

The Fellowship of
Fundamental Bible Churches

Constitution
&
Rules of Order

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The Origin and Historical Background of the Fellowship

The Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches was originally known as the Eastern Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church which was formed from the union of the New York, Pennsylvania and the New Jersey Conferences. The oldest body comprised in the union (New York) held its first session in New York City in 1830. In October of 1911, at Pittston, Pennsylvania, the New York and Pennsylvania Conferences united as the Eastern Conference. The following year, at Grace Church, Brooklyn, New York, the New Jersey Conference entered into the union. The territory of the Eastern Conference reached northward from New York City two hundred miles; westward across New Jersey and far enough into Pennsylvania to include Daleville, Pittston and Shickshinny; southward to Bridgeton, Millville and Atlantic City, New Jersey and comprising the churches of Long Island and southern Connecticut.

The 29th and final session of the Eastern Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church was held in Christ Methodist Protestant Church, Atlantic City, New Jersey, September 27-28, 1939. The reason for this was a proposed union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church South and the Methodist Protestant Church. The Eastern Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church gave notice by a decisive vote that it would not enter the union. The reason was clear: the new Methodist Church would be controlled by leaders whose doctrinal beliefs would be at variance with the Word of God. This group would later be known as the United Methodist Church.

The determination not to enter the Methodist union later took the form of a definite action when the president ruled that the conference in session was no longer the Eastern Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church but the Eastern Conference of the Methodist Church. The Eastern Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church was declared out of existence, and all its churches to be a part of the new Methodist Church. At this point, Rev. Newton C. Conant stated that he could not continue to sit in a Methodist Conference and invited all who so desired to withdraw from the meeting with him. A group of ten ordained ministers, seven supply ministers with about sixty other delegates and friends withdrew to the Methodist Protestant Church in Scullville, New Jersey. As they left they sang "Blessed Assurance", "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," and "Tis the Old Time Religion."

In 1940, the name was changed to, "The Eastern Conference of the Bible Protestant Church, Inc." In 1954, the words "Eastern Conference" were deleted from the name and the group was recognized as the "Bible Protestant Church."

In 1941, the Bible Protestant Church along with the Bible Presbyterians organized the American Council of Christian Churches, and we still identify with this group. Our Fellowship of Churches has always been Fundamental in its doctrine and practice. The Bible Protestant Church was born through Biblical Separation and continues today because of separation!

In 1985, at our Annual Conference held at Tri-State Bible Camp, Montague, New Jersey, the name was changed to the “Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches”. This new name clearly identifies who we are and where we stand.

Through the years the FFBC has strengthened its Doctrinal Statement in order to clearly articulate our Fundamental position. We stand firmly on the “Fundamentals of the Faith” and believe the Bible to be God’s Word to us today. As dispensationalists we believe in the pre-tribulational rapture of the Church and the pre-millennial return of Christ. As to the mode of baptism, we believe in baptism by immersion for believers only. We are not charismatic in belief or practice and clearly separate from that movement. As separatists we oppose the National World Council of Churches as well as New Evangelicalism. We believe that compromise with false teachers is sin and that fellowship with compromising brethren likewise grieves the Spirit of God.

Our Annual Conference is held in August of each year for fellowship, business, and challenging preaching! The FFBC owns and operates Tri-State Bible Camp and Conference Center and employs a part-time National Representative.

Doctrinal Statement

We believe the Holy Bible, the Old and New Testaments, with its sixty-six canonical books in the original manuscripts is the verbal, plenary, inerrant and infallible Word of God, entirely without error or contradiction in all matters of which it speaks; we additionally believe that God by His singular care and providence has preserved His Holy Scriptures; and that the Holy Bible is, therefore, the only sufficient final and supreme rule and authority of faith and practice (Psalm 12:6-7, 119:89,105,152,160; Matt. 5:18, 24:35; Luke 16:17; II Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 4:12; I Pet. 1:24-25; II Pet. 1:21; and Rev. 22:18-19).

We believe that God is Triune; that there are three persons in the Godhead, and these are one God (Matt. 28:19).

We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ; that He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary (John 1 and Matt. 1).

We believe that the only way to be saved is by faith in the blood sacrifice, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and that to those who thus become His sheep, He says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (John 10:28 and Eph. 2:8-9).

