

The Open Door Baptist Church  
3432 Eldersville Road  
Colliers, WV 26035

## **CONSTITUTION**

### Preamble

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches of the same faith.

### **ARTICLE I. NAME**

This body shall be known as The Open Door Baptist Church  
The address is: 3432 Eldersville Road  
Colliers, West Virginia 26035

### **ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES**

- To be a dynamic spiritual body empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church community and throughout the world.
- To be a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His Person, and responding to obedience to His leadership.
- To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.
- To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.
- To be a church which ministers unselfishly to people in the community and the world in Jesus Name.
- To be a church whose purpose is to be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the Lordship of Christ.

### **ARTICLE III. STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEFS**

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God and the basis of our beliefs. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statements of "The Baptist Faith and Message," as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. We voluntarily band ourselves

together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind.

#### **ARTICLE IV. STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26-27.) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4.)

We believe that God has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.)

We believe that in order to preserve the function, integrity and witness of Open Door Baptist Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the members of Open Door Baptist Church and the community, it is imperative that all members and persons employed by Open Door Baptist Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.)

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 Open Door Baptist Church.

#### **ARTICLE V CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and 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 Ghost we do now in the presence of God and

this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into this covenant with one another as one body in Christ Jesus.

We engage, 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 prosperity and spirituality; to sustain it's worship, ordinances, doctrines and discipline; to contribute regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the relief of the poor, and to spread the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain in family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek to walk circumspectly in this world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements; and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, back-biting, and excessive anger; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and the spread of pornography; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and course in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover, engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

#### **ARTICLE VI. POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS**

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership. (Article I, By-Laws).

This church shall be autonomic in polity, answering to no one but the Lord Jesus Christ and the leadership of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Scriptures, being the only rule of faith and Practice. It shall however, maintain affiliation with the area Southern Baptist Associations; and with the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists and the Southern Baptist Convention.

In the event that this church body should have a factious division, the Southern Baptist faction shall retain the properties. Should the church body dissolve, the property will be deeded to the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists, Should the church body cease to be Southern Baptist in affiliation, cooperation, and practice, the sum of (\$20,000.00), twenty thousand dollars, given to this church by the Open Door Baptist Church, Morehead City, North Carolina, is to be repaid to them in full. Likewise the sum of (\$5000.00) five thousand dollars given to this church as a building grant by the North Carolina Convention of Southern Baptists is to be repaid in full to the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists for their disposal as per agreement.

## **ARTICLE VII. ORDINANCES**

The Ordinances of this church shall be Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

### **Section 1. Baptism**

- (a) Repentance of sin and faith in Jesus Christ shall precede baptism.
- (b) Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- (c) Baptism shall be administered by the authority of the church in accordance with Matthew 28:19 (as described in the By-Laws, article IV, Section 1).

### **Section 2. The Lord's Supper**

- (a) The Lord's Supper shall be partaken of only by those who have received the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior and who have followed the Lord in Christian Baptism.
- (b) The Lord's Supper shall be observed by the Church (as described in the By-Laws Art. IV, Section 2).

## **BY-LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

Any person, regardless of race or economic status may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church for membership and shall be received by vote.

#### **Section 1. Qualifications of membership**

1. Public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and Baptism by immersion.
2. By letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church.
3. By statement of Christian experience and Baptism in another church of like faith and order when circumstances prohibit the securing of a letter.
4. By restoration (in case of previous exclusion from this church). Upon confession of error and satisfactory evidence of repentance.

#### **Section 2. Termination of Membership**

Members shall be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death of a member.
2. Dismission to another Baptist Church.
3. Exclusion by action of this church (Article I, Section 3)
4. Erasure upon written request, or proof of membership in a church of another denomination.

#### **Section 3. Discipline of Members.**

It shall be practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, deacons, or other authorized persons are to be available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

When a member becomes an offense to the church and to it's good name by any unchristian conduct, or by any persistent breach of his covenant vows, or by advocating doctrines out of harmony with those held by this church, the church may terminate his membership.

Should some serious conditions exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor, deacons, or any other authorized persons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18 and Galatians 6:1.

If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, two-thirds majority vote of the members is required; and the church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be preceded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.

The church may restore to membership any member previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

**Section 4. Inactive Roll**

An inactive roll of the membership shall be kept by the clerk which shall be composed of those people who at the end of the church year have not attended or contributed to the church in any way during the preceding year, except in special cases as determined by church action. This list, prepared by the clerk of the church, shall be approved by the church in the regular business session. The only purpose of this list is to maintain an honest and accurate active roll. Upon the reappearance of any such inactive member his name shall be returned to the active roll without prejudice.

