



# Constitution & By Laws

Fourth Revision  
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# CONSTITUTION

## PREAMBLE

In order to affirm and preserve the principles of our faith, to guarantee that this body may be governed in an orderly and efficient manner consistent with the Scriptures, and for the purpose of preserving the unity of this church, the liberties inherent in each individual member and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of like faith, we do declare and establish this Constitution.

## ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this church shall be North Country Fellowship Church, incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, 21 May 1989, in Watertown, New York.

## ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose for which this church is established shall be:

1. To worship God the Father and to honor our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit of God;
2. To build up our local body of believers to a place of spiritual maturity, fruitful service, and mutual love;
3. To fellowship with those of like-minded faith so as to encourage mutual growth and edification;
4. To proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to maintain and support such agencies, services, and missionary endeavors as shall adequately carry out the above purpose;
5. To administer the New Testament ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

## ARTICLE III - STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe:

1. There is one God, the creator, infinitely perfect and holy, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; all equally God, of one essence, yet separate in personality. (Deut. 6:14; Gen. 1:1; Matt 5:48; Isa. 6:3; Ex 3:14; 1 Pet. 1:2; Jn. 1:1; Acts 5:3-4; Matt 3:16-17)
2. Jesus Christ, the Son, eternally co-equal with the Father, became a man for our salvation, without ceasing to be God. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, shed His blood and died as an atonement for our sins, was bodily raised from the dead, and sits at the right hand of God (the Father), making intercession for believers. We believe in His imminent return for His Bride (the Church), and His visible return to establish His millennial kingdom on earth. (Phil. 2:6-7; Jn 1:1-4; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Acts 7:56; Mat 1:18-23; 2 Cor. 5:21; Acts 1:3; Heb. 7:25; Acts 1:9-11; Heb. 4:14-16; 1Thes. 4:13-17; Matt. 25:13; Rev. 20)
3. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He indwells, baptizes, and seals each believer at conversion, and is the means of knowing and applying the will of God in daily life. He also gives a gift or gifts to every believer for the building up of the church. (Jn. 16:8-11; 1Cor. 6:19, 1 Jn 4:13; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:13-14; Jn 14:26; Jn. 16:13; Eph. 4:30; Gal. 5:16-25)

4. The sixty-six books of the Holy Bible constitute the complete inspired Word of God. They are absolutely authoritative and inerrant in their original form, and are all-sufficient as the believer's rule of faith and practice. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21; 2 Tim. 2:15; Ps. 119:160; Matt.5:17-18; 2 Sam. 23:2; Jn. 17:17; Lu. 1:70; Acts 3:18; Heb. 4:12)
5. Man was created in the image of God by direct creation. However, man sinned and thereby incurred both physical and spiritual death. All are sinners by nature and choice, separated from God, unwilling and incapable of receiving the things of the Spirit of God apart from the regenerating grace of God. (Gen. 1:26-27; Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 5:12; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 2:12-14; Eph. 2:12; Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 8:7; Jn. 3:19; Rom. 3:10-23)
6. Salvation is provided for man by grace and it is received through faith. It was accomplished by Christ through His substitutionary sacrifice that paid God's just penalty for sin. This atonement was intended as sufficient for all and is in fact offered to all. Yet it is applied only to God's chosen ones. Jesus is the only way to God and the only Mediator between God and man through this atoning work. The believer is thus regenerated by the Spirit of God (born again), justified before God, united with Christ, and adopted into the family of God. The redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (Eph. 2:8-10; Jn. 1:12; Is. 52:13-53:12; Matt. 20:28; Rom. 3:24; Rom. 6:23b; 2 Cor. 5:14-21; Eph. 1:3-12; 1 Tim. 4:10; Jn. 14:6; 1 Tim 2:4,6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim 2:5; Jn. 3:5-7; Tit. 3:5,7; Gal. 2:16; Rom. 8:15-16; Gal. 4:6; Phil. 1:6; Rom. 11:29; 1 Cor. 1:8-9)
7. It is God's desire for all believers to walk in the Spirit and thus fulfill His will by denying ungodliness and worldly pleasure and living a life that glorifies Him. The believer is to have no association with those who profess to be Christians and who promote a gospel other than the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (Titus 2:11-14; Rom. 8:1-14; 1 Jn. 3:1-10; col. 3:1-2; 1 Cor. 5:9-13; 2 Cor. 6:14 - 7:1; Tit. 3:10-11; 2 Jn. 7:11; 1 Tim. 4; Gal. 1:6-9)
8. The local church is an assembly of born again, believers; subject to the Word of God; independent; united in organization to practice the two New Testament ordinances of the Lord's Table (communion) and baptism (by immersion). The church of Jesus Christ meets together for worship, prayer, fellowship, teaching, and actively engaging in carrying out the Great Commission. (Eph. 1:1; Phil. 1:11-13; 1 Cor. 11:20-30; Acts 2:41-47; Acts 8:36-39; Acts 18:8; Rom. 6:3-5; Acts 6:1-6; Acts 13:1-4; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8)
9. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; those who are saved, unto a resurrection of eternal life; and those who are lost, unto a resurrection of eternal damnation along with the adversary, Satan. (Acts 24:15; Jn. 5:24-29; Rev. 20:7-15; 1 Cor. 15; Jn. 3:36)

