

# South CHURCH

Articles of Association



Bylaws



The Official Statement  
of Doctrinal Beliefs

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**SOUTH CHURCH**  
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[www.southlife.org](http://www.southlife.org)

# Articles of Association of South Church

First, the name assumed by this corporation and by which it shall be known in law is **South Church** of Lansing, Michigan, an independent congregation committed to Baptist beliefs.

Second, the location of said church shall be in the Township of Delta, County of Eaton, and State of Michigan; post office address 5250 Cornerstone Drive, Lansing MI 48917.

Third, the time for which said corporation shall be created shall be perpetual.

Fourth, the members of South Church shall worship and labor together according to the teaching of the Holy Scripture. This church declares its adherence to the doctrines as set forth in Holy Scripture and the Official Statement of Doctrinal Beliefs of South Church.

Fifth, the membership of this church shall consist as follows:

(a) of all persons whose names stand at this date, April 25, 2004, as members upon

the register of the clerk of the South Church of Lansing, Michigan, and

(b) of all persons who shall, upon recommendation of the board of deacons and vote of the church, be received as members according to the bylaws of this church.

Such members shall have all the rights, duties, privileges, and obligations as provided for in the bylaws of this church.

Sixth, the officers of this church shall be the senior pastor and all those persons elected by congregational vote as set forth in the bylaws. Only persons who shall have attained the age of twenty-one years at the time of the election, and who are members in good standing of South Church at the time of the election, shall be eligible for election as officers.

Seventh, these Articles of Association may be amended as provided for by law at any regular business meeting of the church by a two-thirds vote of the members present, providing two weeks' notice of the proposal shall have been given.

# Bylaws of South Church

## ARTICLE ONE ● Membership

### Section 1 ● RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

Application for membership shall be made to the pastor or one of his assistants or a member of the board of deacons or other authorized person, who shall examine the candidates and explain the purpose, requirements, program and doctrines of the church. Those applicants recommended for membership by the board of deacons shall be approved by a majority vote of the membership voting at any regular meeting of the church.

Any person confessing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior, and who conscientiously commits himself or herself to faithfully participate in church worship, personal Bible study and prayer may be received into membership upon his or her baptism by immersion.

Members of other Baptist churches may be united with this church on presentation of letters of transfer from their respective churches. Persons not members of any church, or those who come from churches of other denomination but have fulfilled the conditions of this section, may be received into membership.

### Section 2 ● COVENANT DUTIES

All members shall be expected to support this church by prayer and attendance at its regular meetings, to regularly give financial support to the church and its causes, and to share in its work.

### Section 3 ● ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Persons residing in this area on a temporary basis may make application for associate membership in this church in accordance with the provision of Section 1 of this article. These members may retain their membership in the home churches, yet may fellowship with this church during their residence here in all respects with the exception of holding elective offices and of voting.

### Section 4 ● TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Letters of transfer to other Baptist churches and letters of dismissal to those who unite with churches of other denominations shall be granted by the church, upon recommendation of the board of deacons, and sent by the clerk to the clerk of the church named in the letter.

Any member who has a conscientious change of heart concerning his standing in regards to his subscription to the doctrines of this church shall notify the church clerk and request that his name be stricken from the rolls.

Upon the recommendation of the Board of Deacons, the church may remove from membership by a majority vote all members who have not complied with Article One, Section 2 for at least five (5) years. Such removal from membership shall be acted upon accordingly by the church clerk.

## ARTICLE TWO ● Meetings

## Section 1 ● WORSHIP

Meetings for worship shall be on Sunday and other days as arranged by the pastor and the board of deacons at their discretion.

## Section 2 ● COMMUNION

The Lord's Supper shall normally be commemorated on the first Sunday of each month, or as determined by the board of deacons.

## Section 3 ● ANNUAL MEETINGS

The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held as early in April of each year as is consistent with the preparation of the reports to be submitted at the meeting.

In all questions before the congregation all members who have attained their sixteenth birthday and are in full membership shall be entitled to vote. Ten percent, or one hundred of the voting members (whichever is smaller), shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting of the congregation.

