



First Pentecostal Holiness Church
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Membership Information

Any person who has been born again by faith in Jesus Christ may become a member of First Pentecostal Holiness Church of Winnsboro. Members are expected to hold to the Articles of Faith of the church and to accept the Covenant of Commitment as the standard by which they live.

ARTICLES OF FAITH OF THE INTERNATIONAL PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH

ARTICLE ONE

We believe there is but one living and true God everlasting, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness; Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in the unity of this Godhead there are three Persons of one substance of eternal being, and equal in holiness, justice, wisdom, power, and dignity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

ARTICLE TWO

We believe that the Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and the manhood were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and perfect man, who actually suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile the Father to us, and to make atonement, not only for our actual guilt, but also for original sin.

ARTICLE THREE

We believe that Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again His body, with all things appertaining to the perfections of man's nature, and ascended into heaven and there sits until He shall return to judge all men at the last day.

ARTICLE FOUR

We believe the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

ARTICLE FIVE

We believe in the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, known as the Bible, composed of sixty-six books and divided into two departments, Old and New Testaments. We believe the Bible is the Word of God, the full and complete revelation of the plan and history of redemption.

ARTICLE SIX

We believe that eternal life with God in heaven is a portion of the reward of the finally righteous; and that everlasting banishment from the presence of the Lord and unending torture in hell are the wages of the persistently wicked (Matthew 25:46; Psalm 9:17; Revelation 21:7-8).

ARTICLE SEVEN

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

ARTICLE EIGHT

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

ARTICLE NINE

We believe that Jesus Christ shed His blood for the complete cleansing of the justified believer from all indwelling sin and from its pollution, subsequent to regeneration (1 John 1:7-9).

ARTICLE TEN

We believe in sanctification. While sanctification is initiated in regeneration and consummated in glorification, we believe that it includes a definite, instantaneous work of grace achieved by faith subsequent to regeneration (Acts 26:18; 1 John 1:9). Sanctification delivers from the power and dominion of sin. It is followed by life-long growth in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:16; 2 Peter 3:18).

ARTICLE ELEVEN

We believe 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 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; 2:14, 8-17; 10:44-46; 19:6).

ARTICLE TWELVE

We believe in divine healing as in the atonement (Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:16-17; Mark 16:14-18; James 5:14-16; Exodus 15:26).

ARTICLE THIRTEEN

We believe in the imminent, personal, premillennial second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 3:1-4; Matthew 24:29-44), and love and wait for His appearing (2 Timothy 4:8).

ARTICLE FOURTEEN

We believe it is the responsibility of every believer to dedicate his life to carrying out the work of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20; Acts 1:8).

COVENANT OF COMMITMENT

The Pentecostal Holiness Church is committed to Jesus Christ and His kingdom. This commitment involves a biblical lifestyle. We believe that the Bible is God's infallible Word and the believer's guide and final authority for both faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:16-17). We are totally committed to the Bible as God's written Word to man. We believe that a top priority of Christians in this world is to multiply believers and multiply churches as a means of extending the kingdom of God. We must, therefore, follow a lifestyle that gives impetus to this purpose. As members of the army of God we are involved in spiritual warfare, and thus under military discipline (2 Timothy 2:3-4). Other considerations must take second place to our primary purpose in life. We are mobilized on a wartime basis. Every facet of our lives must come under divine authority (1 Corinthians 10:31).

OUR BODIES

Since our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit and instruments of righteousness (1 Corinthians 6:19; Romans 6:13), we must keep our bodies clean and consecrated for the Master's use. From the beginning of our existence as a denomination we have expected our members to abstain from the use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, and addictive drugs. We have also maintained a strong position against premarital, extramarital, and deviant sex, including homosexual and lesbian relationships, refusing to accept the loose moral standards of our society. We commit ourselves to maintaining this disciplined lifestyle with regard to our bodies (Romans 12:1-2).

OUR MINDS

The mind is also the dwelling place of God. We believe that our minds should be kept pure and positive in the midst of an impure and negative world (Philippians 4:7-8). It is for this reason that our members are to govern their "mental" diet. The profanity and pornography that pervade our modern media- both print and video-make it imperative that Christians discipline their minds by refusing to feed upon that which is profane, vulgar, or hedonistic. Thus Pentecostal Holiness members are to avoid material that panders to the profane and pornographic, while consciously replacing it with wholesome material that nurtures and strengthens the spiritual man. We hold a deep commitment to the study of the Bible.

OUR SPIRITS

Our commitment includes our spirits. The spirit of this world is hostile to the spirit of the Christian (Galatians 5:17; 1 Corinthians 2:12-14). The spirit rulers of this present darkness are ever at work to establish strongholds in the minds of unsuspecting believers, to impose upon them the mind-set of the world. We must guard against the hatred and hostility that breed so easily in the human spirit. The greed and selfishness that motivate much of our modern culture is contrary to our Christian faith and testimony. We therefore urge all our members to exhibit the "mind of Christ" in all their attitudes (Philippians 2:5-11).