## ARTICLE IV - MEMBER'S STATEMENT OF PURPOSE & DESIRE

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into a covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We endeavor, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote it's spirituality; to sustain it's worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry and expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We endeavor to maintain family and private devotions; to educate our children in the faith, to seek the salvation of our family and acquaintances; to walk uprightly in the world; to be just in our dealings,

faithful in our responsibilities, and exemplary in our behavior; to avoid all gossiping, backbiting and excessive anger; to abstain from all forms of intoxication, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We also endeavor to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready to seek reconciliation, mindful of the pattern established by our Savior (Matt. 18:15-20).

We further endeavor that, if we move from this area, we will unite as soon as possible with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

## ARTICLE V - FORM OF GOVERNMENT

The government of this church is vested in its members.

## ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS

The Scriptural officers of this church are Elder(s) and Deacon(s). The Bylaws shall determine their appointment and succession. The church shall elect and appoint other officers as are deemed advisable to the various forms of service indicated by their titles and as defined in the Bylaws.

## ARTICLE VII - MEMBERSHIP

Any person who receives Jesus Christ as his personal Savior and Lord; shows evidence of the new life in Christ; has expressed agreement with the Constitution; has expressed support of the Bylaws; and, who has, in accordance with our Lord's command and example, been baptized by immersion, is eligible for membership.

## ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS

The meetings for worship, prayer, praise, fellowship, business and special purposes shall be set forth in the Bylaws.

## ARTICLE IX - AFFILIATION

This church shall be affiliated with Conservative Baptist associations on the local, regional and national levels. It shall cooperate with Conservative Baptist agencies as it sees fit. Affiliation with this association permits churches to send messengers to the annual meetings of the association, if they so desire. Such affiliation will be maintained as long as their policies and doctrinal statements agree with our Constitution.

## ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS

The Constitution may be amended in accordance with the prerequisites set forth in the Bylaws.

# BYLAWS

## ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

### Section 1 - Qualifications.

The church membership consists of those who confess Jesus Christ to be their Lord and Savior, and who; (1) after due examination by the Elders as to their Christian experience (and if coming from other churches, as to their letters of dismissal and recommendations or their satisfactory substitutes); (2) have been baptized by immersion; (3) have expressed agreement with the Constitution; and (4) have expressed support of the Bylaws of this church.

Following examination by the Elders, two weeks notice shall be given to the membership to determine if there are any biblical objections to the candidate becoming a member.

### Section 2 - Recognition.

The Elders, Deacons, and members shall extend to all new members the "Right Hand of Fellowship" in recognition of their admission to all rights and privileges of the church.

### Section 3 - Responsibilities.

Members are expected to be faithful in all the spiritual duties essential to the Christian life; and also to attend habitually the services of this church; to give regularly for its support, benevolences, and missionary program; to share in its organized work; and to support the leaders of the church in prayer.

### Section 4 - Rights.

Members in full and regular standing, and are at least 18 years old, may act and vote in the transactions of the church which require a congregation vote. All members shall enjoy the watchcare of their souls, the mutual stimulation to love and good works, and teaching from God's Word.

