

Constitution and General Rules
of the
Fire-Baptized Holiness
Church



1908

Constitution and General Rules . of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church.

ARTICLE I.

NAME.

This organization shall be called the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church.

ARTICLE II.

OBJECT AND DESIGN.

The object and purpose of this church is threefold :

1. The deepening of the spiritual life **among** ourselves, so that all of our members shall attain the highest state **of** Christian **experience** possible in this life.

2 The ordination and appointment of **Elders**, Pastors, Evangelists and Missionaries divinely called, qualified and set apart to the work.

3. All our Elders, Pastors, **Evangelists** and Missionaries shall be **required** to teach

and preach the doctrines set forth in the basis of union.

4. All our regularly ordained Elders, Pastors, Evangelists and Missionaries shall have authority to administer the ordinances of the Lord's supper and baptism and to solemnize matrimony.

ARTICLE III.

BASIS OF UNION.

1. We believe that Jesus Christ shed His blood for the remission of sins that are past (Rom. 3: 25), and for the regeneration of penitent sinners and for salvation from sin and from sinning (I. John 3: 5-10; Eph. 2: 1-10).

2 We believe, teach and firmly maintain the Scriptural doctrine of justification by faith alone (Eom. 5: 1).

3. We believe also that Jesus Christ shed His blood for the complete cleansing of the justified believer from all indwelling sin, end from its pollution subsequent to regeneration.

4. We believe also that entire sanctification is an instantaneous, definite, second work of grace, obtainable by faith on the part of the fully justified believer.

5. We believe also that the Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire is obtainable by a definite act of appropriating faith

on the part of the fully cleansed believer, and that the initial evidence of the reception of this experience is speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance (Luke 11:13; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; 8:17; 10:44-46; 19:6).

6. We believe also in &vine healing as in the atonement (Isa. 53:4, 5; Matt. 8:16, 17; Mark 16:14-18; James 5:14-16; Ex. 15:26).

7. We believe in the imminent, personal, premillennial, second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (I. Thes. 4:15-18; Titus 2:13; II. Peter 3:1-14; Matt. 24:29-44), and we love and wait for His appearing (II. Tim. 4:8).

8. The Fire-Baptized Holiness Church is utterly opposed to the teaching of the so-called Christian Scientists, Spiritualists, Unitarians, Universalists and Mormons. We deny as false and unscriptural Seventh-Day Adventism, annihilation of the wicked, conditional immortality, antinomianism, absolute perfection, so-called come-autism, the so-called resurrection life, the so-called redemption or glorification of the body in this life, and the doctrine of the restitution of all things as set forth in millennial dawnism, and the false teaching that we are not born of God until we are sanctified wholly.

9. The Lord says, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled," and the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church firmly holds that

there are certain relations between husband and wife which are strictly private according to the Word of God, and into this sacred privacy no one has any right to inquire (Heb. 13. 4 ; I. Cor. 7: 1-5).

10. No subsequent General Council shall have authority to change the basis of union of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church, without a full representation from the local bands.

ARTICLE IV.

GENERAL RULES.

1. No one shall be admitted to full membership in this church who is not in full accord with the teachings of the same as set forth in the basis of union.

2 He must also give satisfactory evidence aside from his own testimony that he is regenerated, clearly justified, sanctified wholly, and is groaning after the fulness of the Spirit. Provided, also, that applicants in the enjoyment of the experience of Scriptural justification may be received as probationers for the period of three months. Provided, further, that no one shall be received into full membership nor entitled to a vote who does not enjoy the experience of entire sanctification and is agonizing after the fulness of the Spirit.

3. In accordance with these professions, all

who remain with us shall take as their rule of conduct the Word of God (Gal. 6:16), and shall conform outwardly as well as inwardly **in their daily walk and conversation** to its simple teachings. 5

4. We are commanded in God's Word not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers, and to have no communion or fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, such as oathbound secret societies, social clubs and corrupt partisan politics (II. Cor. 6: 14; Eph. 5: 11); not to be conformed to this world (Rom. 12: 2) ; to come out from among them and be separate (II. Cor. 6:17), and even to turn away from those who have the form of godliness, **but** deny the power thereof (II. Tim. 3: 5) ; to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit (II. Cor. 7: 1), such as the use, growth, sale or handling of tobacco in tvery form, or of morphine, or intoxicants, filthiness of speech, foolish talk-orjesting, or the use of slang language; to abstain from all appearance of evil (I. Thes. 6: 22); and to do all we do to the glory of **God** and in the name of Jesus Christ (Col. 3: 17; I. Cor. 10: 31); to wear no outward adorning, such as jewelry, gold, feathers, flowers, costly apparel or cmamentation of any kind (I. Tim. 2: 9; I. Pet. 3; 3); and a practical observance of **all** these Scriptural re-

quirements, and a complete separation from anything which does not tend to deepen our own spirituality and promote the glory of God, is hereby required of all our members.