OUR SPEECH

Our speech reveals much about us (Matthew 12:34-37). The Christian should be known by his wholesome conversation. Our members are to refrain from speaking anything that is unclean, untrue, unkind, or unprofitable. We must make sure that our talk affirms, rather than hinders, our testimony.

OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Our relationships reveal our preferences and positions. Thus our people are not to align themselves with organizations or movements that stand in contradiction to Christian principles (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

The believer's commitment to Jesus Christ stands above his commitment to any political party or economic structure or social institution. Any time there is a conflict between the Christian's commitment to Christ and his commitment to any other relationship, he must recognize that all other commitments are governed by this highest commitment (Luke 14:26-27). All our members are to be honest and ethical in all their relationships (Romans 12:17).

OUR FAMILIES

The family is the basic unit of society. The divine origin of the family makes it of vital concern both to the church and to society. Our commitment to a biblical lifestyle profoundly impacts the family. We give priority to the sanctity of marriage and to the biblical pattern of relationships in the home. While the husband is recognized as the head of the home, he is also commanded to love and cherish his wife as his own body (Ephesians 5:25, 28). Wives are to respect and honor their husbands (Ephesians 5:22-23). Parents are to teach and correct their children, but at the same time refrain from provoking them to anger and resentment (Ephesians 6:1-4). Children are to respect and obey their parents. Christian families should worship together, play together, and work together. The relationships in the Christian family should reflect the healing that Christ brings to all human relationships.

OUR STEWARDSHIP

Our commitment to Jesus Christ includes stewardship. According to the Bible everything belongs to God (Psalm 24:1). We are stewards of His resources. Our stewardship of possessions begins with the tithe (Malachi 3:8-10). All our members are expected to return a tenth of all their income to the Lord. This tithe is to be paid into the "storehouse." This storehouse is the treasury of the local church or conference to which this member belongs. In addition to the tithe, all our members are expected to give offerings out of the ninety percent of God's wealth which He allows them to use (1 Corinthians 16:2). Stewardship also includes our time, talent, and spiritual gifts, as well as our money (Ephesians 5:16; Romans 12:3-8; Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27).

OUR LOYALTY

Loyalty to Christ and His church are basic to the success of the Pentecostal Holiness Church. The faithful participation of every member, both lay and clergy, and every local church and quadrennial conference in the various ministries of the church is necessary if the Pentecostal Holiness Church is to fulfill its mission. Loyalty involves commitment to all the ministries of the denomination. Since leaders should be role models, all those in leadership in the local church, the quadrennial conference, and the general church should set an example by their faithfulness in supporting the ministries of the church. Loyalty involves attendance at the gatherings of the church. This is vital at local church, quadrennial conference, and denominational gatherings (Hebrews 10:25). Loyalty involves financial support. Faithfulness in tithes and offerings is essential to the prosperity of God's people (Malachi 3:8-12). This applies to local church members, quadrennial conferences, and all other individuals and entities of the church. Loyalty involves affirmation. The morale of the church requires the positive affirmation of the leadership and ministries of the denomination. While negative criticism tears the church apart (Galatians 5:12-26), positive affirmation builds it up (Ephesians 4:16).

CONCLUSION

This Covenant of Commitment is intended as a guideline for all our members, not a system for monitoring and judging one another. Neither is this Covenant of Commitment to be considered an exhaustive statement concerning a biblical lifestyle. The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is our complete and final authority. A careful, conscientious, and continual study of God's Word will reveal to the believer a growing understanding of what it means to live worthy of our calling in Christ Jesus. Any

member having difficulty in following a biblical lifestyle or this Covenant of Commitment should be given loving nurture and patient instruction in order to lead him to maturity and restoration, if needed (Galatians 6:1). There are times when, in spite of every effort to nurture and restore a member, no alternative but excommunication can be found. When a member refuses to heed the loving admonitions of the church to follow a Christian lifestyle, he or she must be excommunicated from the fellowship of the church. However, excommunication is a last resort, and is administered only in flagrant cases of heresy, divisiveness, or immorality (Matthew 18:15-17; Titus 3:10; Romans 16:17-18; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5). The primary purpose for this commitment to a disciplined lifestyle is to strengthen the position of our members as Great Commission Christians, and thus to firmly establish our denomination as a Great Commission movement. We feel that the Pentecostal Holiness Church has a vital part to play in world evangelism. Our aim is to make the multiplying of believers and the multiplying of churches a top priority of the denomination.

For more information about First Pentecostal Holiness Church of Winnsboro, log onto: www.fphc.org