### Section 5 - Termination.

1. Any member in good and regular standing who desires a letter of dismissal and recommendation to any other Baptist church is entitled to have a letter sent to another church upon written request. In case of moving to another community, he should promptly make such a request and seek to join another fellowship.
2. If a member desires to join a religious body with which this church is not in fellowship, the church may, at his request, give him a certificate of good standing and terminate his membership.
3. A member in good standing may request to be released from his covenant obligations to this church. After the church has patiently and kindly endeavored to secure his continuance in its fellowship, such a request may be granted and his membership terminated.
4. If a member is absent from church services, without the Board of Elders approval, for a period of six months, and if efforts for restoration of the member to active support of the church through attendance and giving have not been successful, the member may be denied the privilege of voting and serving in the church. Such action, if deemed necessary by the Board of Elders, shall result in his being placed on the inactive membership role.

5. Members who have committed gross breach of covenant (see Art. II - Discipline), or who have been on the inactive membership role for a period of twelve months or longer, and for whom the church's efforts for restoration have failed, may be dropped from the membership role automatically at a regular business meeting upon recommendation of the Board of Elders.
6. All members dropped from the active roll shall be notified of the action in writing.

### Section 6 - Restoration.

Any person whose membership has been terminated may be restored upon recommendation of the Board of Elders for any offense, upon his repentance and reformation, or, if because of continued absence, upon satisfactory evidence given of the desire to cooperate actively in the work of the church.(See Art. I, Sec. 1)

## ARTICLE II - DISCIPLINE

### Section 1 - Discipline.

1. Definition: The term "discipline" as used in this Article refers to the method of correction for problems and difficulties in the church body. It is that procedure which includes Christian teaching, admonition, and rebuke (both public and private) with the aim of helping an individual Christian to grow spiritually in the faith and to throw off unchristian attitudes and practices.
2. Attitude in Discipline: An attitude of love, patience, calmness, prayer and understanding shall be the undergirding factors in all matters of church discipline, regardless of the nature of the difficulty or violation. The goal of discipline is restoration.

### Section 2 - Matters Requiring Discipline.

A member of this church shall be subject to church discipline for:

1. Disagreements between individuals: The order given in Matthew 18:15-20 shall be followed to resolve disharmony between members, when such disharmony is deemed to be of a serious or divisive nature by the Board of Elders.
2. Heresy: Members who hold and/or persistently propagate false doctrine shall be subject to church discipline.
3. Public Sin: Members found walking disorderly, in a manner unbecoming to disciples of Christ, shall be subject to disciplinary action after careful consideration by the Elders.
4. Attitude toward the Local Church: Members who treat the acts and decisions of the church contemptuously, or pursue a course which produces discord, disunity, or dissension, shall be subject to discipline.

### Section 3 - Procedure for Discipline.

1. Administration of Discipline: The Elders shall be responsible for implementing the administration of discipline (Matthew 18:16).
2. Exclusion: If the member in question neglects to hear the church (Matthew 18:17) and a proper solution in accord with the scriptures and the church's faith and practice still cannot be worked out, the errant member will be dismissed from membership upon recommendation of the Board of Elders.



3. Restoration of Membership: Excluded members may be restored upon the recommendation of the Elders if there is satisfactory evidence of genuine repentance.

## ARTICLE III - CHURCH OFFICERS

### Section 1 - Introduction.

All duly elected officers shall have the trust and confidence of the church body so that they may carry out their ministries and responsibilities without undue encumbrances. They shall realize, however, their responsibility to the church by keeping the church body informed. They are to remain in the bounds of the authority placed upon them by this Constitution and Bylaws and by the church body.

