitation we are aware of is that this is no substitute for living communication and instruction. We invite all to come and see what we mean by these things.

We also recognize the danger of abuse, where any document is put above the Word of God. Here we would warn ourselves to watch against such a grievous error. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

PREAMBLE

We the members of Providence Baptist Church of Lecanto, Florida do ordain and establish the following Articles, to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this local church of the Lord Jesus Christ shall be Providence Baptist Church. We have chosen this name not as a sectarian label, but as a name reflective of some of our doctrinal convictions. We incorporate the word **Providence** to reflect our conviction that "God the good creator of all things, in His infinite power and wisdom, doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all His creatures and things, from the greatest even to the least, by His most wise and holy providence, to the end for which they were created . . ." (Paragraph 1, Chapter 5, 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith). Such providence has in our time brought together in this place a body of Christian believers of one heart and one mind.

Baptist is a term used to distinguish our convictions in certain areas of faith and practice from other religious assemblies. Baptists have historically held that the Holy Bible is God's Word and

is sufficient in all matters of faith and practice. Recognizing that some in our day who bear the name may not be reflective of such convictions, we unashamedly are.

Church is what we are by organization. We are not a man-made institution but an ecclesiastical institution established by God with Christ as the head.

ARTICLE II **ASSOCIATION**

Section 1. We acknowledge no ecclesiastical authority other than our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of the church (Ephesians 1:21-23, 5:23), and who directs the affairs of the church through elders (AKA Pastors, Bishops) chosen and ordained according to the precepts of Holy Scripture (Acts 14:21-23; I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). The elders themselves at all times and in all their activities stand under the authority of Holy Scripture (Acts 16:4; I Corinthians 7:17; II Timothy 3:16-17).

Section 2. The church may and does cooperate with other like minded churches in matters of mutual interest and concern (II Corinthians 8:18-24). We may seek the assistance (I Corinthians 16:1-2) and counsel (I Thessalonians 1:7, 2:14) of other churches in matters of special concern to us (Acts 14:21-23; Philippians 4:15), but the decision of no other church or group of churches shall at any time be acknowledged as binding on this church.

ARTICLE III **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this church is to glorify the triune God of the Scriptures by maintaining and promoting His worship both individually and corporately, by evangelizing sinners, baptizing the converts, and by teaching His saints to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded us (Philippians 3:3; I Peter 2:4-5; Matthew 28:18-20). Therefore we are committed to the proclamation of God's perfect Law and of the glorious Gospel of His grace through all the world to the defense of that "faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), and to the pure and faithful celebration of the ordinances of the New Covenant.

ARTICLE IV **ARTICLES OF FAITH**

We adopt as the fullest expression of our faith the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689, with the appended qualifications (please see Appendix A). The ultimate authority in all matters of faith, order, and morals is and must be the Bible alone, which truth is clearly set forth in the opening article of the Confession itself. This historic document, albeit imperfect, is an excellent summary of "the things most surely believed among us" and we find it to be an assistance in controversy, a confirmation in faith, and a means of edification in righteousness.

ARTICLE V MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP: Any person shall be eligible for membership in this church, who professes repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2:37-42, 5:14, 8:12), who manifests a life transformed by the power of Christ (I Corinthians 1:1-2, 6:11; Matthew 3:6-8), who has been scripturally baptized upon profession of faith (Matthew 28:18-20), who expresses substantial agreement with the Confession and Constitution of this church (I Corinthians 14:40; Amos 3:3), who intends to give whole hearted support to its ministry (Ephesians 4:3), and who is willing to submit to its government and discipline (I Corinthians 1:10; Hebrews 13:17).

Section 2. TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP: Each member of the church is acknowledged to form a vital part of the body and to have a special function in the life of that body (I Corinthians 12:14-27). Practical considerations, however, require that certain distinctions be recognized in the membership of this church.

Paragraph A. REGULAR MEMBERS: All who are received into the membership of the church according to the procedures set forth in Section 3 of this Article, who continue in the duties set forth in Section 4 of this Article, and who do not come under corrective discipline of the church as set forth in Article VI, shall be considered regular members in good standing and entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership in the church (Acts 2:41-42).

Regular members who move away from our area may, at their request, be retained as members of this church as they actively seek to join themselves to another church, providing they continue to regularly support the church and that communication with the elders is maintained (at least monthly). These members shall enjoy the privileges of pastoral oversight and church fellowship, and be subject to the discipline of the church, but shall not be permitted to vote in any business meeting of the church, nor to hold any elected position in the church. Failure to remain in contact with the church will, after ninety days, terminate said membership.

Paragraph B. ASSOCIATE MEMBERS: Persons who come to live in our area for a limited period of time (such as students, military personnel, persons on special work assignments, winter residents) may be received into or removed from the membership of the church on the same basis and in the same manner as persons having permanent residence in our geographical area. If such a person is already a member of a church in his place of permanent residence, he need not be released from the membership of his "home church" but will be regarded as an associate member while in our midst, enjoying all the rights and privileges and subject to all the responsibilities and discipline of regular membership, with the exception of holding any elected position in the church. When such a person terminates his period of temporary residence as a member in good standing, he will be released to the fellowship of his "home church" (Acts 18:27; Romans 16:1-2).

Section 3. PROCEDURES IN THE RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Paragraph A. A person who desires to become a member of the church shall apply by filling out the prospective member application and requesting to be interviewed by the elders. During the interview the elders will seek to determine whether that person has a credible profession of faith in Christ, has been scripturally baptized, is in substantial agreement with the Confession and Constitution of the church, is willing to assume the responsibilities of church membership, intends to give whole hearted support to its ministry, and is willing to submit to its government and discipline (Acts 9:26-27, 10:47-48, 11:4, 15-18, 23).

Paragraph B. If the applicant is or has been a member of another church, special effort will be made to determine the person's standing in that church and his reasons for leaving (Acts 15:1-2, 23-24). If a former church raises an objection which the elders consider valid, the applicant may be denied membership at the discretion of the elders (III John 8-12).

