



# Church Constitution

*"Let all things be done decently and in order." 1 Corinthians 14:40*

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## ARTICLE 1 – The Name

Name The name of this local church shall be:  
***Wilton Bible Church  
Wilton, California***

## ARTICLE 2 – The Object

The Object The Church is a separated body of believers, baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and observing the forms, ordinances, and principles laid-down in the New Testament.



The object of this church is to provide a local base:

- For the fulfilling of the Great Commission  
 *Matt 28.19-20*
- For the assembling for mutual exhortation  
 *Heb 10.24-25*
- For the promoting the unity of the Body of Christ, while earnestly contending for the fundamentals of the Faith  
 *Jude 3*
- For maintaining separation from those ministries that deny the fundamentals of the Faith  
 *2 Cor 6.14-17*

## ARTICLE 3 – Statement of Faith and Doctrine

Statement of Faith and Doctrine The members of Wilton Bible Church subscribe to the following:



### Section 1 – The Holy Scriptures

The Holy Scriptures We believe the Holy Scriptures to be the Word of God; the verbal, plenary, inspiration of the Old and New Testaments, in the final authority for faith and life, and to be inerrant in the original writings, infallible, and God-breathed.  
 *2 Tim 3.16-17*  *2 Peter 1.19-21*

### Section 2 – God








God We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons.

- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- Co-eternal in being
- Co-identical in nature
- Co-equal in power and glory
- Having the same attributes and perfections

 *Deut 6.4*  *2 Cor 13.14*

We believe God is:

- Spirit
- From everlasting-to-everlasting the same
- Creator of all things
- Omnipotent
- Omniscient
- Omnipresent





 <i>John 4.24</i>	 <i>Isaiah 44.24</i>
 <i>Luke 24.39</i>	 <i>Rev 19.6</i>
 <i>Psalm 90.2 ; 139.7-10 ; 147.5</i>	 <i>1 John 3.20</i>
 <i>Gal 3.6</i>	 <i>Jer 23.34</i>
 <i>James 1.17</i>	

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### Section 3 – The Person and Work of Christ

#### The Person and Work of Christ




We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, whose body was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men.

 <i>Isaiah 53.6</i>	 <i>John 1.2,14</i>
 <i>Eph 2.1-3</i>	 <i>Luke 1.35</i>

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was offered once to pay the penalty of sins of the whole world through His death on the Cross as a representative, substitutionary sacrifice, and that believers are assured of their resurrection by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead.

 <i>Rom 3.24-25 ; 4.24-25</i>	 <i>1 John 2.2</i>
 <i>1 Peter 2.24</i>	 <i>1 Cor 15.23</i>
 <i>Heb 9.28</i>	

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven, and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where He ministers for us as our High Priest, Intercessor, and Advocate.

 <i>Acts 1.9-10</i>	 <i>1 John 2.1</i>
 <i>Heb 7.25 ; 9.24</i>	





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### Section 4 – The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

#### The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit:

- Convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment
- In salvation, He regenerates all believers, baptizing them into the Body of Christ, indwelling, sanctifying, sealing them unto the day of redemption, and that He is the Divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth.




 <i>John 16.8-11,13</i>	 <i>Rom 8.9,13</i>
 <i>1 Cor 12.12-14</i>	 <i>Eph 1.13-14</i>

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### Section 5 – Man

#### Man – Totally Depraved

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but when Adam sinned, mankind inherited from him a sinful nature and was alienated from God; therefore, man is totally depraved, and of himself utterly unable to remedy his sinful condition.




 <i>Gen 1.26-27</i>	 <i>Eph 2.12</i>
 <i>Rom 3.22-23 ; 5.12</i>	

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



### Section 6 – Salvation

#### Salvation

We believe that Salvation is a gift from God, completely disregarding the good or religious work of man, and is received when a person believes in the work of Christ on his behalf.

 <i>Eph 1.7 ; 2.8-9</i>	 <i>John 1.12</i>
 <i>Acts 17.30 ; 20.21</i>	


We believe that all the redeemed are kept by God's power, and are thus secure in Christ forever.


 <i>John 10.27-30</i>	 <i>1 Peter 1.5</i>
 <i>Rom 8.1,38-39</i>	 <i>1 John 5.11-13</i>

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## Section 7 – The Christian Life

**The Christian Life** We believe the Christian has been freed from the demands of the Mosaic Law, and has complete liberty in issues not forbidden in Scripture, except where such practice will hinder a weaker brother, or hinder a sinner from being saved.


 1 Cor 10.23,33

 Gal 5.1

We believe that while a Christian is to be set apart unto the Lord, he is to be separate from the world by loving not the world, neither the things of the world, and must even separate from a believer who practices false doctrine.


 Rom 12.1-2

 1 John 2.15

 2 Thes 3.6, 14

 1 Cor 7.10-14

We believe that the Christian is to be controlled by the Spirit and is to manifest His fruit in our lives.

 Gal 5.16, 22-25

 Eph 5.18

We believe that every saved person possesses two natures, with provisions made for victory of the new nature over the old nature through submission to the authority of the indwelling Holy Spirit and obedience to God's Word; and that all claims of the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural.

 Rom 8.12-13

 1 John 1.8

 Gal 5.16-25

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## Section 8 – The Church


**The Church** We believe that the Church, from its birth at Pentecost, as the Body of Christ, is composed of all, who by faith in Christ, are regenerated and sealed by the Holy Spirit.