### Section 2 - Elders.

1. Qualifications: The qualifications for Elders shall be those set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. An elder must be a man who has been called by God to his ministry (I Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11), gifted by the Holy Spirit as a pastor-teacher, and recognized by the church as an undershepherd of Christ, to preach, teach, and train others to provide leadership for the carrying out of the spirit and letter of the Word of God, and the Constitution and Bylaws of this church. At the time of the church's call to him, he must be a member of a Baptist Church or be in complete accord with Baptist church doctrine, this Constitution and Bylaws, and shall become a member of this church upon accepting it's call.
2. Respect for the Office: The Elders shall be held in high esteem as undershepherds of Christ (1 Thes. 5:12-13; 1 Tim. 5:17-19; Heb. 13:17). To aid the Elders in their ministry, the church shall not burden them with tasks that are unrelated to those given in their job description.
3. Senior Elder: The Senior Elder (Pastor/Bishop) is the Elder who is given the primary oversight of all the ministries of the church. He is responsible for the overall direction and efficient operation of these ministries. He is to be a paid staff member as the church's finances allow. He is also an ex officio member of all boards and committees, and allowed voting privileges on the Board of Elders.
4. Board of Elders: The Board of Elders shall be comprised of the Senior Elder and any such other Elders as recognized by the church. Candidates for this office must meet the qualifications previously set forth (Section 2.1) and will serve for an indeterminate period.
  - A. Duties: The Board of Elders shall serve in council and conference with the Senior Elder in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church. They are responsible with the Senior Elder for the oversight of all ministries of the church. Specific duties include:
    - 1) Meeting regularly (at least once a month) for prayer concerning the affairs of the church and to conduct business. A majority of the board shall constitute a quorum.
    - 2)The Senior Elder is to preside at their meetings.
    - 3)Delegating areas of oversight to each Elder, distributing the responsibilities as much as possible according individual gifts and abilities.
    - 4)Having ex officio oversight of any Ministry Committee, while also being eligible for election to any committee as voting member.
    - 5)Providing assistance to the Senior Elder in:
      - a) The preaching, teaching, training, and equipping ministries of the church, including pulpit supply and the conduct of the worship service.

- b) Visitation, counseling, and the training of new converts and members.
  - c) The careful examination of all candidates for church membership, recommending to the church those considered eligible for membership.
  - d) All matters of discipline of members.
  - e) The administration of the ordinances.
- B. Bi-vocation: An Elder is a man whose gifts abilities are worthy of being supported by the church (1 Tim. 5:17-18) as the church is financially able. It is permissible, however, for an Elder to have another occupation if it is necessary or desirable (1 Cor. 9:6, 12, 15, 18).
- C. Mutual Responsibility of Elders: The Elders have a mutual responsibility of encouragement, exhortation, and accountability to each other in the performance of their ministries.
5. Appointment: Upon the unanimous recommendation of the Board of Elders, notice of any special meetings called for the purpose of appointing an Elder shall be given from the pulpit for the two consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting. All members will be requested to submit to the Board of Elders in writing any biblical objections which would prohibit the appointment. The Elders shall be appointed for an indefinite period of time.
  6. Disqualification: If at any time an Elder Believes himself to be disqualified, he shall discuss the matter with his fellow Elders and tentatively offer his resignation. Elders who are accused of serious sin shall be consulted by the other Elders, in conference with the accusers. No accusation shall be received except on the testimony of at least two or three witnesses. If the accused Elder is found guilty and remains unrepentant, the Board of Elders shall remove the Elder from office. Problems concerning an Elder's performance, competence, or qualifications shall first be presented privately to the Elder involved. If the problem cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the matter shall be taken to the Board of Elders for discussion and prayer. If this problem remains unresolved after Board action, the Board of Elders shall determine final disposition of the matter, including possible dismissal of the Elder. In the event that the charges of lack of performance, incompetence, or qualification involves the only Elder within the church, a special meeting of the membership shall be called, and upon a three-quarters ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) majority vote, the regional office of the Conservative Baptist Association shall be notified and requested to form a board of elders (minimum of three) to decide the issue. Each member of this board must be in agreement with the spirit and content of the Constitution and Bylaws. To maintain the ideal that we "do all this for the sake of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:23a), all related events and actions taken are to remain confidential (among members only) that the cause of Christ is not discredited among unbelievers.
  7. In appointments or dismissals of elders, the Board of Elders will consist of a minimum of three elders. The Senior Elder shall be required to request assistance from other like-minded churches if necessary to obtain the minimum number of elders required.
  8. Resignation: An Elder may be relieved of his responsibilities by his resignation at any time. Previous written notice (in cases other than those involving church discipline) of not less than thirty (30) days shall be given by the Elder. This condition may be waived if mutually agreed upon.
  9. Ordination: The church has the right to ordain any of its Elders as it sees fit. The Board of Elders shall call an Ordination Council of like-minded churches. The council shall examine the candidate and make its recommendation to the ordaining church. The recommendation of the council shall be carefully considered, but is not binding upon the church.

10. In the event the church is without an Elder, the regional office of the Conservative Baptist Association shall be requested to form a board of elders to appoint an Elder as specified above (section 2.5).