6. To abstain from mentioning the faults of an absent person, and refuse to listen to those who do, except it be absolutely necessary for the glory of God and the good of the cause, and of the person concerned.

7. The tenth is the Lord's and shall be recognized as such by all our members (Gen. 28: 22; Matt. 23: 23).

8. All our members are required to be patterns of frugality, diligence, faith and charity, taking up the cross daily, and true to the abiding baptism of the Holy Ghost.

9. To witness on all suitable occasions, even if it costs us our lives, to what the Lord has done for us, especially to sanctification, divine healing, and the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire.

10. All our evangelists and workers shall cause the members to know what is expected of them regarding everything mentioned, directly or indirectly, in the general rules, and shall deal faithfully with every one.

These are the general rules of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church, and we believe them to be in accordance with the teachings of God's Word, and therefore for

the good of our own souls and for the glory of God.

ARTICLE V.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECEPTION OF PRIVATE MEMBERS.

1. Have you the forgiveness of your sins? (I. Jno. 1:9.)

2. Have you peace now with God through our Lord Jesus Christ? (Rom. 5: 1.)

3. Have you the witness of the Holy Spirit agreeing with your spirit that you are a child of God? (Rom. 8:16.)

4. Has no sin, inward or outward, dominion over you? (Rom. 6:14.)

5. Are you wholly sanctified according to I Thes. 5:23?

6. Have you the personal Holy Ghost as promised in John 14:16, 26; 15: 26; 16; 13; Luke 11:13 and Acts 19:2?

7. Do you believe in divine healing as in the atonement? and in the laying on of hands, and in anointing with oil? (Isa. 53: 3-5; Matt. 8: 17; Mark 16: 14-18; James 5; 14-16.)

8. Do you believe in the imminent, personal, premillennial, second coming of our Lord? (I. Thes. 4: 15-18; II, Peter 3: 1-4.)

9. Will you faithfully and loyally witness to all these experiences? (Acts 2: 32; Isa. 43: 10; Luke 24: 48.)

No one shall be received into full membership who shall not pass satisfactory examination upon the foregoing questions.

ARTICLE VI.

QUESTIONS TO APPLICANTS FOR THE MINISTRY.

1. Have you been called of God to preach the gospel, and can you say as the apostle said, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel?"

2. Will you "preach the Word" without fear or favor, seeking the honor that comes from God only, reproof, rebuking and exhorting with all long-suffering and doctrine, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints?

3. Will you take the Word of God as your charge and only rule of conduct, and strive to regulate your life and manner of living by its sacred teaching? (II. Tim. 4:1-5; I. Cor. 9:16; I. Tim. 4:10-16; II. Tim. 1:1-13; Acts 20:17-35.)

4. Having a dispensation committed unto you, will you undertake to preach this gospel, not as a hireling, nor by constraint, neither as being lords over God's heritage, nor for filthy lucre, but willingly, and of a ready mind, doing all for the glory of God and the salvation of lost men?

5. Have you counted the cost, and do you

fully commit yourself for life to the cause of Pentecostal holiness?

. In addition **to** the above, the Ruling Elders shall be required to pass satisfactory examination as to qualifications upon the following Scriptures: Titus 1:5-9; I. Tim. 3:2-7; I. Peter 6:2-4.

Let all these examinations be close and searching, and let all our workers be required to conform strictly to these requirements.

ARTICLE VII. GOVERNMENT.

We recognize and acknowledge **our** Lord Jesus Christ as the Supreme Head and Rightful Governor of the Fire-Baptized Holiness **Church** in all its various departments, and His infallible Word as the man of our counsel and as our only rule of faith and practice.

GENERAL OFFICERS.