The annual meeting of the official board shall be held on the last Wednesday of March. The explicit purpose of this meeting shall be to draft the budget for the ensuing fiscal year and to approve the recommendation of the nominating committee for candidates for elective office for the next term.

## Section 4 ● REGULAR MEETINGS

A regular meeting, as used in the By-laws, shall be either a regular Sunday morning, evening, or a Wednesday evening service.

## Section 5 ● SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special business meetings of the church may be called by the pastor, the board of deacons, or the board of trustees provided that notice of such meeting and the agenda shall have been given publicly either by insertion in the bulletin or by announcement in the church at

two regular meetings, one of which shall be on Sunday.

The business to be transacted must be stated in the call for the meeting. No business shall be transacted at a special meeting except as specified in the call for the meeting.

## ARTICLE THREE ● Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall begin on the first day of April each year. All officers elected shall take office at the annual meeting, and all terms of office shall run until the next annual meeting or, in the case of three-year terms, the annual meeting most concurrent with the end of the three-year period.

## ARTICLE FOUR ● Reports

At each annual meeting all officers, boards, and councils shall make reports on their activities during the preceding year. These reports shall be in writing and incorporated into an annual report prepared for distribution to the congregation.

In addition to these annual reports, any of the boards or councils or their respective committees shall make such interim reports as requested of them by the official board. These reports shall be in writing and incorporated into the minutes of the official board meetings.

## ARTICLE FIVE ● Branch Churches

Whenever branch churches shall become operative under the auspices of this church, the elected officers of this church shall assume the respective responsibilities in the branch church until such time as the branch church shall become autonomous and independent. It shall be the policy of this church to encourage such branch churches to operate independently as soon as feasible.

## ARTICLE SIX ● Elections

## Section 1 ● NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A nominating committee consisting of the senior pastor or his designated associate pastor, a representative from each of the regular boards and councils (except official board) and three members chosen from the congregation by popular vote at the second regular Sunday evening meeting in January, shall recommend to the official board the name of a candidate (or candidates) who, in the judgment of the committee, is well suited for the office and who has agreed to fulfill the office if elected. The official board may remove a name for specific cause upon majority vote, or it may add names of other candidates if it sees fit upon majority vote.

## Section 2 ● POSTING

The list of nominees shall be posted in at least three prominent places in the church two Sundays prior to the annual meeting of the congregation.

## Section 3 ● GENERAL ELECTION

The general election of officers shall be held at the annual meeting of the church.

## Section 4 ● NOMINATION FROM THE FLOOR

Nomination may be made by any member for any office, at the annual meeting, providing that the nominee has given his prior consent and is willing and capable of fulfilling the office if elected. The members of the congregation shall vote to accept or reject the name proposed as a candidate for office.

## Section 5 ● METHOD OF VOTING

The nominating committee shall report and present a printed list of nominees approved by the official board to each voting member present. After the members have considered the list of nominees, additional nominations may be made from the floor. Printed ballots shall then be presented showing the offices to be filled and deaconesses to be elected, the number to be voted for the names proposed by the nominating committee, and providing

space for writing in the names nominated at the meeting.

## Section 6 ● VOTES TO ELECT

The candidates for offices shall be declared elected when they have received the highest number of votes cast for each office. In case of a tie, the nominating committee shall decide, by vote, who shall be declared elected.

Members of the nominating committee shall serve as tellers, post results of the congregational vote, and notify candidates of their election.

## ARTICLE SEVEN ● Officers

### Section 1 ● THE PASTOR

It shall be the duty of the pastor to preach the Word of God, to administer the ordinances of the Gospel, to act as moderator of congregational business meetings, to direct and to annually evaluate in writing the pastoral assistants, and to perform the various pastoral duties incumbent on his office. He shall be chairman of the official board, responsible to it, and an ex-officio member of all other boards, councils, and committees of the church.