Paragraph C. If the elders are satisfied that the applicant meets the requirements for membership, they shall announce the same to the congregation at a stated meeting of the church, for two consecutive weeks, thus allowing for objections or questions to be raised privately with the elders by any member concerning the applicant's manner of life or doctrine. The elders may postpone the reception of any person into membership until proper investigation can be made concerning objections which in their judgment are sufficiently serious. If no objections are raised which the elders consider to be valid, this will be considered as a positive vote by the congregation and the person will be publicly received into membership at a stated meeting of the church. (Matthew 3:4-8; Acts 9:26-27; I John 4:1; Revelation 2:2)

Section 4. CONDUCT REQUIRED OF MEMBERS

Paragraph A. ATTENDANCE AT STATED MEETINGS: All regular and associate members are expected to faithfully attend the stated meetings of the church unless providentially hindered (by illness, accident, unusual working conditions, and other such circumstances). The stated meetings of the church are: all the Lord's Day services (Exodus 20:8-11), the midweek service, the business meetings of the congregation, and any special meetings which the elders shall occasionally deem it necessary to call (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:23-25). The members are strongly urged to engage themselves in due preparation of heart prior to meetings and to make every effort to be punctual in attendance (Isaiah 1:10-17; Matthew 15:8; I Corinthians 14:40).

Paragraph B. FINANCIAL SUPPORT: Scripture clearly teaches that Christians should financially support the work of the Lord by systematic, proportionate giving through the local church (Malachi 3:8-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; II Corinthians 8 and 9). Such giving is part of our worship to God. The members of this church are expected to conform to this rule of Scripture. Members will not be considered as fulfilling their duty in this

matter by giving to other causes. This is not meant to forbid such giving, and it is acknowledged that personal acts of benevolence need not be conducted through the church (Hebrews 13:16). However, financial giving to this church should be expressive of one's level of commitment as a member of this assembly, in view of a Christian's responsibility to support the work of the ministry and the work of the gospel (I Corinthians 9:13-14; Galatians 6:6). The tithe is not imposed upon God's people as a tax, but is strongly urged upon each member as a general guide for basic giving and as an expression of worship. To this should be added gifts and offerings according to one's ability and the willingness of his heart (Exodus 36:2-7; II Corinthians 8:1-5, 12, 9:7).

Paragraph C. PROMOTION OF EDIFICATION AND PEACE: Inasmuch as the church is represented in Scripture as a body having many members, each of the members having its particular function and yet having a concern for the health and protection of the whole (I Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:4, 11-16), the members of this church must strive for the good of the entire body. Members must prayerfully seek to discover their gifts and talents and exercise them appropriately (Romans 12:3-8). We must also seek to cultivate acquaintance with one another and maintain mutual transparency and honesty so that we may be better able to pray for one another (Ephesians 4:25); love, comfort, and encourage one another; and help one another materially as necessity may require (Galatians 6:10; I John 3:16-18). In addition, we must discreetly confess our faults to one another (James 5:16), faithfully admonish and encourage one another (Matthew 18:15; I Thessalonians 5:14; Hebrews 3:12-13, 10:24-25) and refrain from all backbiting and gossip (Psalm 15:3; Proverbs 6:16-19, 16:28, 26:20-22). In pursuit of the peace and well-being of the church, the elders may determine that some matters of congregational business are so sensitive that the members will be expected to keep such matters confidential and not discuss them with persons outside this assembly (Proverbs 11:13).

Paragraph D. SUPPORT OF AND SUBMISSION TO LEADERSHIP: Members are expected to support and submit to the elders (AKA pastors or bishops in scripture) of the church. Supporting God's servants necessitates praying for them and their labors (Ephesians 6:18-19), cultivating personal acquaintance with them, loving them, and esteeming them highly for their work's sake (I Thessalonians 5:12-13), standing by them and not forsaking them in their afflictions and in all their good causes (II Timothy 1:16-18), and defending rather than prejudicing or damaging their good name (Acts 23:5; I Timothy 5:19). Submitting to God's servants necessitates imitating their Christian graces, faith, and Godly principles as they also imitate Christ (I Corinthians 11:1; Hebrews 13:7; I Peter 5:3); receiving their teaching with all readiness of mind and teachableness of spirit, yet with ultimate allegiance to the Word of God (Acts 17:11; James 1:19-21; I Thessalonians 2:13); humbly heeding their scriptural rebukes and warnings as from those appointed to watch for our souls and committed to present us complete and mature in Christ (Colossians 1:28-29; Hebrews 13:17); seeking and carefully considering their counsel as from those counted faithful by the Lord (I Corinthians 7:1, 25); and cheerfully embracing and abiding by their decisions regarding corporate policy in God's house, which is His church (I Timothy 3:5, 15; Hebrews 13:17), even when personally differing with their judgment (Romans 10:21; Jude 8-10).

Paragraph E. A GODLY CHRISTIAN LIFE: All who come into the membership of this church are expected to walk worthily of the Lord, that His name be not blasphemed but rather His excellencies be displayed through us, and that the good name of the church be not damaged but rather enhanced. Therefore, every member is expected to cultivate Godliness in the following areas:

1. PERSONAL LIFE: Each member is expected to walk personally with the Lord, making use of all the private means of grace available to him, including daily and habitual secret prayer (Psalm 55:17, 88:9; Daniel 6:10; Matthew 6:5-11; Colossians 4:2), daily and habitual reading and meditating on God's Word (Psalm 1:2, 119:11, 97; II Timothy 2:15), continual maintenance of a good conscience with judgment day honesty (Acts 24:16; I Timothy 1:19; Hebrews 10:22, 13:18), periodic and wholesome self-examination, prayerfully conducted by the standard of God's Word (Psalm 139:23-24; II Corinthians 13:5; II Peter 1:10-11; I John 5:13), and careful and spiritual observance of the Lord's Day (Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11; Isaiah 58:13-14; Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10).