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven and is now seated at the right hand of the Father; that He ever liveth to make intercession for all that come to God by Him (Acts 1:9-11; Heb. 4:14; and Eph. 1:20-21).

We believe that the Church, which is the Body of Christ, began with the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost; and that each one who receives the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior is a member of the Body of Christ, and is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:12-28; 6:19-20).

We believe that the Gospel commission is for the Church; that the Lord's Supper and water Baptism by immersion for believers only are Divine institutions and that Christ desires us to practice them in this age (Matt. 28:18-20 and I Cor. 11:23-39).

We believe that Christ may at any moment return in the air to rapture the Saints, and that a Tribulation period of approximately seven years shall follow, after which He will come to the earth with His Saints, and rule for a thousand years. After this the wicked will be judged and cast in to the Lake of Fire (I Thess. 4:13-18; I Cor. 15:51-57; Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15-21, 24:27, 25:46; and Rev. 19:11, 20:10-12).

We believe that Satan is a person, the author of the Fall, and that he shall be eternally punished (Job 1:6; Gen. 3:1-19; and Rev. 20:10).

We believe the doctrine of separation is rooted in the holiness of our God and His instruction for us to be holy (1 Peter 1:15,16). The doctrine of separation is understood both as from the world (1 John 2:15-17), unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:11-7:1), and from brethren that compromise the truth of God's Word (Romans 16:17,18; 2 Thessalonians 3:6,14,15). We therefore shall not knowingly

cooperate with nor join in ministry affiliation with organizations or individuals that do not hold to the fundamentals of the faith as set forth in the Word of God, or that refuse to separate themselves from unbelievers, the world and disobedient brethren.

We believe that God is Sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts; and, that the gifts of evangelists, pastors and teachers are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today; and, that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed. We believe that the Bible is sufficient alone without any supernatural sign gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12).

We believe that marriage is a picture of the relationship between Christ and His Church (Eph.5:25), and we believe that marriage is a divine and sacred institution, which is publicly entered into, uniting one man and one woman in a life-long covenant (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6). It is God's intent that the marriage relationship is only to be broken by death (1 Corinthians 7:10-11; Romans 7:2; Malachi 2:16). The Bible is against remarriage for those that are divorced (Mark 10:11-12; Rom 7:1-3). A divorced man is not qualified for the office of pastor or deacon (1 Timothy 3:2-5)

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust; in the eternal conscious punishment of the lost and the eternal joy of the saved (Rev. 20:11-15; 22:12-21; and I Cor. 15:1-58).

We believe the following to be essential Doctrines of the Christian Faith:

- The Inspiration of the Scriptures
- The Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ
- The Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ
- The Vicarious Death of Jesus Christ
- The Bodily Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ
- The Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ

Constitution of the FFBC

Article I Name

The name of this fellowship shall be the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches.

Article II Purpose

The purpose of the Fellowship shall be to promote Christian fellowship among churches of like precious faith who declare the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27), disciple the believers (Eph. 4:12), and defend the faith (Jude 3).

The Fellowship is composed of independent, autonomous, fundamental, separated, Bible-believing churches who acknowledge only the Lord Jesus Christ as Spiritual Head and the Scriptures as the final authority for faith and practice.

Article III Doctrine and Position

Each church or individual that is part of the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches must be in complete agreement with the Doctrinal Statement, Constitution, Biblical Distinctives and Biblical Positions as specified in its authorized literature. Any additional literature representing the position of the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches must be approved by a majority of pastors and delegates before distribution.

Article IV Membership and Voting Privileges

Section A - Churches

1. Procedure for accepting new churches:

- A. Application shall be made by interested churches to the Headquarters on the appropriate application form.
- B. Upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the church shall be presented at the Annual Session of the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches for membership.

2. Participation by member churches:

- A. Each church is entitled to a delegate or alternate delegate to the Annual Session.
- B. Each church is entitled to one vote on all matters.
- C. Each delegate must sign, without reservation, his agreement with the Doctrinal Statement, Biblical Positions and Constitution.

Section B - Ministers

1. A ministerial member is a man.

- A. Who has been previously ordained and has been examined by the Ministerial Qualifications Committee or has been approved and recommended for ordination by the Ministerial Qualifications Committee, and
- B. Who has had one year of full time service, and
- C. Who is ministering or has ministered in his chosen field of service, and
- D. Who has been reviewed and recommended by the Ministerial Qualifications Committee to the Fellowship and received by a majority vote at an Annual Session.