As often as necessary, by the resignation, removal, or death of a pastor, the church shall elect to call to its pastorate a minister of good report from among those recommended to the congregation by a pulpit committee. A call shall be extended upon approval of seventy-five percent of the members voting in the election at any regular or special business meeting.

When either the Pastor or the church wishes to terminate the services of the Pastor, the party desiring such change shall give the other party three months written notice. The church may terminate the services of the Pastor upon approval of seventy-five percent of the members voting at a special meeting. Such action must be initiated by the board of deacons and approved by the official board prior to the time it is presented to the congregation for vote.

Immediately upon vacancy of the pastorate, a

pulpit committee shall be organized consisting of two representatives from each of the boards of deacons, trustees, missions, and the Christian education council chosen by the respective groups. And two members shall be chosen from the congregation by popular vote at a regular Wednesday evening meeting. The pulpit committee shall elect its own chairman from among its members. It shall be responsible to provide pulpit supply during the time of the vacancy and to secure candidates for the pastorate.

If the pastor has an assistant or assistants, it shall be the duty of the assistants to cooperate with the pastor and to administer such services as shall be designated to them by him.

## Section 2 ● BOARD OF DEACONS

It shall be the duty of the deacons to assist the pastor in the performance of his duties, to review, in conjunction with the senior pastor, all areas of ministry annually, to have custody of the deacons' fund for the care of the needy of the church, to administer the same upon the advice of the pastor, to examine and recommend candidates for church membership, and in general, to have the responsibility of the spiritual life and work of the church. A simple majority of its members shall constitute a quorum in the meetings of the board of deacons.

The deacons shall supervise the organization of auxiliary societies for men and women in the church and shall ensure that the officers of these auxiliary organizations are members of the church. The deacons will be responsible for appointment and functioning of departments and committees of the church which may be necessary to the conduct of their responsibilities. Committees may be established as they become necessary, by the chairman of the board of deacons. The congregation shall elect one deacon for each one-hundred persons on the membership roll of the church, but not fewer than seven shall be on the board at any given time. One-third of these shall be elected at each annual meeting, and the term of office shall be three years. When it becomes necessary to elect a deacon

for a short term by virtue of expanding the size of the board, the elected candidate receiving the least number of votes shall be designated to whatever term may be required to ensure that one-third of the terms are expiring each year.

No deacon shall be elected to two successive full terms in office. Any person, upon nomination by the board of deacons, may be elected a deacon emeritus by a vote of the congregation at any annual business meeting. The office of deacon emeritus shall not include voting privileges on the board of deacons.

The deacons shall present a list of nominees for deaconesses to the annual meeting of the official board at which the recommendations of the nominating committee for officers and the budget are presented. The number of deaconesses shall be equal to the number of deacons, without considering deacons emeritus or life deaconesses. The terms of the deaconesses shall be three years, with one-third of the terms expiring each year. The deaconesses shall be elected by the congregation at the annual meeting, but only their chair-person shall serve on the official board.

It shall be the duty of the deaconesses to assist the deacons in the responsibility for the spiritual life and work of the women of the church. Particular duties may be assigned to them by the deacons from time to time. Any person, upon nomination by the deaconesses, may be elected a life deaconess by a vote of the congregation at any annual business meeting. Life deaconesses shall have voting privileges on the deaconesses committee.

### Section 3 ● BOARD OF TRUSTEES

It shall be the duty of the board of trustees to hold in trust and to supervise the care of all property, real and personal, of the church; to represent the church in law, as authorized by the congregation; to buy, sell, and lease real estate; to construct buildings; and to fulfill the various other trusts committed to it by law, the congregation, or existing circumstances involving the stewardship of the temporal affairs of the church. Four members shall constitute a quorum in the meetings of the board of trustees.