2. FAMILY LIFE: The church expects its members to obey the teachings of the Scriptures with respect to family life and the government of the home. As the God-appointed head of the family, the husband must rule over the household with gentleness and love, but also wisdom and firmness (Ephesians 5:23-29; I Peter 3:7; Colossians 3:19). The wife must also be in subjection to her husband in all things according to the rule of Scripture (Ephesians 5:22-24; I Peter 3:1-2; Colossians 3:18). The husband with the wife must nurture their children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:1-4), by setting a Godly example before them, by leading them in family worship, by instructing them consistently in the Scriptures (Genesis 18:19; Deuteronomy 6:7), by praying for them (I Chronicles 29:19), and by wise and firm discipline, including corporal punishment when it is needed (Proverbs 13:24, 22:15, 29:15; Hebrews 12:7).

3. PERSONAL EVANGELISM: Not all Christians have the same God-given ability to communicate the Gospel (I Corinthians 12:4-7, 11, 14-20, 27-30), nor the same opportunity (Acts 4:33). At the same time, evangelism is not restricted to experts or professionals (Acts 11:19; II Corinthians 4:13). All Christians should be deeply concerned for the glory of God, the eternal welfare of lost men, and the prosperity of the church (Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 9:1-3; Ephesians 3:20-21). Therefore, members are expected to pray for the extension of the Kingdom of God throughout the entire world (Ephesians 6:18-20; II Thessalonians 3:1-2; I Timothy 2:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38), and to seek to recognize and seize every opportunity to bear witness to his faith in Christ both by consistent Christian conduct and by the testimony of the lips (Romans 1:16-17; Philippians 2:14-16; I Peter 3:14-16).

4. CHRISTIAN LIBERTY: Each member of the church is expected to render in his daily life loyal obedience to all the moral precepts established by the Word of God (Romans 8:3-4). If God has not condemned or forbidden a practice in His Word, a

Christian is at liberty to participate in it. The exercise of Christian liberty, however, must at all times be governed by an earnest desire to walk in the fear of God and to glorify Him in all things (I Corinthians 10:31; I Peter 1:17), a loving regard for the consciences of weaker brethren (Romans 15:1-3; I Corinthians 8:9), a compassion for the lost (I Corinthians 9:19-22), and a zealous regard for the health of one's own soul (Romans 13:14; I Peter 2:16).

5. SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD: God never intended the glorious blessing of Christian liberty which we enjoy to become an excuse and covering for worldliness (Galatians 5:13; I Peter 2:9). To the contrary, we have been liberated from the bondage of our sins in order that we might be a people distinct from this wicked world and set apart to God (Titus 2:11-14; I Peter 1:14-15). Accordingly, we are commanded to detest the ungodliness in society (Proverbs 1:10-19; Romans 12:1-2; James 1:27). Therefore, members are expected to detest and separate from the wicked attitudes, practices, and unwholesome influence of the ungodly society around us. This is not to be thought of as a call to absolute separation from all contact with the ungodly, which would require us to leave the world (I Corinthians 5:9-10).

RESPECTING THE WORLD'S ATTITUDES: Members are expected to resist the worldly attitude that the things of this life are of primary importance (I John 2:15-17; Matthew 6:33). Members are not to become so absorbed with work, material possessions, politics, recreation, television, sports, or any other person or thing that would rival our primary attachment to Christ (Matthew 6:24). Members are not to adopt the distorted values of the world, such as: considering self-worth to be rooted in intelligence, wealth, usefulness to society, beauty, or athletic skill; or considering that personal peace and happiness should be pursued as our ultimate goal, and are attained by our acquiring possessions. Members are not to adopt the moral relativism of the world, especially respecting the sanctity of life and truth. Members are to resist worldly attitudes about masculinity and femininity, reject the carnal notions that male and female roles are arbitrary and reversible, that sexual orientation is a matter of preference rather than morality, and that marriage is oppressive unless it is egalitarian. Members are to regard a husband's role not only to be that of provider and protector (Ephesians 5:23, 28; I Timothy 5:8), but also to be that of giving personal nurture to his wife (Ephesians 5:25-26; I Peter 3:7). Members are to regard the wife's primary role to be that of a helper to her husband (Genesis 2:18), her basic (but not necessarily exclusive) sphere of labor is to be domestic (Proverbs 31:10-31; I Timothy 5:14; Titus 2:4), and her estate as wife and mother is to be noble and honorable, rather than degrading and unfulfilling. Single members are to refrain from pursuing romantic interests with non-Christians, and contracting marriages with them (Proverbs 2:15, 17, 6:20, 23-25; I Corinthians 7:39; II Corinthians 6:14-15).

RESPECTING THE WORLD'S PRACTICES: Members are not to indulge in any of the vices which surround us: drunkenness, drug abuse, gluttony, viewing pornographic materials, fornication, homosexuality, and other such sins (I Corinthians

15:33; I Corinthians 6:9-11). We must resist any wicked influence of this godless society upon our souls and our families (Romans 12:1-2).

RESPECTING THE WORLD'S ORGANIZATIONS: No member of Providence Baptist Church shall be a member of any militia or paramilitary organization which is dedicated to the armed and violent overthrow of the government (Romans 13:1-7). Neither shall any member of the church be a member of any secret organization (i.e., Shriners or Masons) which outwardly would appear righteous and good but inwardly denies cardinal doctrines of our Christian faith (Matthew 23:27; I John 2:22-23). Members are free to join other types of secular clubs or organizations as long as they do not interfere with the regularly scheduled meetings of the church. However, we strongly urge that no such membership be allowed equal or higher priority than a persons walk with Christ.