1. There shall be a General Overseer, **who** shall have the general oversight and care of all the church, and whose tenure of office shall continue during good behavior. **He** shall preside at all the General Councils, **and when present, at all the state, provincial, and territorial associations.**

2. There shall be a General Secretary and General Treasurer, appointed by the General Overseer. The General Secretary shall keep

the minutes of each General Council, and a correct list of the membership of the church, as furnished by the Ruling Elders. The General Treasurer shall have charge of all money contributed for the benefit of the church at large, and pay the same by order of the Board of Trustees.

3. There shall be a Board of Trustees, consisting of not less than three or more than nine, appointed by the General Overseer, who shall be chairman of the same. They shall hold in trust and have charge of all property deeded or bequeathed to the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church.

ARTICLE VIII.

RULING ELDERS.

1. The General Overseer shall appoint the Ruling Elders for the state, provincial and territorial churches, both domestic and foreign, and shall have power and authority to remove the same and appoint others, whenever, in his best judgment, the good of the cause requires it.

2. It shall be the duty of the Ruling Elders to preach the Word, giving their time, talents and influence to the spreading of Pentecostal holiness throughout their respective jurisdictions. They are expected to so direct the work in their respective territories

that the greatest possible **good** may be accomplished and the greatest number of souls **saved**. They shall obtain a list of the members of the churches in their respective territories and report the same to the General Secretary once each year.

3. The power to appoint *pastors* of the **local** churches is hereby given to a stationing committee, which shall be appointed by the state convention. Provided, further, that in case of necessity, between state conventions, the Ruling Elder shall supply pastors to the local churches.

ARTICLE IX.

ORDINATION ORDINANCES, ETC.

1. The General Overseer shall **have power** and authority to ordain Elders and **Evangelists** in every place where there **is** need of **such**, and, under the immediate direction of the Holy Ghost, to separate them unto the work whereunto the Lord hath called them, according to the precedent given in Acts **13: 1-3**, always remembering the **Scriptural** requirement that an elder must not be a novice, "lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil" (I. Tim. 3: 6), and **also** that other wholesome apostolic injunction, to "lay hands suddenly on no man" (I. Tim. 5: 22).

2. The General Overseer shall have authority to delegate to any **Ruling** Elder or regularly ordained Evangelist the power to ordain Elders in special cases whenever he may deem it wise and expedient for the promotion of the Pentecostal work

3. A certificate of ordination shall be issued to each ordained minister in the connection, officially signed by the General Overseer.

4. In view of the increasing number and efficiency of women who are evidently called of God unto the evangelistic, missionary and rescue work, provision is hereby made for the appointing, ordaining and sending forth of women thus called of **God**, exactly the same as men, thus placing Spirit-filled women, called of God, upon the same footing with our brethren of the stronger sex.

5. As the question of water baptism has always been a subject of fruitless strife among carnal professors, we leave it entirely to the individual conscience, as to the mode by which the rite shall be administered.

6. In the administration of the Lord's supper only unfermented wine shall be used.

ARTICLE X.

GENERAL COUNCIL,

1. The General Council shall be composed

of the General Overseer, the Assistant General Overseers, the Trustees, the Ruling Elders, the General Secretary, the General Treasurer, and a delegate to be elected by each state convention.

2. There shall be a regular meeting every two years, provided, that in case of necessity the General Overseer shall have authority to convene the General Council at such time and place as he may designate, for the transaction of such business as may properly come before it.

3. The object of the General Council shall be to confer together and to adopt such measures and devise such means as shall be deemed expedient for the promotion and furtherance of the cause of Pentecostal holiness.

4. In the event of the death, removal or disability of the General Overseer, the Board of Trustees shall have authority to call a meeting of the General Council, who shall, by prayer and fasting, seek to know the mind of the Spirit with regard to filling the vacancy, and the one plainly designated by the Holy Ghost shall be accepted as the divinely appointed one.

5. The General Overseer and three Ruling Elders shall constitute a quorum to transact business.

ARTICLE XI.

MISSIONS.

1. The foreign missionary work shall be under the general supervision of the General Overseer, who shall have power and authority to appoint one or more Superintendents of Foreign Missions, as the exigencies of the times may demand.

ARTICLE XII.

STATE CONVENTIONS.