The congregation shall elect seven trustees. One-third of these shall be elected at each annual meeting, and the term of office shall be three years. When it becomes necessary to elect a trustee for a short term to ensure that one-third of the terms are expiring each year, the elected candidate receiving the least number of votes shall be designated to whatever short term is required to even up the rotation of the terms. The trustees shall be custodians of all property of the church and shall be responsible for the stewardship of the physical facilities and fiscal affairs of the church. They shall serve as finance committee and building committee of the official board and shall represent the church in all legal matters. Their responsibilities shall include the repairs or alterations of the church building, equipment, arrangement and assignment of rooms, use of buildings, paying of all proper bills, reviewing the functions of the treasurer, hiring and directing of janitor service, and all other such duties generally called "temporal affairs" in all departments of the church.

The trustees shall be responsible for appointment and function of the departments of the church which may be necessary to the conduct of their responsibilities. Committees may be established as they become necessary by the chairman of the board of trustees.

### Section 4 ● BOARD OF MISSIONS

It shall be the duty of the board of missions to create and foster a missionary interest within the church in cooperation with the

pastor, and to advise the official board with reference to the budgetary requirements of the missionary program. The board of missions shall recommend to the official board the names of prospective candidates for support by the church, and conduct such missionary conferences as might be useful to increase the awareness of the church in the Lord's work outside the ministry of this church, both at home and abroad. This will include missionary instruction, drafting of all missionary budgets, approving of all missionaries to be supported, and approving missionaries who shall present their work to our members by way of securing support.

The congregation shall elect seven persons to the board of missions. One-third of these shall be elected at each annual meeting, and the term of office shall be three years. When it becomes necessary to elect a member to the board of missions for a short term to insure that one-third of the terms is expiring each year, the elected candidate receiving the least number of votes shall be designated to whatever short term is required to even up the rotation of terms. Each year at least one of the nominees for the board of missions shall be a man. No member of the board of missions shall be elected to two successive full terms of office. Four members of the board of missions shall constitute a quorum in its meetings.

### Section 5 ● CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COUNCIL

Each year the congregation shall elect a member to the Christian education council for a term of three years. In addition to the elected members of the Christian education council, the council shall include a representative from each of the boards of deacons, trustees, and missions, selected by each of the respective boards. Four members of the Christian education council shall constitute a quorum in its meetings. No member of the Christian education council shall be elected, as such, to two successive full terms of office.

It shall be the duty of the Christian Education Council, in cooperation with the Senior Pastor and with those pastoral assistants / associates who are designated to work with



the Christian Education ministry, to coordinate all of the educational programs of the church and to administer these programs through such committees, clubs, societies, and other organizations as might be effective in fulfilling the educational responsibilities of the church. These responsibilities include oversight of the Sunday School curriculum and program material used in the youth programs and other activities of the church.

In concert with the appropriate pastoral assistants / associates, the council shall be responsible to the Board of Deacons to ensure the materials and programs used in education are consistent with the Official Statement of Doctrinal Beliefs of South Church, and they shall also review the qualifications of all Sunday School teachers, youth sponsors, club and DVBS leaders, etc. After such review they shall approve (or disapprove) their qualifications for the positions in question. They shall also be responsible for the appointment and function of departments and committees of the church which may be necessary to the conduct of their responsibilities.

#### Section 6 ● OTHER ANNUAL OFFICERS

The congregation shall elect a clerk and treasurer. These officers shall hold office until the next annual meeting. At each subsequent annual meeting these offices shall be filled for a term of one year.

It shall be the duty of the clerk to keep a record of all the business proceedings of the regular and special congregation business meetings and all meetings of the official board, to keep a register of all the members of the church, to write all letters directed by the church or the official board, and to prepare all notices required by statute and by these Articles of Association.

It shall be the duty of the treasurer to maintain the deposits of the church as defined in the By-laws and to pay out the same upon proper authorization as defined in the By-laws. He shall make a report of all receipts, expenditures, cash balances, and obligations of the church at least annually to the congregation and more frequently to the board of trustees as requested

by it.

As circumstances require, the treasurer may nominate such assistants to maintain special or designated funds (such as building or missionary fund) under his supervision. These assistants will serve at the pleasure of the treasurer and the board of trustees upon confirmation by the board of trustees of the treasurer's nominations.