Section 5. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Paragraph A. REASONS FOR TERMINATION:

1. **BY PHYSICAL DEATH:** When a member of the church is removed from our midst by death, his/her name shall be removed from the membership roll (Hebrews 12:23).
2. **BY TRANSFER:** When it is so requested, the elders may grant a departing member in good standing a letter of transfer to the fellowship of another church (Acts 18:27). No such letter may be given to a member who is at that time under the corrective discipline of this church. The elders may refuse to grant a letter of transfer to any church which is in their judgment disloyal to the faith (Jude 3), or which does not exercise godly care over its members.
3. **BY RESIGNATION:** Membership in Providence Baptist Church is entered and initiated jointly by voluntary commitment from the individual applicant and acceptance by the church, expressed in terms of the procedures described in Section 3 of this Article. It follows, then, that members cannot terminate their membership unilaterally under all circumstances. As a general rule, a member may voluntarily resign from membership in Providence Baptist Church. However, a resignation offered by a person guilty of sin which calls for corrective discipline is not valid, and the church may proceed with public censure, or excommunication, as is appropriate to the circumstances and in accordance with the procedures outlined in Article 6 (Acts 15:24; I John 2:18-19; with II John 7-11).
4. **BY EXCLUSION:** If a member habitually absents himself from or ceases to attend the stated meetings of the church without showing just cause, or if upon relocation a member ceases to maintain vital contact with the church, such a one may be excluded from membership at the direction of the elders (I John 2:19). In such cases, the elders shall attempt to contact the person and to rectify and resolve the situation (Ezekiel 34:4; James 5:19-20). If these efforts are ineffective the elders shall

contact that person by letter to encourage the member to return to the fellowship of the church. If within a reasonable period of time no response is received, it will be announced to the congregation that the member has failed to respond and has therefore been excluded from the church roll (Ecclesiastes 5:1-5; Matthew 5:37, 21:28-30).

5. BY EXCOMMUNICATION: According to the teachings of Holy Scripture, a congregation must cut off from its fellowship and visible membership any person who: teaches or insists on holding false and heretical doctrine; blatantly and impertinently conduct themselves in a manner inconsistent with the Christian profession; or persists in disturbing unity, peace, or purity of the church (Matthew 18:15-18; Romans 16:17-20; I Corinthians 5:1-13; Titus 3:10-11). The procedures to be followed in such excommunication are set forth in Section 2 of Article VI.

Paragraph B. IMPLICATIONS OF TERMINATION:

1. Open and forthright communication among the churches is vital to the purity, peace, edification, and unity of the Lord's churches. Therefore, the elders may, at their discretion, disclose to other pastors and churches the circumstances under which a person's membership was terminated (Acts 15:24; I Timothy 1:20; II Timothy 2:17, 4:10, 14).

2. The church has a moral obligation to society both to act with integrity and to maintain its testimony (II Corinthians 8:20-21). Therefore, the elders may, at their discretion, disclose to other persons, including proper civil authorities and/or law enforcement agencies as may be deemed necessary, outside the ecclesiastical circles mentioned above, the circumstances under which a person's membership was terminated (Leviticus 5:1; Proverbs 29:24; I Peter 4:15).

ARTICLE VI CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Section 1. FORMATIVE DISCIPLINE: Formative discipline is that normal instruction, encouragement, admonition, correction or reproof which occurs in the life of the church as the body ministers one to another (I Corinthians 12:12-27), through mutual submission one to another (Ephesians 5:21; I Peter 5:5) and through submission to the ministry and rule of the overseers whom the Lord has set over His church (Hebrews 13:17). God uses such discipline to conform us (thus "formative") into the image of the Son (Romans 8:29), resulting in the sanctification of each member individually and of the whole body of the church collectively (Ephesians 4:11-16). There are occasions, however when formative discipline alone is insufficient and corrective discipline becomes necessary.

Section 2: CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINE:

Paragraph A. GENERAL STATEMENT: Corrective discipline becomes necessary when heretical doctrine or disorderly or scandalous conduct appears among the members of the church. In all such cases reasonable efforts must be made to resolve difficulty, correct error, and remove offense through counsel and admonition before more drastic steps are taken (Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20). The principles given to us in Matthew 18:15-18; I Corinthians 5:1-13; Romans 16:17-20; II Thessalonians 3:6-15; I Timothy 5:19-20; Galatians 6:1; and II Timothy 2:24-26 must be carefully followed in all cases of corporate discipline. Corrective discipline always has for its aim the glory of God, the welfare and purity of the church, and the restoration and spiritual growth of the offender. When admonition is not heeded, suspension of some of the privileges of membership may need to be imposed, and if this measure fails, excommunication from the membership of the church may be necessary. All the members of the church are obliged to submit to and enforce as appropriate the decision of the church in acts of corrective discipline.

Paragraph B. SUSPENSION:

1. Any conduct on the part of a member which disturbs the peace of the church or damages its testimony may require that the offending brother or sister be excluded by action of the elders from participating in certain activities of the church according to the gravity of the offense. A suspension shall be announced to the congregation by the elders and shall remain in force until the suspended member gives evidence of true repentance and change of conduct. When a suspended member can be restored to full fellowship, this shall also be announced to the congregation by the elders. While a member is under such discipline, he shall be treated by the congregation according to the directions given in II Thessalonians 3:6-15. Although such a person is considered to be walking disorderly, he must still be regarded as a member and not cut off from the church.
2. If a member has sinned publicly but shows hopeful signs of repentance, including submission to the admonition of the elders, it may still be necessary to suspend him for a time from some of the privileges of membership lest reproach be brought upon the church, lest others be emboldened to sin, and lest the offender himself fail to test his own soul and realize the gravity of his offense. Those who humbly submit to the imposed discipline shall afterwards be wholly forgiven and publicly received back into full fellowship of the church.
3. In the case where a person is accused or suspected of gross sin and absents himself from the congregation, refusing to meet with elders that the matter may be investigated, the elders shall announce to the congregation that the person is suspended from the privileges of membership, and such suspension shall continue in force as long as the conditions giving rise to it continue, or the elders deem it necessary to deal with the matter as described below in Paragraph C of this article.

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4. Suspended members who have persisted in unrepentant, sinful behavior may, by the decision of the elders, have their status reviewed and be dealt with as described below in Paragraph C of this article.