### Section 3 - Deacons.

1. Qualifications: The qualifications for Deacons shall be those set forth in Acts 6:1-7 and 1 Tim. 3:8-13. They shall be men or women filled with the Holy Spirit, members in good standing of this church, of mature judgment, unquestioned Christian character, and loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Election: Upon the nomination of the church, qualified candidates for the office of Deacon shall be voted on at any regular or special business meeting. An affirmative vote of three-quarters (¾) of those members present and voting shall be necessary to present candidate(s) to the Board of Elders. Voting shall be done by secret ballot. The Board of Elders shall prayerfully consider the candidate(s) qualifications and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to determine which, if any, of the candidates would best serve in the ministry required by the position. The term of office for a Deacon shall be indefinite, based upon the continued need for the ministry to which he was chosen. Upon recommendation, the Board of Elders may terminate the position or direct the church to select from among themselves a potential replacement to fill the vacated office.
3. Termination: The conditions for, and method of, termination of a Deacon's office shall be the same as that given for an Elder (Section 2.7), with the exception that the minimum number of Elders required will be one (1).
4. Resignation: The method of resignation of a Deacon's office shall be the same as that given for an Elder (Section 2.8).
5. Responsibility of the Deacons: The Deacons shall be responsible for the performance of their ministries to which they were appointed and they shall be accountable to the Board of Elders.
  - A. Duties: The Deacons are to serve in council and conference with the Elders in all matters pertaining to the material and social ministries, being careful not to neglect the spiritual needs related to their area of ministry. They shall have custody and control of all temporalities and property, real or personal, belonging to the church, and revenues therefrom, and shall administer the same in accordance with the procedures, rules, and usage's of the church (see Trustees, Art. IV, Sec. 5). Specific duties include:
    - 1) Meeting at least once a month for prayer concerning the affairs of the church and to conduct business (a simple majority of the Board shall constitute a quorum).
    - 2) Delegating areas of oversight to each Deacon, under the guidance of the Elders, distributing the responsibilities as much as possible according to individual gifts and abilities, as new ministries present themselves.
    - 3) Overseeing the counting, depositing, disbursement, and record keeping of all moneys according to the budget and policies of the church. Emergency expenditures not provided for in the budget may be made with the approval of the Board of Elders. When such expenditures are made, a report shall be given to the church at the next regular business meeting by the Board of Trustees.
    - 4) Overseeing the care of the place of worship. They shall be responsible for the proper preparation and appearance of the place of worship, seeking to maintain order and comfort in the assembly. They shall appoint, train, and oversee the ushers.

- 5)Assisting the Elders in the preparation and distribution of the elements of the Communion Service and the preparation and functioning of the Baptismal Service.
- 6)Preparing a church budget to be presented to the Elders and subsequently to the church for approval at the Annual Church Business Meeting.
- 7)Establishing a Deacons Fund for aiding members, or others, as deemed advisable in consultation with the Elders, in times of distress, emergencies, and special need.
- 8)In the absence of a qualified Board of Elders, assisting the senior pastor in those areas of responsibility (Section 2.4.A) as their gifts and abilities allow.
- 9)The minimum number of Deacons shall be one (1) who will be responsible for the administration of church finances, in conjunction with the Board of Elders.

## ARTICLE IV - OTHER OFFICERS

### Section 1 - Introduction.

The church shall elect or appoint to the various forms of service indicated by their titles and as defined in the Bylaws such other officers as are deemed advisable. All duly elected officers shall have the trust and confidence of the church body. They shall realize, however, their responsibility to the church by keeping the church body informed. They are to remain within the bounds of the authority placed upon them by the Scriptures, this Constitution and by-laws, and the church body. There is no place for an attitude of pride or independence.

### Section 2 - Trustees.

Trustees shall be elected by the church in multiples of three (President, Secretary, and Treasurer) to satisfy the state requirements. They shall be responsible for the legal affairs of the church, holding title to and exercising responsibility to insure the membership is kept fully informed of any action relating to the maintenance, acquisition, or distribution of church assets. In all other respects, the Trustees shall conduct its duties within the restrictions and guidelines of the Religious Corporation Law of the State of New York. Trustees term of office shall be three (3) years. Positions within the Board of Trustees shall be voted upon annually. In the event of a vacancy, the Board of Deacons shall call an emergency Business Meeting for a church vote to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term. The terms shall be staggered in such a manner that only one office becomes vacant each year.