#### Section 7 ● REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

An officer of the church, failing to fulfill the duties of his or her office, may be removed from such office by the official board if, after being admonished by the official board, he or she still neglects to fulfill his or her duty or fails to uphold church doctrines as found in the Articles of Association and in the Official Statement of Doctrinal Beliefs of South Church.

#### ARTICLE EIGHT ● Employees of the Church

Any persons associated with this church, particularly employees, should recognize that their conduct reflects upon the testimony that the church maintains for our Lord. It is, therefore, important that guidelines be established for the maintenance of proper relationships within the staff of the church. This article is intended to provide means for clarifying misunderstandings that may arise in these relationships from time to time.

#### Section 1 ● RETENTION OF STAFF PERSONNEL

Employment of pastoral assistants in such areas of service as preaching, calling, Christian education, music, etc., shall be recommended by the board of deacons, with the concurrence of the pastor, and approved by the official board. A call shall be extended only upon approval of seventy-five percent of the members voting at the meeting of the official board.

Church employees, other than pastor and pastoral assistants, shall be employed by the board of trustees with the approval of the pastor and the person to whom the proposed employee will be directly responsible.

## Section 2 ● TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

When either the employee or the board which approved his employment wishes to terminate the employment relationship, the party desiring the change shall give the other party written notice. In the case of pastoral assistants, the notice shall be at least one month. In the case of other employees, the notice shall be at least two weeks. All employees shall be at will employees. An employee who has received notice of termination of employment has the right to appeal this decision within 5 days of that notice to the Official Board in the case of pastoral assistants, or to the Trustee Board in the case of other employees, if he or she so desires. The decision of the respective board shall be final and binding upon all parties.

## ARTICLE NINE ● Official Board

The affairs of the church shall be administered by the pastor and the official board through four policy-making boards or councils which are subordinate to the official board. The official board shall be made up of all the elected officers of the church. The elected officers are the pastor, clerk, treasurer, members of the board of deacons, of the board of trustees, of the board of missions, and of the Christian education council and the chairman of the deaconesses. Pastoral assistants shall be non-voting ex-officio members of the official board.

The official board shall consider matters of general interest to the church. An action of the official board may void any action of any of the other boards or councils of the church, or the official board may direct one of the other boards or councils to take a particular action. The official board shall be responsible for the drafting of the budgets of the church upon recommendation of the other boards and councils of the church. The official board may assume other responsibilities as may be required by particular circumstances, provided that they are not in conflict with other provisions of the Articles of Association or By-laws.

The official board shall meet at the church at

least annually, sufficiently early to consider proposals for the budget and nominations for offices prior to posting requirements for the annual business meetings. Other meetings of the official board may be called by the pastor or chairman of the board of deacons as occasions arise.

The official board shall make its own rules of official conduct. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the board of deacons shall serve as chairman of the official board solely for the purpose of electing a chairman from the board, which may be any member of the official board.

A quorum in the official board shall consist of at least half of the elected officers. In the absence of the church clerk, the chairman of the board of deacons shall appoint a secretary of the meeting.

## ARTICLE TEN ● Rules of Order

### Section 1 ● AUTHORITY

All congregational business meetings of the church shall be conducted in accordance with "Roberts' Rules of Order" except in no circumstance shall this take precedence over the Articles of Association or By-laws of the church.

### Section 2 ● RIGHT TO VOTE

The right to vote on church affairs is limited to members in good and regular standing who have attained their sixteenth birthday.

### Section 3 ● INTERPRETATION

When any question arises in any branch of the church work or regarding the By-laws, the same shall be settled by a majority vote of the official board.

## ARTICLE ELEVEN ● Church Finance

### Section 1 ● FREE WILL SUPPORT

This church shall be supported solely by voluntary offerings. The church does not

encourage pledging on the part of the members nor does it have any method of collecting the pledges of any member, should such exist. Any worldly method of raising money (such as sale of goods, suppers, or games of chance) shall not be used. The board of deacons shall interpret this paragraph in all cases of question about this matter.

