

SECTION 8: THE CHURCH

Paragraph A: The Universal Church

We believe that the universal church is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons united by the Holy Spirit to the risen and ascended Son of God; that by the Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jew or Gentile, and thus being members one of another we are responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian prejudices and denominational bigotry, fervently loving one another with a pure heart. *Leviticus 18:1-30; Matthew 16:16-18; Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 1:19-23; Colossians 1:18;*

Paragraph B: The Local Church

We believe that the establishment and continuance of the local church is clearly taught and defined in the Scriptures. The local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; with final authority in all matters of membership, of polity, of government, and of discipline. We believe the purpose of the local church is to disciple believers in accomplishing the great commission. *Mathew 28:16-20; Acts 15:4, 13-22; I Corinthians 12:12-28; Ephesians 5:23-32; Colossians 3:14-17; I Timothy 3:1-13; 2 Timothy 2:2.*