### Section 3 - Moderator (Trustee).

The Moderator of the church meetings shall be the President of the Trustees. In his absence, a representative from the Board of Deacons shall be Moderator. It is the Moderator's responsibility to preside at the church meetings in order that they may function efficiently and orderly. If unity on a matter is unattainable, he will call for prayer until the problem is resolved.

### Section 4 - Clerk (Trustee).

The Clerk shall be the Trustee elected as secretary and shall keep a suitable record of all the minutes of the meeting. The Clerk shall keep a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms. The Clerk shall notify all officers, members of committees and delegates of their election or appointment. The Clerk shall issue letters of dismissal as

directed by the Board of Elders, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary as prescribed in the Bylaws. It shall be the Clerk's responsibility to promote loyalty and efficiency in church life.

#### Section 5 - Treasurer (Trustee).

The Treasurer shall be the Trustee elected to the position of treasurer, and shall receive and disburse all funds as directed by the Board of Deacons. The Treasurer shall receive all moneys of the church. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate, confidential record of all individual offerings, gifts, and other income to the church as well as all expenditures of the church. These records, with the exception of those records of individual giving, shall be open at all times for inspection by the Board of Deacons or an Auditing Committee. The Treasurer shall have the privilege of appointing any helpers, with the Board of Deacons approval, that are deemed necessary for the efficient operation of his/her responsibilities. Any appointed helpers shall be members of the church.

#### Section 6 - Time Qualification for Office.

With the exception of the Senior Elder, no person shall be elected to an office, board or committee until he/she has been a member for three months.

## ARTICLE V - MEETINGS

#### Section 1 - Worship.

1. Public services shall be held regularly on the Lord's Day.
2. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once a month.
3. Other meetings shall be held as the interest of the Lord's work may require.
4. Due to special circumstances the Elders may alter temporarily any of the above meetings.

#### Section 2 - Business.

1. The Annual Church Business Meeting shall be held the second Wednesday of January (unless another date is given with two weeks notice from the pulpit). At that time the annual reports shall be presented; officers elected; the church budget adopted; and other business transacted as may be specified in the call or authorized in the Bylaws.
2. Quarterly meetings shall be held the first Wednesday of April, July, and October, unless another day is specified, for the purpose of receiving reports and transacting any business as may be necessary.
3. Special meetings may be called by the Board of Elders, the Board of Trustees, or by the written request of ten members in good standing, who are eligible to vote. Only business stated in the call for the meeting may be transacted.
4. Notice of Meetings. All regular and special meetings shall be announced publicly from the pulpit, by any Elder of the church, during two consecutive Sunday services preceding the meeting. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated when the notice is given.
5. Quorum. When the membership of eligible voters exceeds thirty (30), then ten (10) members or one-third (1/3) shall constitute a quorum at all meetings, except for the purchase or sale of property; or amending the Constitution or Bylaws. In these cases, a quorum shall consist of one-half (1/2) the number of eligible voters. Until the number of eligible voters exceeds thirty members, six members shall constitute a quorum. In determining a quorum the following should not be included:

- A. Students who are away at school.
  - B. Servicemen or members who are away for long periods of time and are not present when the meeting is held.
  - C. Members who have permanently moved away but have not yet transferred their letter.
  - D. Members who are in the process of being dropped from the membership role.
  - E. Members who are disabled physically and thus unable to attend the meeting.
6. All elections and decisions shall be determined by a three-quarters (3/4) majority vote unless otherwise specified.
  7. Qualifications for voting. All members of the church, in good and regular standing, who are eighteen (18) years of age or older shall be eligible to vote at all regular or special business meetings.
  8. Order of Business.
    - Call to order
    - Prayer
    - Reading of previous minutes
    - Reports
    - Communications
    - Unfinished Business

## ARTICLE VI - ORGANIZATIONS

This church shall have such organizations as are needed to minister to the different age groups and varied interests of its members. All organizations shall be formed with the approval of the Board of Elders. All officers and bylaws of such organizations shall be consistent with this Constitution and Bylaws, and subject to the oversight of the Board of Elders.