Paragraph C. EXCOMMUNICATION: Excommunication is the strongest statement of church discipline. It shall be enacted Scripturally as an act of the church toward a member who teaches or insists on holding false or heretical doctrine, who blatantly or persistently conducts himself in a manner inconsistent with his Christian profession, or who persists in disturbing the unity and peace of the church (Titus 3:10-11; Romans 16:17-18). Excommunication must be enacted in the following cases:

1. Some types of conduct must be categorized as “immoral” (I Corinthians 5:9-11, 6:9-10; Galatians 5:16-21) and a member guilty of such conduct must be cut off from the fellowship of the church (I Corinthians 5:3-5; Matthew 18:17). In such a case the elders shall make earnest efforts to bring the offender to true repentance and reformation, but if these efforts fail, they shall report the same to the congregation at a regular or specially called business meeting of the church and recommend that the offender be excommunicated - which must be done, according to Scripture by action of the entire church (Matthew 18:17; I Corinthians 5:4-5). To be valid, an act of excommunication must have the approval of at least three-fourths of those members present and voting.
2. Any persistent pattern of behavior, though not “immoral”, that is inconsistent with a Christian profession, for the sake of purity in Christ’s church, must be dealt with in the same manner as an immoral person.
3. Likewise, some wrong opinions regarding the doctrines of Scripture are so serious that they must be categorized as “heretical” (Galatians 1:6-9; I Timothy 4:1), and a member who persists in propagating or holding any such opinion, in spite of earnest and patient admonition, shall be dealt with in the same manner as an immoral person.
4. Understanding the importance of peace and unity in Christ’s church, there may be times in which a person guilty of causing divisions and offenses must be dealt with in the same manner as an immoral person (Romans 16:17-18; Ephesians 4:1-3).

Paragraph D. RESTORATION: It is the duty of the church to forgive and restore to membership those who give satisfactory evidence of being repentant (II Corinthians 2:6-8). The elders may review the status of those who have been excommunicated or suspended to judge whether the aims of the discipline have been accomplished. Such action is to be reported to the church. Upon recommendation of the elders, the congregation shall have the right to restore an excommunicated member by a three-fourths vote of the members present and voting at a duly called congregational meeting. Such restoration does not include restoration to offices.

Section 3: PROTECTIVE DISCIPLINE: While the church has no authority to exercise discipline over nonmembers, it does have the right and responsibility to protect its members from those who would disrupt its peace and the purity of its life and doctrine (Titus 1:9-11). If and when such persons should trouble the church, the elders shall name them, identify their errors, and warn the members not to associate with them.

ARTICLE VII CHURCH ORDINANCES

Section 1. GENERAL STATEMENT: There are two ordinances of special significance which our Lord has commanded us to observe, namely, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Neither of them has saving merit, nor is receiving them absolutely necessary for salvation. Nor is there any grace automatically imparted to the recipient through the water of baptism or the bread and the cup of the Supper (Acts 8:13; I Corinthians 11:20-30; Luke 23:32-43). Nevertheless they are powerful aids to the faith of believers who properly participate in them. Accordingly our Lord is concerned that they be observed unto edification, in a decent and orderly manner. Therefore, our policy regarding their observance is specified in the following sections.

Section 2. BAPTISM: Only confessed disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, having brought forth fruits of repentance, are proper candidates for baptism, and all such persons should be baptized (Matthew 3:7-8; Acts 2:38). Believing that baptism is the God-ordained door of entrance into the visible community of the people of God, we shall receive into the regular membership of the church only those who have been baptized in the biblical mode, which is by immersion (Acts 8:38-39; Colossians 2:12; Mark 1:9-10) and "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

Section 3. THE LORD'S SUPPER: Whereas the ordinance of baptism need be observed only once by each believer, the Lord's Supper should be observed frequently by the assembled church (Acts 2:42; I Corinthians 11:26). While this is a most holy ordinance and should be observed with solemn joy and dignity, the bread and the cup of the Supper are and remain only symbols of the broken body and the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. In order to maintain the purity of this ordinance and in virtue of our Lord's will that only those who are under the government of His church should be admitted to the privileges of His church (Acts 2:41-42; I Corinthians 10:16), we welcome to partake of the Lord's Supper with us all those believers, and only those believers, who have been baptized in accordance with Section 2, and who are members in good standing of a true Biblical New Testament Church. The elders will faithfully seek to insure that only those persons meeting the above stated qualifications will be invited to partake of the Lord's Table.

ARTICLE VIII OFFICERS

Section 1. GENERAL STATEMENT: Jesus Christ alone is the Head of the church (Colossians 1:18). He governs His church through officers whom He calls (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11) and whom His Spirit endows with the gifts and graces needed to accomplish their work (I Corinthians 15:9-10). Because Christ appoints church officers, they have authority as prescribed and limited by Him in the Scriptures (I Corinthians 14:36-38; II Corinthians 13:10; III John 9-10).

Section 2. GENERAL PREREQUISITES: All officers of this church must be members of it. Any individual set apart to one of these offices must be able to conscientiously affirm his agreement with the church's confession of faith and constitution. If he should at any time move from this position, he would be under spiritual and moral obligation to immediately make that fact known to the elders in an orderly manner. Church officers are not exempt from church discipline, but on the contrary, their office obliges them to a more rigorous standard of conduct than other members (I Timothy 5:19-21; James 3:1).

The role of women: Solomon found it impossible to calculate the worth of a godly woman (Proverbs 31:10). It also would be difficult to overestimate the valuable service rendered and the great blessing that godly women are to the local church (Acts 9:36-39; Philippians 4:3; Romans 16:1-2; Acts 16:14-15). However in God's order, women are not to hold either the office of elder or deacon (I Timothy 3:1-2, 5; Titus 1:6). They are not to exercise leadership in a formal meeting of the gathered church or exercise authority over a man in spiritual things outside the corporate gathering as in adult men being under a woman's regular teaching ministry (I Timothy 2:12).

Section 3. ELDERS

Paragraph A. THE IDENTITY OF THE ELDERSHIP: Those who have been called of God to rule and teach in the church are called elders, pastors, or bishops. These are three interchangeable names designating one and the same office in the New Testament church (Acts 20:17, 28; Ephesians 4:11-12; Titus 1:5, 7). They are called "elders" because they demonstrate spiritual maturity, "bishops" (overseers) because they are charged with the oversight of the assembly (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2), and "pastors" because they shepherd the flock of God (Acts 20:28). They are the "pastors and teachers" given to the church "for the perfection of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12). They are to give themselves "continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4).