1. Each state, provincial and territorial church shall hold at least one Pentecostal holiness convention each year, to be open on all the lines of divine truth, especially on the lines of sanctification, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, and divine healing. The time and place of these camp meetings shall be designated by the Ruling Elder.

2. Each state, provincial and territorial convention shall be composed of the Ruling

Pastors and Missionaries belonging to the same.

(2) The examination and recommendation of applicants for ordination.

(3) To suspend from the ministry and deprive of credentials persons **who are inefficient** or negligent of the duties assigned to them.

(4) Evangelists who are unable to attend the state convention shall report in writing to the General Secretary once a year regarding their personal experience and work.

ARTICLE XIII.

LOCAL CHURCHES.

1. Three or more persons in any community, having the required qualifications for membership in the local organization, may be organized into a local church by any evangelist, helper or missionary. If he deem it wise and expedient, he shall appoint a leader, who shall report to the Ruling Elder. Should a vacancy occur, the society may elect a leader.

2. It is hereby provided that the Ruling Elder or Evangelist organizing any local church shall have authority to appoint a committee, whose duty it shall be to attend to the finances of the church.

3. This committee shall consist of the leader, who shall be ex-officio chairman of the

same, a secretary, treasurer, and as many others as he may deem necessary.

4. This committee shall report to the local church once a quarter, and shall thereafter be elected annually by the church.

5. In every local church meetings shall be held when practicable, either in meeting houses, private residences, or in the open air, at least once every Lord's day, and once during the week.

ARTICLE XIV.

JUDICIARY RULES.

1. When the General Overseer shall be accused of immoral conduct or neglect of duties assigned him, it shall be the duty of the Ruling Elder, in or nearest whose jurisdiction said acts of immorality may be committed, to call together the Ruling Elders, whose duty it shall *be* to thoroughly investigate the case, and if he be found guilty, they shall deprive him of his credentials and **expel** him from the church. Three Ruling Elders may constitute a quorum in the trial of this case.

2. When any evangelist shall be accused of immoral conduct, the Ruling Elder shall call to his aid a committee of not less than three nor more than nine from among the ordained evangelists, whose duty it shall be to investigate the charge, and if he be

found guilty, they shall suspend him from the ministry until the ensuing session of the state convention, which *shall* make final disposition of his case. Provided, further, that in case any evangelist living in a state or province where there is no annual convention shall be accused of immoral conduct, the General Overseer shall have power to deal with the same.

3. When the leader of the local church shall be accused of immoral conduct, notice thereof shall be given to the Ruling Elder, whose duty it shall be to call a committee from among the local church of which he is a member, who shall investigate the case, and if he be found guilty, he shall be expelled from membership in the church.

4. Any member violating the general rules, or found guilty of immoral conduct, the leader of the band shall admonish him of the error of his ways, and if he repent not, he shall take with him two or more others, and if he refuse to hear them, he shall be brought before the society, who, after due investigation, shall have power to expel him.

ARTICLE XV.

DIRECTIONS REGARDING DEEDS, TITLES, ETC.

1. Let each church appoint a Board of Trustees in accordance with the laws of their

respective states, territories, etc., whose duty it shall be to receive and hold in trust all property that **may** be deeded **to** the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church for the benefit **of** the individual society to which they may belong.

2. This board shall secure a warranty deed **to all** property whenever it is practicable. When said property shall cease to be used by the society for religious purposes it shall revert to the General Board of Trustees, unless otherwise specified in the deed.

3. This local board shall report to the General Board the amount and estimated value of all property held by them.

4. Let it be specified in each deed to church property that it shall be for the use and benefit of the ministry and membership of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church.

ARTICLE XVI.

1. Hereafter no person shall be ordained without having previously served at least two years in the capacity *of* a local preacher of the gospel.

2. Provision is hereby made that ministers coming to us from any other church or association, having certificate of ordination, shall be received and recognized as such.

Ritual.

BAPTISM.*

The minister may read **a** lesson of his **own** selection from the Word, after which **he** shall address the congregation, **saying:**

Dearly Beloved: The last command of our risen Lord was to **go** into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and His Representative, the blessed Holy Spirit, throughout the Book of Acts enforced this command through the apostles in relation to all who believed in Christ: therefore it is **our** bounden duty as possessors of **His** grace to conform to this great commission, both in the preaching of the **Word** and the administration of the ordinance of Baptism, as our opportunity affords.