## ARTICLE VII - FINANCES

### Section 1 - Policy.

The Scriptures are the sole authority of the financial policy of this church. Only Scriptural methods of raising moneys are allowed. Inasmuch as tithes and offerings are commanded of every believer, all members are encouraged to bring them into this church, God's storehouse (Mal. 3:10; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8-9).

### Section 2 - Designated Giving.

Individuals desiring to make a designated offering through the church may do so, subject to the approval of the Elders.

## ARTICLE VIII - MISSIONS

There shall be an adequate missionary program to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ. The membership shall be encouraged to support those home and foreign missions agencies that are affiliated with the Conservative Baptists. This in no way restricts missionary giving to other individuals, organizations and mission boards whose ministry, policy and program is in basic agreement with our Constitution and Bylaws.

## ARTICLE IX - GENERAL

### Section 1 - Fiscal Year.

The fiscal year of the church shall begin on the first day of the month of January. All officers shall remain in office until their successors are elected. The church shall continue to operate on the previous years budget until the Annual Church Business Meeting.

### Section 2 - Salaried Elder's Benefits.

1. The church shall include in its yearly budget a sum equal to the "self-employed" Social Security rate. A call to a salaried Elder shall include this rate. If the Elder has chosen not to be covered by the Social Security system, this money will be given to him for his own pension fund.
2. If at all possible, the church should contribute towards the Elder's pension fund.
3. The Elder shall be given an annual paid vacation of four weeks, subject to consultation with the Board of Elders.
4. An adequate hospitalization and medical policy shall be provided for a full-time salaried Elder only, unless other arrangements agreed upon and approved by the congregation at the Annual Church Business meeting for a part-time salaried Elder.
5. Upon disqualification or dismissal of a salaried Elder, financial support shall continue for a period of thirty (30) days of such action.

### Section 3 - Will of the Church.

When the church, by vote, has expressed itself and is not in conflict with this Constitution and Bylaws, nor with the Religious Corporation Law of the State of New York, the will of the church shall be carried out by all officers.

### Section 4 - Licensing.

The church may grant a license to preach to any male member who gives evidence of his ability and spiritual preparedness, provided he is recommended by the Board of Elders. The licensee must have preached before the church before any church action is taken.

### Section 5 - Amendments.

1. The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any annual or quarterly business meeting. The general theme of the amendment must appear in the call for the meeting. A quorum shall consist of one-half (1/2) of the eligible voters (see Art. V, Sec. 2.5).
2. The notice for the proposed amendment shall be given on the three consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting.
3. A majority vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the quorum shall be necessary for the amendment, which shall go into effect immediately.
4. All previous actions of the church which are in conflict with these articles are set aside.

## Section 6 - Dissolution of the Corporation.

Assets will be divided equally between Missions Door (formerly the Conservative Baptist Home Missions Society) and CBMissionNortheast (formerly the Conservative Baptist Association of New York State), in accordance with the Certificate of Incorporation.



# AMENDMENTS

## Amendment #1

### **Change to Bylaws, Article V, Section 2 - Business**

The date of the Annual Business Meeting was changed from the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday in December to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday in January to allow for the treasurer to provide accurate year end figures.

Date Changed: September 12, 1991

## Amendment #2

### **Change to Bylaws, Article III, Section 2 - Qualifications for Elders**

The following sentence was added under the Qualifications for Elders, "The qualifications for Elders shall be those set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9."

Date Changed: September 7, 1994

## Amendment #3

### **Change to Bylaws, Article V, Section 2 - Business**

The date of the Quarterly Business Meetings were changed from the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesdays in March, June and September to the 1st Wednesdays in April, July and October to allow even quarterly reporting period (see Amendment #1).

Date Changed: January 10, 1996

## Amendment #4

### **Change to Constitution, Article I - NAME**

The following is the original statement: "The name of this church shall be the North Country Fellowship Church (A Conservative Baptist Church), Watertown, New York, incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, 21 May 1989."

Date Changed: June 2, 1996

## Amendment #5

### **Change to Constitution, Article III - STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The following are the original statements:

1. No changes.
2. "Jesus Christ, the Son, eternally co-equal with the Father, became a man for our salvation, without ceasing to be God. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, virgin born, lived a sinless life, shed His blood and died as an atonement for our sins, was bodily raised from the dead, and sits at the right hand of God (the Father), making intercession for believers. We believe in His imminent return for the Church, and His visible return to establish His millennial kingdom on earth."
3. No changes.