**Section 5. Non-Resident Membership**

A non-resident roll will consist of those members who have moved from the community and are no longer active in the work of this church and have not transferred their membership within three months after moving.

## **ARTICLE II CHURCH OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES**

All who serve as officers of this church and those who serve on church committees shall be members of this church. Officers and committees shall be elected as deemed necessary.

All committee members and chairmen shall be recommended by the church nominating committee or nominated from the floor and elected by the church, unless otherwise specified by the By-Laws. Any committee needing funds shall submit an annual request for those funds to the budget committee.

### **1. Pastor**

#### ***(a) Call and Election***

A pastor shall be chosen and called by this church whenever a vacancy occurs. The election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's notice has been given. A pastor search committee shall be chosen as stated in the By-Laws (Article II, Section 2, Number 4).

The pastor search committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time.

The election shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of three fourths of those eligible members present being necessary for election. A call will then be extended to the man by the church in writing.

The pastor thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or by the church's request.

#### ***(b) Duties***

- The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organization, and the church staff to perform their tasks.
- Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Open Door Baptist Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. (Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:22-32) Further, the pastor and elders of Open Door Baptist Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman, of which one is a member of Open Door Baptist Church. Finally, the facilities and property of

Open Door Baptist Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.

- The pastor of the church shall be an ordained Baptist minister and meet the qualifications as given in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9 and Ephesians 4: 11-13.
- The pastor shall serve as ex-officio member of all committees.
- The pastor will be responsible for securing Evangelists, subject to church approval.
- The pastor will be responsible for securing a pulpit supply in his absence. The church will be responsible for the honorarium.

**(c) *Fringe Benefit***

1. One week paid vacation after one year of service; two weeks paid vacation after two years of service; three weeks paid vacation after five years of service.
2. Two weeks for revivals held outside the church. Additional revivals outside the church must be authorized by the church.
3. Annuity (tax sheltered retirement annuity, and disability insurance)
4. Hospitalization and group life insurance.
5. Upon recommendation of the budget committee and upon approval of the church, the church shall send the pastor to the southern Baptist convention and to approved State Convention meetings.
6. The church shall provide either reimbursement for, or an adequate car expense allowance to the pastor

**(d) *Termination***

The church shall consider that a duly called pastor is a man sent by God in response to much prayer and consideration.

The pastor may relinquish the office by giving at least two weeks written notice to the church.

If for the good of the Lord's work through the church it should become necessary to release the pastor the same consideration should be given to him.



Action to release the pastor must also be based upon the same considerations under which he was called, remembering that he was a man sent by God after much consideration and prayer. The pastor cannot be released because of a personality conflict, but for immorality, heresy, blasphemy or other gross misconduct he shall be released. In these cases he is to be treated as any other member of the church would be in accordance with (Article I, Section 2, Number 3).

Action to release the pastor shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one weeks public notice has been given. The meeting may be called upon recommendation of the deacons. The moderator for this meeting shall be the chairman of the deacons. The vote requesting the pastor's resignation shall be by secret ballot.

To take such action, a two-thirds majority vote of the members present shall be necessary.

Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor, the church will compensate the pastor with two weeks salary.

## **2. Deacons**

- (a) A deacon shall meet all New Testament requirements before election to office; Acts 6:3, I Timothy 3:8-12, Titus 1:6-9. There shall be one deacon elected for assigned service for every fifteen church families

The church shall nominate deacons by secret ballot at a regular Sunday Morning church service three months prior to election. The nominees will be screened by the pastor and other deacons. The qualified persons with the most votes in nomination will be presented to the church for election.

The deacons shall elect a chairman from their own number annually.

Deacons shall serve on a rotation basis. One third for one year, one third for two years, and one third for three years. A deacon shall be eligible for re-election to active status after a lapse of one year. There shall be no obligation to constitute as an assigned deacon one who has been a deacon in another church, but should he be elected to serve in this church his ordination by another Baptist church shall be recognized as sufficient.

### **(b) Duties**

1. Deacons shall be zealous to guard the unity of the Spirit in the church in the bonds of peace.
2. They shall serve as a council of advice and conference with the pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and the work of the church.

With the pastor, they are to consider and formulate plans for the constant effort and progress of the church in all things pertaining to the saving of souls, the development of Christians and the extensions and growth of the Kingdom of God.