Paragraph B. THE AUTHORITY OF THE ELDERSHIP

1. THE GROUND OF THEIR AUTHORITY: The Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:18), through inspiration of the Holy Spirit (II Timothy 3:15-17; I Thessalonians 2:13; I John 4:6), has given to his church the Scriptures as an

infallible and unchanging rule of practice (Matthew 28:20; I Corinthians 7:17, 11:2, 14:36-38, 16:1; Colossians 4:16; II Thessalonians 2:15, 3:14; I Timothy 3:14-15), unto which all church officers are always bound. Where the Scriptures give explicit or implicit direction to the church on a topic, this direction is never to be contradicted. When no such word from Christ is given, church officers are subject to the general principles of Scripture and to the light and order displayed in creation (I Corinthians 14:40).

2. THE SPHERE AND LIMITS OF THEIR AUTHORITY: The Word of God defines the sphere and limits of the authority of elders. The eldership as a body is authorized and responsible to give comprehensive oversight to the church (Acts 20:17-35; I Peter 5:1-2), including the preaching and teaching of the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:20-21, 27; Titus 1:9); the watching out for the welfare of the soul of every member of the church (Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 1:28; I Thessalonians 2:11; Hebrews 13:17); and the directing of the church in all its tasks by setting general policy and by making specific decisions (I Timothy 3:4-5; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 5:1-2). Nonetheless, the elders must exercise this authority with sensitivity to the consensus of the congregation (Ezekiel 34:2-4; I Timothy 3:4-5; I Peter 3:7) and in the posture of servants and examples (Matthew 20:25-28; I Peter 5:3). Therefore, the elders will seek the counsel and support of the congregation respecting any major endeavor or large expenditure (Ephesians 5:21). They should also seek and carefully consider congregational input when to do so would serve the interests of the church and would not involve the elders in a sinful relinquishment of their God-given responsibilities or authority (I Timothy 3:5; Acts 19:30, 21:11-14). According to Scripture, the elders may not impose officers on the church without congregational suffrage, nor may they receive, suspend, exclude or excommunicate any member without action by the church (Acts 6:3-6, 9:26-27; Matthew 18:17; I Corinthians 5:4-5). Furthermore, congregational approval is required for any change to this Constitution.

Paragraph C. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS: The general qualifications for a man chosen to fill the office of elder are clearly set forth in Scripture, particularly in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Any man called to this office must be able to conscientiously affirm his agreement with our Confession of Faith (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9) and the Constitution of the church. Should he at any time change his conviction respecting these standards he is morally obligated to make this fact known to his fellow elders (Acts 24:16; Ephesians 4:25). It is understood that disagreement on minute points of the confession will occur. The elders themselves will determine whether or not disparity in a particular doctrinal area should keep a man from holding the office of elder.

Paragraph D. PLURALITY OF ELDERS: The Scriptures indicate that normally there should be a plurality of elders in the local church (Acts 14:23, 20:17; Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5). Therefore, the church should endeavor to discover and formally recognize all the men and only the men whom the Holy Spirit has endowed with the requisite gifts and graces. The number of elders shall not be fixed. All elders may continue in office as

long as they remain qualified, able, and willing to serve, and as long as they hold the confidence of the congregation as expressed in the procedure for reaffirmation.

Paragraph E. **PARITY AND DIVERSITY OF ELDERS:** The elders are all equal in office and authority (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17) but diverse in gifts and function. Each elder must be "apt to teach", engaged in private instruction and admonition, and engaged in the administration and government of the church (Acts 20:28; I Timothy 5:17). However, some will be more experienced, involved, and proficient than others in executing various dimensions of the pastoral office, and in view of the God-given diversity of gifts, some should be more engaged in formal public preaching and teaching than others (Ephesians 4:11; I Timothy 5:17). In view of the diversity of gifts as well as the numerous and grave responsibilities of the office, it is highly desirable that at least one elder be devoted to the full-time work of the ministry and the oversight of the church. The church is responsible to give adequate financial support to such men, while others of the elders fulfill the office as they maintain an ordinary vocation (Matthew 10:9-10; Acts 18:3-5; I Corinthians 9:9-11; I Timothy 5:17-18).

Paragraph F. **ABNORMALITIES IN THE NUMBER OF ELDERSHIP:** Should it come to pass, in the providence of God, that Providence Baptist Church has only one man qualified for the office of elder, the church must wait upon God with fervent prayer that He might remedy this abnormality (Matthew 9:37-38). In such cases, the sole elder will meet periodically with the board of deacons to seek God's will and direction for the church, and to protect him from the possibility of becoming self-willed or tyrannical in his attitude or rule. (Ephesians 5:21; I Peter 5:3, 5). The sole elder bears full spiritual authority in, and responsibility for, the church.

Should it come to pass, in the providence of God, that Providence Baptist Church is without any elders, a steering committee shall be formed, consisting of three members of the present diaconate. The deacons shall choose among themselves three members to serve as a steering committee. In the event of less than three deacons, the remaining deacon(s) shall nominate from the church membership male member(s) in good standing, and approved individually by majority vote at a specially called business meeting of the church (I Corinthians 4:40). This committee shall make arrangements for pulpit supply, search for a pastor, and oversee the necessary business of the church. This committee should seek constant counsel from the eldership of another like-minded church. This committee shall be disbanded as soon as a man is called to the office of elder.

Section 4. DEACONS

Paragraph A. **DUTIES OF DEACONS:** Christ, the Head of the church, has instituted the office of deacon as an aid to the people of God in general and to the elders of the church in particular (Acts 6:1-6). While the office of deacon is a serving rather than a ruling office, God has promised a special blessing to those who serve well as deacons (I Timothy 3:13). Deacons are responsible to administer the ordinary business, secular affairs, and the benevolent concerns of the church so that the elders may devote

themselves without distraction to the biblical priorities of their office (Acts 6:3-4). They must fulfill the duties of their office in cooperation with and under the oversight of the elders (Acts 11:30).

