



CHURCH 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 individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches.

I. NAME: This body shall be known as Crosscreek Baptist Church located at Pelham, Alabama.

II. OBJECTIVES

Mission¹:

- To be a people who love the Lord their God with heart and soul and mind;
- To be a people who follow Jesus' command to love as he has loved.
- To be a people who know the Word of God and love to teach the truth;
- To be a people who gather in Jesus' name, a fellowship of love.
- To be a people in partnership with all who bear the name of Christ;
- To be a people who gladly share their faith, a witness to the world.

Vision: As a reflection of Christ, we envision a community where every person is invited to Crosscreek, accepted, and valued without hesitation. We believe that those actively engaged in the community of Crosscreek will experience healing and be challenged to deepen their faith and broaden their service to the world.

What We Value:

1. We value being inviting.
2. We value acceptance.
3. We value authentic community.
4. We value affirmation of women in full ministry participation.
5. We value the worth and gifts of children.
6. We value an examined faith.
7. We value missions.

III. CONFESSION OF FAITH: Jesus is Lord.

¹ Adapted from Kirkland, Terry. "To Be a People Who Love the Lord," 1977. Composed for Crosscreek Baptist Church.

IV. FOUR VALUED FREEDOMS OF BAPTISTS: Crosscreek upholds the following traditional Baptist freedoms for all people: Bible Freedom, Soul Freedom, Church Freedom, and Religious Freedom:²

- BIBLE FREEDOM is the historic Baptist affirmation that the Bible, under the Lordship of Christ, must be central in the life of the individual and church and that Christians, with the best and most scholarly tools of inquiry, are both free and obligated to study and obey the Scripture. (Shurden, 9)
- SOUL FREEDOM is the historic Baptist affirmation of the inalienable right and responsibility of every person to deal with God without the imposition of creed, the interference of clergy, or the intervention of civil government. (Shurden, 23)
- CHURCH FREEDOM is the historic Baptist affirmation that local churches are free, under the Lordship of Christ, to determine their membership and leadership, to order their worship and work, to ordain whom they perceive as gifted for ministry, male or female, and to participate in the larger Body of Christ, of whose unity and mission Baptists are proudly a part. (Shurden, 33)
- RELIGIOUS FREEDOM is the historic Baptist affirmation of freedom *OF* religion, freedom *FOR* religion, and freedom *FROM* religion, insisting that Caesar is not Christ and Christ is not Caesar. (Shurden, 45)

V. REVISIONS: Recognizing that changes in society may bring about new issues not covered herein, we provide the following method for the revision of this constitution. At the beginning of each year, the constitution will be reviewed by the church council. Suggested revisions will then be presented at the first business meeting of each new year. Every resident member will be notified and reminded of this meeting ahead of time. Any revisions must then be approved by a simple majority of those present at this meeting.

VI. CHURCH COVENANT: As members of the Crosscreek Baptist Church of Pelham, we enter into a partnership with each other which is built upon a life commitment to Jesus Christ, and which takes as a minimum the following positions:

1. A membership open to any person who receives Jesus Christ as Lord, regardless of the background, gender identity, ethnicity, race, nationality, sexual orientation, age, ability, political affiliation, financial situation, education, or social status of that person.
2. A worshiping fellowship which seeks an encounter with Christ in all services, activities, and endeavors.

² Walter B. Shurden, *The Baptist Identity: Four Fragile Freedoms* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc.), 1993.

3. An outreach, strongly evangelical, in which each member seeks by personal witness of life, influence, and word to share their faith in Jesus Christ.
4. A social concern which seeks justice for everyone, and which results in active ministry to our local community, and to the whole world.
5. A stewardship in which the tithe is conceived as the minimum as far as possessions are concerned and which recognizes that all that we have and are belong to God.
6. A lifestyle open to the demands of Christ and faithful to the opportunities of worship, witness, education, and ministry through this local church.
7. A concern for each other which shows itself not only in daily prayer but also in compassionate action.
8. A continuity in which, upon moving from the Pelham community, a member is expected to unite as soon as possible with some other church where they can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.