3. In event of the vacancy of the office of pastor, or in his inability to serve, the deacons shall be responsible for securing the pulpit supply for the regular meetings of the church.
4. The deacons shall hold regular monthly meetings.
5. The deacon, as the name implies, shall be recognized as a helper in the ministry. He shall under gird the pastor in his work, and is by no means a person of authority or power, but a servant of the Lord.
6. The deacons shall assist in the serving of the Lord's Supper, and ministering to the needy.

### **3. Clerk of the Church**

The church shall elect, annually, a clerk, as it's clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of the names of the members, with dates of admission, dismissal, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted on by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of meetings where notice is necessary, as indicated in these By-Laws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing an annual letter of the church to the Association. In the absence of the clerk the moderator may appoint a person to record the minutes of a business meeting.

### **4. Treasurer**

The church shall elect for an indefinite term, a church treasurer, as it's financial officer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of authorization from the church, all money or things of value paid or given to the church. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular monthly business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month. The financial records of the church may be audited, as necessary, however, the individual tithing and stewardship records are confidential and shall not be given out except as an annual stewardship report to the individual for his records and purposes. No one may have access to the records of the church unless authorized by the church. The treasurer shall sign all checks and stewardship reports.

### **5. Assistant Treasurer**

The church shall elect annually an assistant treasurer who shall be responsible for assisting the treasurer in the performance of those duties as directed by the treasurer. The assistant treasurer shall be authorized to sign checks in the absence of the treasurer, rendering an account of checks signed to the treasurer. This is an emergency measure only.

## **6. Trustees**

The church shall elect three Trustees, or as prescribed by civil law, to serve as the legal officers of the church. They shall hold in trust all church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing such action, they shall have the authority and power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. They shall be the legal signature of the church to sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church approved matters.

The Trustees shall be responsible to see that all church properties are properly insured and protected. They shall also be responsible to see that all church properties are properly maintained.

The trustees develop and recommend to the church, in cooperation with appropriate church leaders, policies for the use of church facilities and equipment.

## **Section 2. Church Committees**

### **(1) Nominating Committee**

The first three members of the nominating committee shall be appointed annually by the pastor, at least three months prior to the annual election of officers. It shall be the duty of those first members of the committee to bring to the church nominations for the offices of Sunday School Director, Church training Director, Women's Missionary Union Director, and Brotherhood Director. Upon their election to these offices, these will then become additional members of the nominating committee to bring nominations for all offices. This committee shall not present the name of anyone to the church for any office unless they are a member of this church and \*in good and regular standing and have the consent of the nominee.

\*To be in good and regular standing, church members must, so far as circumstances permit, be regular in church attendance, contributors to the financial support of the church, be just in their dealings and exemplary in their conduct\*

### **(2) Stewardship Committee (Budget)**

The Stewardship committee shall develop and recommend to the church an overall stewardship program and develop a plan, a unified church budget, and a financial plan for the coming year. It advises and recommends in administration of the gifts of the church members and others, using sound principles of financial management. This committee works with the treasurer in the preparation and presentation to the church of required reports regarding the financial affairs of the church. This committee shall consist of the Treasurer, Chairman of Deacons, and/or other elected persons.

### **(3) Missions Committee**

The Missions Committee seeks to discover possibilities for local missions projects, programs and organizations, and serves the church in establishing and conducting such

mission projects as may be assigned to it. The Missions committee shall help create an atmosphere of total mission consciousness in the church.

**(4) *Pastor Search Committee***

This committee shall consist of five members that are elected by the church by secret ballot. This committee shall consist of at least one deacon and members who are actively involved in the work of the church, and must be in good standing in the church \*(Section 2 Church committees, (1) at conclusion of Nominating Committee paragraph). The committee is to function from the time of their election until a pastor is secured.

It shall be the duty of the committee to seek out a suitable pastor. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time.

They shall present the prospective pastor to the church at a meeting called for that purpose. At least one week's public notice shall be given. The recommendation of this committee will constitute a nomination.

**(5) *Flower Committee***

This committee shall consist of three persons. Duties of this committee shall be to purchase flowers to send in case of the death of a member or death in a members immediate family (parents, grandparents, children,, brother, sister, husband, wife.) They shall provide, arrange, and dispose of floral arrangements in the church sanctuary and in other areas of the church facilities as needed.

**(6) *Lord's Supper Committee***

The Nominating committee shall nominate two persons for the Lord's Supper Committee, which shall be responsible for the preparation of the elements of the Lord's Supper and care of Communion equipment.