Here let the candidates for baptism be invited to stand before the congregation, **the** minister addressing them **as follows:**

Dearly Beloved: **This** act of yours, coming seeking baptism in the name of **the** Lord, is a public testimony of your professed **sub**mission to Christ and the grace vouchsafed to you in the pardon and cleansing of your **soul** from sin. **But** that you may further declare your determination to walk in the command-

*The candidate shall have the right to choose whatever mode of baptism he prefers.

your acceptance with God? **Ans.** I have.

3. Will you endeavor to walk in the fear of God and in the **way** of His commandments *to* the end of life? **Ans.** **I** will endeavor to do so by His grace.

4. Will you endeavor -to seek after all the **fuln^ess** of **God**, till all His will and good

5. Will you attend divine services as opportunity affords, and contribute **of** your means **for** the support and spread of the full

which prayer shall be offered and the service closed with the benediction.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The minister officiating shall read a lesson from the Word, either from the Gospels or Epistles, as he may deem appropriate. After the Scripture lesson he may address the congregation as follows:

Beloved in Christ: This precious sacrament commemorates the suffering and death of our Lord, whereby He offered Himself a ransom for our souls, making atonement for our sins in His own blood, and thus satisfying the claims of Divine justice against us. It also points to His return to earth, when He shall partake of it anew with us in the kingdom of the Father. Let us draw near in deep humility and take this sacrament to our comfort, and, devoutly kneeling, render our sincere thanks to Almighty God.

Here the minister shall offer extemporary prayer, consecrating the elements to their sacred use. After prayer, the communion shall be given as follows:

We invite all true Christians, all who have fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, and who sincerely love the appearing of our Lord, to come and partake of this sacrament in the name of the Lord.

A brief prayer may be offered for the special blessing of the Lord upon the communicants, immediately before the elements are distributed. This may be done as each table of communicants are served.

Each table of communicants may be dismissed with the following benediction:

Arise and go in peace in the name of the Lord, and may the grace of our God go with **you**.

After all have partaken of the elements, a hymn shall be sung, closing with prayer, the congregation kneeling, at the close of which the doxology may be sung and the service dismissed.

SOLEMNIZATION OF MATRIMONY.

The contracting parties presenting themselves before the minister, he shall address those **present** as **follows**:

Dearly Beloved: The marriage relation was ordained of God in the time of man's innocence in the Garden of Eden, and was designed for the mutual happiness and good of those entering into **its** relation, and **for** the uncorrupted preservation and perpetuity of the human family. It was hallowed by the presence of Christ at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, and is declared by the **Apostle Paul** to be **an** honorable estate for all. These per-

sons present come seeking union in this relation, and it is our purpose to so unite them, unless just cause here be shown why they may not be united; therefore if any one here present can show just cause why this union may not be effected, let them now speak, or forever hereafter hold their peace.

No cause being given, the minister shall address the couple as follows:

M. Will you take **this** woman **to be your lawful** and wedded wife, to live **with her after** God's ordinance in the bonds of holy matrimony, love, cherish and keep **her**, in sickness and in health, and, **forsaking all others, cleave only unto her so long as ye both shall live?**
Ans. I will.

N. Will **you** take **this man to be your lawful** and wedded husband, to live **with him after** God's ordinance in **the** bonds of holy matrimony, love, honor and obey **him**, in sickness and in health, and, **forsaking all others, cleave only unto him so long as ye both shall live?** **Ans. I will.**

Then shall the minister pronounce the following:

In the presense of God and this company I pronounce you husband and wife. **Whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.**

General Officers of the Free-Bap- tized Business Church.

General Overseer.

Joseph H. King, Royston, Ga.

Assistant General Overseer.

Samuel D. Page, Chadbourn, N. C.

General Secretary and Treasurer.

Albert E. Robinson, 1106 Taylor street,
Columbia, S. C.

Ruling Elders.

North Carolina and Lower South Carolina—

• John J. Carter, Chadbourn, N. C.

Georgia and Upper South Carolina— G. O.
Gaines, Royston, Ga.

Trustees.

Joseph H. King, Royston, Ga.; Samuel D.
Page, Chadbourn, N. C.; G. O. Gaines, Roys-
ton, Ga.

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The General Secretary will supply all who
wish copies of this Constitution. Price, 5c.
each; 50c. per dozen, postpaid.