Paragraph B. **NUMBER OF DEACONS AND LENGTH OF TERM:** The number of deacons shall not be fixed. The church shall choose as many as are needed for the work to be done from among the men who give evidence of having the scriptural qualifications for that office (Acts 6:3; I Timothy 3:8-13). Deacons may continue in office as long as they remain qualified, able, and willing to serve, and as long as they hold the confidence of the congregation as expressed in the procedure for reaffirmation.

Paragraph C. **QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS:** The qualifications for a man chosen to fulfill the office of deacon are particularly set forth in Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-13. Any man called to this office must be able to conscientiously affirm his agreement with our Confession of Faith and the Constitution of the church. Should he at any time change his convictions respecting these standards, he is morally obligated to make this fact known to the elders (Acts 24:16; Ephesians 4:25). It is understood that disagreement on minute points of the confession will occur. The elders themselves will determine whether or not disparity in a particular doctrinal area should keep a man from holding the office of deacon.

Paragraph D. **CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE DEACONS:** To help the diaconate function in an efficient and orderly manner (I Corinthians 14:40), the elders, in consultation with the deacons, shall choose one of the deacons to serve as chairman, and another as vice-chairman to serve in his absence. The chairman shall be responsible to organize and lead the regular deacon's meetings and to communicate regularly with the eldership concerning diaconate business and concerns.

Section 5. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICE BEARERS

Paragraph A. **THE PROCESS OF RECOGNITION:** The appointment of elders and deacons is the prerogative of the Lord Jesus Christ alone (Ephesians 4:11). He has ordained that each local church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, exercise the responsibility of recognizing those whom He is appointing to be elders and deacons in that particular church (Acts 6:3; Titus 1:5). Elders and deacons are ordained to office by the laying on of hands by the eldership (Acts 6:6; I Timothy 4:14). This is an expression of approval for which the elders are responsible (I Timothy 5:22). Therefore, each officer must have the approval, not only of the church as a whole, but of the eldership in particular (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). The Lord's appointment of an individual to either of these offices is recognized by means of that individual's particular office and his own conviction that the Lord is calling him to minister in that office. The responsibility to recognize the gifts of Christ to His church is a matter of such gravity that it should be accompanied by much prayerful waiting on God for guidance, a careful consideration of the relevant passages of Scripture, and an objective evaluation of each man considered for

a particular office (Acts 6:6, 14:23). These activities are the responsibility of each individual member of the church as well as of the church as a whole.

Paragraph B. RECOMMENDATIONS: As the need or opportunity arises in God's providence, the elders or the congregation may at anytime recommend, for the office of elder or deacon, any qualified man who is caring and ministering to Christ's people.

1. The elders may at any time during the year present a candidate or candidates to either or both offices and call a special congregational meeting for their consideration. In no case may a man be presented for either office without his knowledge and prior consent.

2. The members shall serve in an advisory capacity in the discovery of appropriate nominees by submitting to the elders the names of men they consider to be potential office bearers. This may be done throughout the year, but especially the months preceding the semiannual business meetings. The elders will consider the advisory names and prayerfully decide if these men should be nominated at this time for the respective offices. If the elders unanimously approve a man, they will nominate him to the church.

3. Prior to presenting the candidate(s) to the congregation, the elders will meet with the man and his family to confirm his willingness to undergo congregational examination and his readiness to serve in church office. He may, without prejudice, decline nomination. If the man consents, he will be presented to the congregation as a nominee for office.

Paragraph C. CONGREGATIONAL APPROVAL: There must be a minimum period of one month from the time of the man's nomination until the meeting/meetings called for his public examination and congregational vote. During this period the members have a solemn obligation prayerfully to assess the man nominated in light of the relevant passages of scripture. Any member who has reservations relative to the man's qualifications for office should speak directly to him and/or one of the elders. In the event that any reservations of a man's qualifications are not resolved, then it is the responsibility of that member to bring such reservations to the attention of the elders. When the time comes to consider a nomination during a business meeting of the church, the candidate for office and any members of his immediate family who are present shall be requested to leave the room while his qualifications are discussed by the congregation in the fear of God and in the light of Scripture. Objections which have not been raised previously in private with the nominee and the elders may not be introduced for the first time at this meeting. After that, a written ballot shall be taken. It is hoped that the vote of the congregation will always be unanimous, but if unanimity is not realized, no less than a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting shall be required for the election of an officer (Acts 13:1-3, 6:3-6).

Paragraph D. INSTALLATION/ORDINATION: Following the recognition of an officer by vote of the congregation, he shall be publicly recognized in his office at a stated

meeting by prayer and the laying on of hands of the existing elders on behalf of the church (Acts 6:6, 14:23; I Timothy 4:14).

Paragraph E. REVIEW OF CHURCH OFFICERS: Officers shall hold office only as long as they are faithful to their calling and have the confidence and esteem of the congregation. The church, therefore, shall reconfirm (or withdraw) its confidence in the biblical qualifications of each officer five years after his ordination and every fifth year thereafter.

Section 6. TERMINATION OF OFFICE BEARERS

Paragraph A. NON-DISCIPLINARY TERMINATION

1. An officer may resign from his office without prejudice if he does so in an orderly fashion and for good and valid reasons. This resignation together with its reasons and the date upon which he wishes his resignation to be effective shall be submitted in writing to the elders of the Church (Acts 24:16).

2. In cases where the elders determine that an officer is no longer competent to fulfill all the duties of his office, by reason of infirmities not of themselves blameworthy (II Samuel 21:15-17), they shall explain their concerns to him and seek his resignation. If he will not resign, they shall present their concerns to the congregation and call for a vote of confidence in him. In order to retain his office in such circumstances the officer must receive a vote of confidence by no less than a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting.