**(7) *Benevolent Committee***

This committee shall remember the sick and shut in and the needy, and administer to the needs of these using the benevolent funds allocated to this use.

**(8) *Usher Committee***

This committee will greet and make welcome, visitors and all who attend services and programs. They shall attend to the seating of the congregation and to the receiving of the offering. They shall look after the parking of cars and direction of traffic. They shall seek to prevent any interruptions and distractions and such other duties as shall insure a worshipful atmosphere.

**(9) *Social Committee***

This committee shall promote fellowship within the church. They shall make provision for meals or refreshments on occasion as determined by the church.

(10) Other committees may be added as necessary for the ongoing work of the church.

## **ARTICLE III CHURCH PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS**

All organizations sponsored by the church will be under church control. The church shall sponsor such organizations as would contribute to the up building of the church. The church shall strive to provide, as deemed necessary, such organizations as Sunday School, Church Training, Women's Missionary Union, Brotherhood, etc.

### **Section 1. Facility Use Policy**

The church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of church members. The church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and to bring God glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-members as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice. An active member of Open Door Baptist Church must serve as a sponsor and be present while the facility is in use.

But facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the church's constitution and bylaws. Nor may church facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the church's faith or moral teachings. The pastor and elders are the final decision-maker concerning use of church facilities.

This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons. First, the church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the church's beliefs would be material cooperation with that activity, and would be a grave violation of the church's faith and religious practice. (2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.)

Second, it is very important that the church present a consistent message to the community, and that the church staff and members conscientiously maintain that message as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Allowing facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the church's faith would have a severe, negative impact on the message that the church strives to promote. It could also cause confusion and scandal to church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the church agrees with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using its facilities.

Therefore, in no event shall persons or groups who hold, advance, or advocate beliefs, or advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict the church's faith use any church facility. Nor may church facilities be used in any way that contradicts the church's faith. This policy applies to all church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities are connected to the church's sanctuary, because the church sees all of its property as holy and set apart to worship God. (Colossians 3:17.)

## **ARTICLE IV CHURCH ORDINANCES**

### **Section 1. Baptism**

The church shall receive for Christian baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly and who indicates a commitment to follow Him as Lord of their life.

### **Section 2. The Lord's Supper**

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper at least every other month on the first Sunday of the month unless otherwise scheduled by the church. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Super.

## **ARTICLE V. CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **Section 1. Worship**

The church shall maintain full time services, including, but not limited to, Sunday Morning, Sunday Evening, and weekly prayer services.

### **Section 2. Regular Business Meetings**

The church shall hold regular business meetings on the first mid-week service following the first Sunday of each month, unless the date conflicts with some special emphasis of the church. In such cases the business meeting will be held on the next non-conflicting mid-week service.

All items to be voted on shall be presented to the moderator in writing and posted one week prior to such meeting.

The annual election of officers and teachers and committees shall be held at the September business meeting.

### **Section 3. Special Services**

Revival services and any other church meetings deemed essential to the advancement of the church's objectives shall be placed on the church calendar, by vote of the church.

### **Section 4. Special Business Meetings**

The pastor or moderator with the deacons may call a special business meeting to care for such matters requiring immediate attention. A notice must be given at a regularly scheduled service for the special called meeting, unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical.

### **Section 5. Quorum**

The quorum consists of those members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

**Section 6. Parliamentary Rules**

Robert's Rule of Order, Revised, is the authority for all business meetings of the church.

**ARTICLE VI. CHURCH FINANCES**

**Section 1. Financial Policies**

The church shall be supported by the tithes and offering of its members as taught in the Holy Scriptures: Malachi 3:10, I Corinthians 16:2, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.

All funds for any purposes shall pass through the hands of the treasurer and be properly recorded in the books of the church.

No contract for supplies, materials, or services shall be made unless authorized by the direct vote of the church.

The pastor's salary shall be considered before any other obligations of the church. In fairness, his salary is earned just as any other member's secular income, and he will bear his fair share of the obligations of the church, just as any other member is expected to do.

**Section 3. Fiscal Year**

The church fiscal year shall run concurrently with the calendar year, which begins January 1, and ends December 31.

**ARTICLE VII AMMENDMENTS**

This Constitution and By Laws may be amended by a two thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a regular business meeting, provided that a notice and explanation of the amendment has been given at a regular business meeting at least one month previous to the action thereon.

Exception to this is ARTICLES III of this Constitution, which shall require one year's notice and are subject to the agreements of ARTICLE V, which by vote of this church are irrevocable.

**AMMENDMENTS:**