4. "The sixty-six books of the Holy Bible are the verbally and plenary complete inspired Word of God, absolutely authoritative and inerrant in their original autographs, and are all-sufficient as the believer's rule of faith and practice."
5. "Man was created in the image of God by direct creation. They have sinned and thereby incurred both physical and spiritual death. All men are sinners by nature and choice, unwilling and incapable of receiving the things of the Spirit of God apart from the regenerating grace of God. Because of their sin, all men are separated from God."
6. "Salvation is provided for man by grace and it is received through faith. It was accomplished by Christ through His substitutionary sacrifice in paying God's just penalty for sin. This atonement was intended as sufficient for all and is in fact offered to all. Yet it is applied only to God's chosen ones. Jesus is the only way to God and the only Mediator between God and man through this atoning work. The believer is thus regenerated by the Spirit of God (born again) justified before God, united with Christ, and adopted into the family of God. The redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever."
7. "It is God's will that each believer walk in the Spirit, doing His will, living a life that glorifies God, and denying ungodliness and worldly pleasure. The believer is to have no association with those who promote a gospel, other than the gospel of Jesus Christ."
8. "The local church is an assembly of born again, baptized believers; subject to the Word of God; independent; united in organization to practice the two New Testament ordinances of the Lord's Table (communion) and baptism (by immersion). The church of Jesus Christ meets together for worship, prayer, fellowship, teaching, and actively engaging in carrying out the Great Commission."
9. "We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of eternal life, and they that are lost unto the resurrection of eternal damnation, along with the adversary Satan."

Date Changed: June 2, 1996

## Amendment #6

### Change to Bylaws, Article VIII - MISSIONS

The following is the original statement: "There shall be an adequate missionary program to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ. Since this church is in affiliation with the Conservative Baptist Association of America, the membership shall be encouraged to support the Conservative Baptist Foreign and Home Mission Societies. This in no way restricts missionary giving to other individuals, organizations and mission boards whose ministry, policy and program is in basic agreement with our Constitution and Bylaws."

Date Changed: June 2, 1996

## Amendment #7

### Change to Constitution - Article IX - Affiliation

The following is the original statement: "This church shall be affiliated with the Conservative Baptist Association of America on the local, state (regional) and national levels."

Date Changed: October 17, 2012

## Amendment #8

### **Change to Bylaws - Article IV - Other Officers - Section 5 - Treasurer (Trustee)**

The following is the original statement: "The Treasurer shall receive all moneys, and have custody of all envelopes provided for the systematic collection of the revenue of the church."

Date Changed: October 17, 2012

## Amendment #9

### **Change to Bylaws - Article IV - Other Officers - Section 5 - Treasurer (Trustee)**

The following is the original statement: "The Treasurer shall have the privilege of appointing any helpers, with the Board of Deacons approval, that are deemed necessary for the efficient operation of his/her responsibilities."

Date Changed: October 17, 2012

## Amendment #10

### **Change to Bylaws - Article VII - Finances - Section 2 - System**

The following original statement / section was removed: "The church will provide and encourage the use of church offering envelopes."

Date Changed: October 17, 2012

## Amendment #11

### **Change to Bylaws - Article VIII - Missions**

The following is the original statement: "There shall be an adequate missionary program to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ. Since this church is in affiliation with the Conservative Baptist Association of America, the membership shall be encouraged to support those home and foreign missions agencies that are directed by the CBA. This in no way restricts missionary giving to other individuals, organizations and mission boards whose ministry, policy and program is in basic agreement with our Constitution and Bylaws."

Date Changed: October 17, 2012

## Amendment #12

### **Change Bylaws - Article IX - General - Section 6 - Dissolution of the Corporation**

The following is the original statement: "Assets will be divided equally between the Conservative Baptist Home Missions Society and the Conservative Baptist Association of New York State, in accordance with the Certificate of Incorporation."

Date Changed: October 17, 2012

## Amendment #13

### **Change to Bylaws, Article III, Section 3 - Qualifications for Deacons**

The following is the original statement: "The qualifications for Deacons shall be those set forth in Acts 6:1-7 and 1 Tim. 3:8-13. They shall be men filled with the Holy Spirit, members in good standing of this church, of mature judgment, unquestioned Christian character, and loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ."

Date Changed: January 15, 2014