## Section 2 ● BIBLE METHOD OF FINANCE

The church accepts the Bible as final authority in all matters of faith and practice and, therefore, holds that the Scriptures set forth the rule that on the first day of the week tithes and offerings, as God has prospered each person, are to be given to God's work as a demonstration of God's faithfulness in providing for our needs and our willingness to be faithful stewards. (See Malachi 3:8-11, I Corinthians 16:2, II Corinthians 9:6-15.)

## Section 3 ● DEPOSIT OF RECEIPTS

All funds received by the church shall be promptly deposited in accounts maintained in the name of South Church as designated by the board of trustees. Gifts designated for special activities of the church or for use by other institutions or persons shall be deposited in the accounts of the church and promptly used for the purpose intended by the donor.

The board of trustees may authorize the establishment of special funds for deposit of designated gifts or special activities of the church under the supervision of the treasurer or his properly authorized assistants. Only the treasurer or his properly authorized assistants may draw from the general and special budgeted accounts of the church.

## Section 4 ● BUDGETS AND EXPENDITURES

The board of trustees shall annually submit to the official board a budget of general operating expenditures for each activity or department of the church (which shall include the building expenditure and debt retirement), and the board of missions shall annually submit to the official board a budget of missionary operating

expenditures. The official board may alter and/or approve the proposed budgets and submit them to the congregation for final approval. These approved budgets become authorization for responsible officers of the church to conscientiously use the funds in the administration of their offices.

The total budget may not be expanded by more than 2% without the recommendation of the board of trustees and approval of church membership.

The treasurer shall not make any expenditure in excess of the most current budgetary authorization, nor shall he make any expenditure irrespective of budgetary authorizations if there are not sufficient funds on deposit to pay the check or draft. It shall be the duty of each officer to insure that expenditures in his department do not exceed budgetary authorization.

The board of trustees may, from time to time, develop such administrative techniques as deemed necessary to establish adequate budgetary control over purchases and expenditures.

The treasurer shall maintain records to reflect expenditures by budgetary classification and report monthly to the board of trustees the budgetary authorizations and expenditures to date for each item in the budget.

## ARTICLE TWELVE ● Discipline

The discipline of the church shall be trusted to the board of deacons and shall be exercised in the context of the teaching of the Word of God.

## Section 1 ● RESTRICTION OF MEMBERS

(a) Circulating of petitions. The circulating of a petition among the members within the church facilities or regarding church affairs, without having secured permission from the board of deacons, shall not be allowed.

(b) Calling of meetings. Calling a meeting with the purpose to hinder or interrupt the work of an officer, board, or committee is prohibited.

#### Section 2 ● SUSPENSION FROM FELLOWSHIP

In the case of an offense, the offender having been summoned before the board of deacons, given a fair hearing, and counseled by the deacons, may be suspended by them from good and regular standing, voting, and holding office for such a time as they deem fit. Evidence of repentance shall be sufficient for restoration to fellowship by the deacons.

#### Section 3 ● REMOVAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

In all cases of disorderly conduct or heretical doctrine so opposed to the church's life as to render fellowship impossible, the following procedures shall be used:

The person shall first be dealt with as directed by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-18. If this fails to lead to a restoration of fellowship, charges shall be put in writing and placed in the hands of the individual and he (or she) summoned to meet the board of deacons within the next two weeks. After a fair and impartial meeting of all the witnesses accessible and all the facts ascertainable, if the majority of the board of deacons believe him (or her) to be guilty, the name of said party shall be stricken from the roll at once. Failure on the part of the accused to appear shall not prevent the deacons from examining the case and rendering a decision in accord with the testimony received.

#### Section 4 ● RESTORATION

It shall be the responsibility always of "those who are spiritual" to seek the restoration of those who are "overtaken in a fault" in accordance with Galatians 6:1

#### ARTICLE THIRTEEN ● Official Statement of Doctrinal Beliefs of South Church

The Official Statement of Doctrinal Beliefs of South Church shall be subscribed to by all pastoral staff and members of the official board.

All missionaries who receive financial support from the church shall subscribe in writing to the Official Statement of Doctrinal Beliefs of South Church.