Paragraph B. DISCIPLINARY TERMINATION: Church officers are not exempt from church discipline, moreover, their office obliges them to a more rigorous standard of conduct than regular members (James 3:1). Church officers are subject not only to the same rules of discipline as the other members, but in addition are subject to public reprimand by the elders (Galations 2:14; I Timothy 5:20) and/or removal from office if their behavior is disorderly or scandalous, thereby bringing reproach to Christ and the church and setting a bad example before the brethren. The disciplinary removal of an officer shall require congregational approval at a duly called congregational meeting. In order to retain his office in such circumstances the officer must receive a vote of confidence by no less than three-fourths of those members present and voting.

Paragraph C. IMPLICATIONS OF TERMINATION: When a man leaves office he no longer retains the authority of that office and may no longer continue in its functions, privileges and titles. He will no longer represent himself in any manner as an officer of Providence Baptist Church in any church or society at large. It is expected that all former officers will respect the sanctity of the trust previously given to them and that they will maintain the confidentiality of all ecclesiastical matters (Proverbs 11:13). A man having previously held office and relinquished it may be reconsidered for office only in the manner prescribed in Section 5.

ARTICLE IX **TRUSTEES**

Section 1. In order to “render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s” (Matthew 22:21), this church is incorporated under the Laws of the State of Florida. While the Scriptures do not recognize trustees as a biblical church office, our Certificate of Incorporation and the Laws of the State of Florida require that trustees be elected by the church to represent the church in the execution of corporate legal documents.

Section 2. The board of trustees shall consist of at least the minimum number required by law. Trustees may be elected from among the church officers or from the congregation at large. The trustees would primarily consist of the elders, as chosen among themselves. In the event additional trustees are needed, vacancies shall be filled from the board of deacons.

Section 3. The trustees shall perform such legal and business transactions as are specifically designated to them by the Laws of the State of Florida. In the discharge of their duties, they shall act only at the direction of the elders of the church, and where required by law and by our corporate documents, with the consent of the congregation.

Section 4. In the event of a conflict of interest between the government of God and the government of man, the allegiance of the trustees must be to follow God’s laws first and man’s laws second (Acts 4:19, 5:27-29).

ARTICLE X **CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETINGS**

Section 1. GENERAL STATEMENT: There shall be a semiannual business meeting of the church (approximately at the beginning of the calendar year and another around six months later), for the hearing of reports, the election of officers, and the transaction of other business. Only those matters presented to, and approved by, the elders prior to the meeting will be considered. Special business meetings may be called at other times at the discretion of the elders.

Section 2. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Paragraph A. Notice of all congregational meetings shall be given at regular worship services on the two successive Lord’s Days immediately prior to the meetings (minimum of 8 days). However, in the case of an emergency, a meeting may be called on shorter notice by notifying each regular member by personal contact of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting.

Paragraph B. Meetings for the hearing of special reports or for seeking the counsel of the congregation may be called on shorter notice, but no vote may be taken or other business transacted at such meetings.

Section 3. QUORUM: The regular and associate members present at any properly convened congregational meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 4. MODERATOR: One of the elders shall preside over all congregational meetings. If the church finds itself without an elder, the deacons shall chose one of their number to preside.

Section 5. VOTING.

Paragraph A. In order that the conduct of church business may be an expression of the mind of Christ, and not merely of men, the members of the congregation must form the judgments expressed in their voting in subjection to the Word of God and in prayerful reliance upon the Spirit of God who indwells them (Philippians 1:27, 2:2-5; Acts 15:22, 25-28, 13:3-4).

Paragraph B. All regular and associate members who are in good standing in the church may vote on any question properly brought before the congregation. __

Paragraph C. Unanimity of heart and mind under God shall at all times be sought and prayed for (Acts 6:5), but when unanimity is not realized, not less than a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting shall be required to make a resolution valid.

Section 6. CLOSED MEETINGS: Meetings involving the exercise of corrective discipline shall be open only to regular and associate members of the church and to those whose presence the elders deem appropriate and necessary. At the sole discretion of the elders, other meetings may also be limited in the same manner.

ARTICLE XI AMENDMENTS

This Constitution, as with any other non-inspired document, is not infallible. It does, however, reflect an earnest and sincere attempt to apply the Scriptures in the proper ordering of the life of this local church.

Section 1. PROPOSALS: If at any time a member of this church becomes aware that adherence to this Constitution would violate biblical principle, they should make this known to the elders. If the elders conclude that biblical principle requires disregarding a provision of this Constitution, they are obligated to communicate this together with the reason(s) for their conclusion to the church, and present a proposed amendment to correct said deficiency, at a duly called meeting of the church.

Section 2. PROCEDURE: This Constitution may be amended by a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting at a duly convened business meeting of the congregation. Such meeting will be convened in accordance with the procedures outlined in Article X of this constitution.

ARTICLE XII

DISSOLUTION

If Providence Baptist Church should conclude its ministry and be dissolved, none of its assets remaining after meeting all responsibilities and payment of all just obligations shall revert back to or be used for the benefit of any individual member of the church, its officers or other private individuals. Such assets, if any, shall in the event of its dissolution, be assigned by action of its members, at a properly called meeting, to such other organization(s) which are in harmony with the objectives and doctrinal position as stated in this Constitution. Such organization(s) must also be recognized by the United States Internal Revenue Service as entitled to income tax exempt status under section 501 (c) (3) or amendments thereto of the revenue code.

ARTICLE XIII

PERPETUITY

We hereby commit ourselves to transmit our heritage, embodied in our Confession and this Constitution, unimpaired to succeeding generations of our spiritual children, God willing, until Christ returns. To this end, each member of the church shall be furnished with a copy of our Confession and Constitution. Each member is encouraged to read through each of them as often as necessary to remain familiar with their contents.

ARTICLE XIV

CONCLUSION

It is our desire as a church, that the Biblical Truths and Principles that are set forth in our Confession of Faith and this Constitution, will be manifest in our lives to the end that our Heavenly Father "who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Ephesians 3:20-21).

APPENDIX "A"

Modifications to the "1689 Baptist Confession of Faith"

Chapter 15, Paragraph 1: Strike "at riper years"

Chapter 10, Paragraph 3: Adopt 1689 that states "Elect infants"

Chapter 26, Paragraph 4: "but is an antichrist" . . . strike "that man of sin & son of perdition"