2. Ministerial members of the Fellowship must sign annually, without reservation their agreement with the Doctrinal Statement, Biblical Distinctives, Biblical Positions and Constitution.

3. A ministerial member is entitled to one vote.

Section C - Other Voting Members

Any member of the Executive Committee who is not a delegate or a ministerial member shall be entitled to one vote. The Administrator of Tri-State Bible Conference shall be entitled to one vote. They must also sign annually without reservation the Doctrinal Statement, Biblical Distinctives, Biblical Positions and Constitution.

Article V
Ordination

Section A - Ordination Requirements

Those men seeking ordination:

- 1. Must meet Biblical Qualifications of I Timothy 3:1-8.
- 2. Must have adequate training for the ministry and be currently involved in a local church ministry.

3. Must have been approved by an ordination council of Fundamental, separated pastors and/or Ministerial Qualifications Committee and other ministerial members of the Fellowship.
4. Must be serving the Lord in a generally recognized field of Christian service in order to become a candidate.

Section B - Ordination Service

The Ordination Service will be under the auspices of the local church. When a local church seeks the assistance of the FFBC in the matter of ordination, help will be given according to the guidelines established in section H of the Rules of Order.

Article VI Annual Session

There shall be an Annual Session of the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches at such time and place as shall be determined by the members of the Fellowship in a regular meeting. Special meetings may be called by the Executive Committee. These special meetings are not the scheduled meetings of the Executive Committee. The Rules of Order for the Annual Session are available through the headquarters.

Article VII Officers

The officers of this Fellowship shall be President, Vice President, Secretary and Financial Secretary. These officers shall be elected by ballot for a two year term of office. They shall be members of the Executive Committee.

1. The President

The President shall be a member of the Fellowship. He shall preside at all sessions of the Fellowship and at all meetings of the Executive Committee. He shall be a ex-officio member of any appointed committees of the Fellowship. He, with the Secretary, shall sign all appropriate legal document. He shall appoint a Chairman for each region to promote fellowship among the churches. No person shall serve as President for more than six consecutive terms, or a total of 7 years if they have inherited an unexpired term.

2. The Vice President

The Vice President shall be a member of the Fellowship. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall assume the responsibilities of the President. He shall assist the President at the discretion of the President. No person shall serve as Vice President for more than six consecutive terms, or a total of 7 years if they have inherited an unexpired term.

3. The Secretary

The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all meetings and shall keep in trust the official seal and documents of the Fellowship. He shall maintain the official role of the Fellowship and secure annually the signatures of the members of the Fellowship in compliance with Article III. He, with the President, shall sign all legal documents. No person shall serve as Secretary for more than six consecutive terms, or a total of 7 years if they have inherited an unexpired term.

4. The Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for the deposit of all monies of the Fellowship General Fund, issue receipts and disperse monies as authorized. No person shall serve as Financial Secretary for more than six consecutive terms, or a total of 7 years if they have inherited an unexpired term.

Article VIII Boards and Committees

1. The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of all four elected officers, and twelve men, six ministerial members of the Fellowship and six laymen, elected by the Fellowship at large.

The twelve members at large on the Executive Committee shall serve a two year term on a rotating basis. Three ministers and three layman will be elected each year. No man shall serve for more than six consecutive years, or a total of 7 years if they have inherited an unexpired term.

The Executive Committee shall have the power to transact business between Annual Sessions insofar as its actions are in harmony with the policies of the Fellowship.

The Executive Committee will serve as the Trustees of the Fellowship.

The Executive Committee will appoint the National Representative and the Administrator of Tri-State Bible Conference.

No ministerial member of the Fellowship shall be eligible to serve on the Executive Committee who has not been a member of the Fellowship for at least one year.

A minister who has previously served on the Executive Committee as a layman is exempt from the one year limitation.

A layman must be a member of a Fellowship church for one year to be eligible to serve on the Executive Committee.

The Minutes of the Executive Committee must be forwarded to each Pastor and delegate.

2. The Pastoral/Church Relations Committee

The Pastoral/Church Relations Committee shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, National Representative and the Ministerial Qualifications Chairman.