The Official Statement of Doctrinal Beliefs of South Church shall be printed along with the Articles of Association and By-Laws of this church, be readily available to all members of this church, and shall be provided to all new members.

#### ARTICLE FOURTEEN ● Amendments

These By-laws may be amended at any regular business meeting of the church by a two-thirds vote of the members present, providing two weeks' notice of the proposal shall have been given.

# The Official Statement of Doctrinal Beliefs of South Church

ROMANS 10:9-10 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. (NIV)

1. We believe in THE ONE TRUE GOD: who is perfect, infinite, and eternal in His being, in His holiness, love, knowledge, wisdom and power. He is Creator of the universe and sovereign over all, yet everywhere present in all of creation. He is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three distinct persons in one. Genesis 1:1; Exodus 15:11; Psalms 8:1-6; 19:1-4; 139:7-10; Matthew 28:19; John 4:23-24; 5:26; 10:30.

2. We believe in THE LORD JESUS CHRIST: who is the second Person of the Triune God, the eternal Word and Only Begotten Son; that without any change in His divine Person, He became man by miracle of the Virgin Birth. He gave Himself in substitutionary death upon the cross, bearing the sin of the world, and suffering its full penalty in our stead; that He arose from the grave in a glorified body; He ascended into Heaven where He is our High Priest and Advocate. Job 19:25; Matthew 1:18-25; John 1:1, 14; 3:16; Romans 5:18-19; I Corinthians 15:3-7; Galatians 4:4,5; Philippians 2:6-10; Hebrews 4:14-16; I John 2:1,2.

3. We believe in THE HOLY SPIRIT: who is the Third Person of the Trinity, and the divine Agent in nature, revelation and redemption; that His ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, convict the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment; that He regenerates, indwells, baptizes, seals and anoints all who become children of God through Christ; that He further empowers, guides, teaches, sanctifies and fills believers who daily surrender to Him. John 3:3-6; 14:16,17,26; 16:7-14; Romans 8:9, 11, 16; I Corinthians 3:16-17; 12:13; II Corinthians 3:18; II Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 5:16, 22-25; Ephesians 1:13-14.

4. We believe in THE HOLY SCRIPTURE: accepting fully the writings of the Old and New Testaments as the very Word of God, verbally inspired in all parts and therefore wholly without error as originally given of God, the only infallible and authoritative rule of faith, life, and conduct. Psalm 119:105, 133, 160; Proverbs 30:5a; II Timothy 3:16,17; II Peter 1:19-21.

5. We believe ALL PEOPLE ARE BY NATURE AND CHOICE SINFUL AND THEREFORE LOST AND ALIENATED FROM GOD: that Adam and Eve were the direct creation of God, made in His image and likeness; that by personal disobedience to the revealed will of God, they became sinful creatures, the parents of a fallen race; that all people within themselves have no possible means of achieving salvation and are under the righteous judgment and wrath of God. Genesis 1:27, 3:6; Psalm 51:5; Isaiah 53:6; 64:6; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3.

6. We believe in SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH: that salvation is the free gift of God, neither merited nor secured by any virtue or work of mankind, but received only by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and that the redeemed shall never perish. John 1:12; 10:28,29; Romans 8:1, 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8,9; Philippians 1:6; Titus 3:5.

7. We believe in THE EXISTENCE OF SATAN: who was created an angelic being who through pride and wicked ambition rebelled against God, thus becoming totally depraved, the great adversary of God and His people, leader of all evil angels, the deceiver and ruler of this present world: that his final doom is certain; that we are able to resist and overcome him only in the armor of God, by the blood of the Lamb and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah 14:12-15; Ephesians 6:12-17; I Peter 5:8; I John 3:8; Revelation 12:9-11; 20:10.

8. We believe in THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST: that His coming is imminent and personal; that He will pour out the righteous judgments of God upon the unbelieving world; and that He will establish His glorious kingdom over all the nations for a thousand years. I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Hebrews 10:37; James 5:8; Jude 14,15; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:4-7.