The Pastoral/Church Relations Committee shall stand ready to assist local churches or pastors when requested. The Committee may review the status of any ministerial member or church regarding his or their relationship with the Fellowship.

3. The Ministerial Qualifications Committee Chairman

The Ministerial Qualifications Committee's Chairman shall examine all ministerial applications as to their Doctrinal and Practical Convictions for membership in the Fellowship. This application will be forwarded to all ministerial members within the Fellowship for feedback. Should the chairman determine a personal interview with the applicant is warranted, regional pastors will meet with him to discuss the application.

4. Other Boards and Committees

Other Board/Committees will be elected/appointed by the Fellowship at the Annual Meeting and shall be accountable to the Executive Committee.

Article IX Termination of Membership

Section A - Withdrawal

A church or ministerial member may withdraw at any time from the membership of the Fellowship for any reason deemed sufficient.

Section B - Expulsion

A church or ministerial member shall not be expelled from the Fellowship without a fair, impartial investigation and trial. The accused shall have the right of defense either in person or by a representative chosen from the membership of the Fellowship.

Hearings shall be held before the Pastoral/Church Relations Committee. Appeals for the Committee's decision can be made to the Executive Committee, provided that the Fellowship votes to consider such an appeal.

The basis for expulsion of a ministerial member shall be heresy, immorality, or conduct unbecoming a minister of this Fellowship.

A church that is no longer in agreement with the Doctrinal Statement, Biblical Distinctives, Biblical Positions or Constitution will be expelled from this Fellowship.

Section C - Removal

A ministerial member of the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches shall not be removed from the Roll of Ministers except by recommendation of the Pastoral/Church Relations Committee. This Committee shall annually review the status of all ministerial members and report to the Fellowship during said Session. The Pastoral/Church Relations Committee shall base its recommendation upon the following criteria:

1. The Committee shall recommend the removal of any ministerial member who refuses to sign annually the Doctrinal Statement, Biblical Positions and the Constitution of the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches.
2. The Committee may recommend the removal of any ministerial member who does not contribute to the testimony of and does not give interest in the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches.

Article X Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the Corporation, the Board of Trustees, which is the Executive Committee, shall pay or make provision for the payment of all liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the Corporation, exclusively for the purposes of the Corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Trustees shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principle office of the Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in (these articles). No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the Corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal Revenue Code of 1954)or corresponding provision of future United States Internal Revenue Law) or (b) by a corporation contributions to which are deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provision of any United States Internal Revenue Law).

Article XI Amendments

Amendments to the articles of this Constitution may be made by a two-thirds vote of the membership present and voting at the Annual Session of the Fellowship. An amendment must be proposed in writing and posted at least 24 hours in advance.

Upon adoption, it must be placed in the official records by the Secretary. Amendments to the Doctrinal Statement shall only be made after the following procedure:

1. Presentation of the proposed amendment in writing to ministers and delegates assembled in the Annual Session of the Fellowship.
2. Circulation of said proposal among our member churches by action of the Annual Session of the Fellowship for consideration and careful study during the ensuing year.
3. Action upon said proposed amendment at the following Annual Session, in accord with the procedure outlined above.

Rules of Order

Section A - Annual Meeting

1. The Fellowship shall meet annually in accordance with Article VI of their Constitution.
2. Each church is requested to send credential forms for the delegate and alternate delegate to the Secretary by July 15th. The wives of the ministerial member shall not be eligible to serve as delegates. The ministerial members of the Fellowship and the elected delegates shall constitute the “roll” upon which the Annual Session shall be constituted.
3. No minister or delegate shall be placed on the “roll.” have the privilege of voting or be eligible to be elected or appointed to an office who has not first signed a statement asserting their agreement with the Doctrinal Statement, Constitution, Biblical Positions, Biblical Distinctives and the Loyalty Statement of the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches. All other people serving as members of the Fellowship Committees shall be required to sign these annually. (See Article IX Section C of the FFBC Constitution).
4. The Annual Session shall begin as follows:
 - A. Formal opening by the President
 - B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America
 - C. Roll Call
 - D. Memorial Roll and Prayer
 - E. Address Welcome and Response
 - F. Organization of the Annual Session and approval of the program
 - G. Approval of all boards and committees.
 - H. The Session will then proceed according to the adopted program
5. The memorial roll of the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches shall consist of the names of the ministerial members of the Fellowship and the names of wives of ministerial members who have died during the past year. Their names shall be added to the memorial roll and recorded in the minutes.

Section B - Appointed Committees and Delegations

1. Appointees

Each person appointed to serve on a committee or delegation must be a member of a Fellowship church who evidences his agreement with Article III of the Constitution and the Loyalty Statement, by signing a statement of affirmation.

No layman can serve on any Board or Committee of the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches who is not an active member in good standing of a Fellowship church. When it comes to elections of lay people to offices or committees, a one year grace period will be given when the layman is between memberships in Fellowship Churches before he is ineligible to run for office.

2. Delegations

The President shall appoint delegates to the American Council of Christian Churches, and meeting with other such groups that maintain a position consistent with the Fellowship. Such appointments must be approved by the Fellowship or by the Executive Committee between sessions.

3. Nominating Committee

The nominating Committee shall be a standing committee of the Fellowship composed of two members of the Executive Committee who are not up for election, two members of the Fellowship and the National Representative who will serve as the chairman.

All suggestions for nominations to Boards and Committees of the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches shall be forwarded to the Nominating Committee Chairman at least 90 days prior to the Annual Session.

This Committee shall be responsible for developing a slate of candidates. They shall ascertain the willingness, eligibility and availability of the nominee to serve. The Committee shall also forward a copy of the recommended slate to each church on or before August 1.

4. Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee shall consist of all financial secretaries and treasurers of the Fellowship with the President appointing the chairman. They shall prepare an annual report projecting the overall financial needs of the Fellowship.

Section C - Fellowship Reports

1. The fiscal year of the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches shall be July 1 through June 30. All annual reports should be consistent with the dates of the fiscal year.
2. All Treasurer's Reports should include with the report an audit of their books and balances. Such an audit should be made by someone outside the organization involved or a public accountant.
3. All Statistical Reports should be in the hands of the Statistical Secretary by July 15th.

Section D - Registration Fee

There shall be a registration fee paid by each ministerial member and delegate who attends the Annual Session.

Section E - Procedure

1. The transaction of all business shall be conducted in accordance with "*Roberts Rules of Order*" except where superseded by the Fellowship's Rules of Order.
2. When an interpretation of a Fellowship rule referring to the Fellowship is desired, the matter in question shall be referred to the Parliamentarian of the Fellowship to make such interpretation. The President shall appoint the Parliamentarian for each Annual Session. If one has not been appointed, the President shall act as Parliamentarian.
3. The President or presiding officer shall insist upon the observance of proper decorum during all sessions.

Section F - Elections

1. All officers, as listed in Article VII, shall be elected by a majority of those present and voting, with the exception of the National Representative, who is appointed by the Executive Committee, subject to approval by the Annual Session. Elections to boards and committees shall be by a plurality vote.
2. Committees and boards of the Fellowship should keep a record of the attendance of their members. This record shall be given at the time of election.
3. Officers of the various boards and committees shall be elected by ballot.

Section G - Pastoral Changes

1. At the invitation of the local church, the Fellowship may conduct and installation service for a pastor who has been approved by the Fellowship. The President of the Fellowship shall appoint those representing the Fellowship at such services.
2. Upon leaving a church, the former pastor should recognize the leadership of the new pastor allowing the Holy Spirit to be his guide. Therefore the former pastor should not interfere in the affairs of the church.

Section H - Ordination

1. Any church that desires help in the matter of ordination may request help from the Fellowship.
2. When the Fellowship is requested to help, the Ministerial Qualifications Chairman will be responsible for calling an ordination council on behalf of the church. If at all possible, this council should meet in the local church which is conducting the ordination.
3. A moderator and clerk will be selected from the group present.
4. The ordination certificate will be given under the authority and order of the local church and not the Fellowship of Fundamental Bible Churches.

Section I - Finances

The work of this Fellowship shall be carried on by means of the free will gifts of the Lord's people. Churches shall not be assessed. Designated funds are to be distributed in full accord with the instructions given providing they conform to the aims and purposes of this Fellowship.

Section J - Amendments

These rules shall not be amended except by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at the Annual Session of the Fellowship.

- The Doctrinal Statement, Rules of Order and Constitution were revised August 2017