9. We believe in FUTURE LIFE, BODILY RESURRECTION AND ETERNAL JUDGMENT: that the souls and spirits of the saved at death go immediately to be with Jesus Christ in Heaven; the unsaved at death descend immediately into Hades where they are kept under punishment until the final day of judgment, at which time their bodies shall be raised from the grave, thereupon they shall be judged and cast into Hell, the place of final and everlasting punishment. Job 19:25-27; Luke 16:19-23; I Corinthians 4:5; 15:12-58; II Corinthians 5:8-10; Revelation 20:11-15.

10. We believe in THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS: that every born-again person has direct access to God without the need of a human priest because Christ is our great high priest; that the believer has the right and responsibility to personally study the Scriptures and to pray. John 14:6; I Timothy 2:5; II Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 4:16; I Peter 2:1,5,9.

11. We believe in THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST: that He alone is Head of the Church which is His body into which all true believers are immediately baptized (placed) by the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:36; I Corinthians 12:12-13; II Corinthians 5:15; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:11-15; Philippians 2:9-11.

12. We believe in THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH: that a New Testament church is a local assembly of born-again, baptized believers united in organization to meet for worship of God, prayer, fellowship, teaching, a united testimony, and to actively engage in carrying out the Great Commission. Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 2:41,42; Hebrews 10:24-25.

13. We believe that THE CHURCH HAS BEEN GIVEN SPIRITUAL GIFTS to fulfill its God ordained mission of edification and evangelism. These include gifted persons who are given for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry and spiritual gifts which each member of the body of Christ received from the Holy Spirit at the time of salvation. We do believe that God can perform miracles today and that he can and does heal. Scripture indicates that several of the sign gifts were foundational to the church and were given to authenticate the ministry of the Apostles. Romans 12:4-8; I Corinthians 1:22-23; 12:1-11; 13:8; II Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:11-12.

14. We believe THAT THE ONLY ORDINANCES GIVEN TO THE LOCAL CHURCH ARE BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER: that Baptism is by immersion of believers, thus portraying the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; that the Lord's Supper is the partaking of the bread and cup by the believer as a continuing memorial of the broken body and shed blood of Christ. Matthew 26:26-30; 28:19,20; Acts 2:41-42; 8:37-38; I Corinthians 11:23-34.

15. We believe in THE INDEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH: that each New Testament church is free to govern itself without ecclesiastical interference, and should cooperate with other New Testament churches as the Holy Spirit leads; that it is responsible to follow the pattern of the New Testament church and is directly accountable to God. Acts 13:1-3; 15:22,23; I Thessalonians 5:12-14; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9.

The Official Statement of Doctrinal Beliefs does not exhaust the full extent of our beliefs. While we accept and follow the teachings of the Bible as our final authority in all matters (as set forth herein), for the purposes of the faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and disciplinary practices of South Church, the Official Board, representing the congregational membership, is our final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application at South Church in all matters.

16. WE BELIEVE IN GOD'S DESIGN FOR MARRIAGE, GENDER AND SEXUALITY. We believe that God directly created Adam and Eve, the historical parents of the human race, distinct from the rest of creation in their bearing of God's image and their stewardship over creation. Their union as man and woman models God's design for marriage and perpetually stands as God's loving and righteous will for all sexual intimacy. The Genesis account, confirmed throughout the rest of Scripture, also teaches that humankind is differentiated into two sexes (genders), male and female. (Gen. 1:26-27; Gen. 2:18-25; Ex. 20:14, 17, Ex. 22:19; Lev. 18: 22-23, 20:13, 15-16; Deut. 22:5; Matt 15:18-20; Matt. 19:4-6, 9; Rom. 1:18-31; I Cor. 6:9-10, 15-20; I Tim. 1:8-11; Jude 7).

17. WE BELIEVE IN THE DIGNITY OF EVERY HUMAN BEING. We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of South Church. However, preaching, teaching, and practicing God's Truth as revealed in Scripture is not hateful or harassing of any person, but rather an act of sincere love.

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