The Local Church is:

- A body of professing believers associated in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel.
- Observing the ordinances of Christ.
- Governed by His laws and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges vested in them by His Word.

We hold that the Local church has an absolute right of self-government, free from any hierarchy of individuals or organizations.


- The one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit.
- Each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation on all matters of:
  - Membership
  - Policy
  - Government
  - Discipline
  - Benevolence


 1 Cor 12.12-14

 Acts 2.41,42 ; 20.17,28-32

 2 Cor 11.2

 1 Tim 3.1-13

 Eph 1.22-23 ; 5.25-27

 Titus 1.5-11

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## Section 9 – Missions

**Missions** We believe that it is the obligation of the saved to witness by life, and by the word, to the truths of the Holy Scripture.

- Seek to proclaim the Gospel to all mankind.
- Baptizing the converts.
- Teaching them obedience to the Word.

 Matt 28.19,20

 2 Cor 5.19-20

 Acts 1.8


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## Section 10 – The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts

### The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts

We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts.


- The gifts of evangelist and pastor-teacher are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today.
- Though speaking-in-tongues and the working of sign miracles ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established, various other gifts of the Spirit are still operable today.

 *1 Cor 12.4-11; 13.8*


 *Heb 2.1-4*

 *2 Cor 12.12*

 *Rom 12.6-8*

 *Eph 4.7-12*

We believe that God does hear and answer prayer, in accord with His own will, for the sick and afflicted.

 *John 15.7*

 *James 5.16*

 *1 John 5.14,15*

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## Section 11 – Dispensationalism

### Dispensationalism

We believe in the dispensational view of Bible interpretation:

- Innocence
- Conscience
- Human government
- Promise
- Law
- Grace
- Kingdom

 *2 Tim 2.15*

 *1 Cor 10.11*

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## Section 12 – Ordinances


### Ordinances

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ gave two ordinances to be observed by the Church.

- We believe that the Lord's Supper and Baptism are expressive ceremonies, having no saving qualities, and bestowing no saving grace on those who observe them, as expressly commanded in the Word of God.

**LORD'S SUPPER** - We believe in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper in which all believers, by eating of the bread and the drinking of the cup, are to commemorate together the substitutionary death of Christ.

- Until He comes again.
- Always preceded by solemn self-examination.


 *1 Cor 11.23-28*

**BAPTISM** – We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer in the name of God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- To show our identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.
- It is symbolic of our death to sin and resurrection to a new life, which occurred the moment we believed in Christ Jesus.

 *Acts 8.36-39*

 *Col 2.12*

 *Matt 3.5-6 ; 28.19*

 *Acts 2.41-42*

 *Rom 6.4*

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## Section 13 – Satan

### The Personality of Satan

We believe that Lucifer, the anointed cherub, because of his pride, was cast out of heaven, and as Satan:

- He provided the temptation for the first sin.
- He is the open and declared enemy of God and man.
- He will be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire.

📖 Job 1.6-7  
📖 Isaiah 14.12-17  
📖 Ezekiel 28.11-19

📖 Matt 4.2-11, 25-41  
📖 Rev 20.10

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## Section 14 – The Second Advent of Christ

### The Second Advent of Christ

We believe in that “Blessed Hope”, the personal, imminent, pre-tribulation and pre-millennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the air, for His Church.

- After the seven-year Tribulation, He will return to earth with His Saints, to establish His Millennial Kingdom.

📖 1 Thess 1.10 ; 4.13-18 ; 5.9  
📖 Zech 14.4-11

📖 Rev 3.10 ; 19.11-16 ; 20.1-6

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## Section 15 – The Eternal State

### The Eternal State

We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where, in conscious bliss, they await the first resurrection, when the spirit, soul, and body are reunited, to be glorified forever with the Lord.

📖 Luke 23.43  
📖 Rev 20.4-6  
📖 2 Cor 5.8

📖 Phil 1.23 ; 3.21  
📖 1 Thess 4.16-17

We believe that the souls of the unbelievers are, at death, in conscious misery, until the second resurrection, when the soul and body reunited, then shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment.

📖 Luke 16.19-26  
📖 Matt 25.41-46  
📖 2 Thes 1.7-10

📖 Jude .6-7  
📖 Mark 9.43-48  
📖 Rev 20.11-15 : 21.8

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## Section 16 – Human Sexuality

### Human Sexuality

We believe that God has ordained and commanded that the intimate sexual relationship be completely and only within the relationship of marriage, which is to be a lifelong commitment. We believe that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman.

We believe that any sexual activities outside of biblical marriage in any form, be it homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, incest, fornication, adultery, pornography, bigamy, or bestiality are perversions of God’s gift of sexuality to mankind.

We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one’s gender by surgery or appearance.

📖 Gen 2.24-25 ; 26.8-11  
📖 Exo 20.14 ; 22.19  
📖 Lev 18.1-30 ; 20.13  
📖 Rom 1.18-32 ; 7.2

📖 1 Cor 5.1 ; 6.9 ; 7.10  
📖 Eph 5.1-8,22-23  
📖 1 Thess 4.1-8  
📖 Heb 13.4

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## Section 17 – Sanctity of Human Life

### Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God and is under obligation to God to protect and preserve human life, with the State holding the right from God to exercise capital punishment toward those who usurp God’s authority by selfishly destroying any human life. We believe that human life begins at conception, and that the unborn child is a living human being.

We believe that abortion is the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life.

- We reject any teaching that abortions due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental or emotional well-being of the mother are acceptable.

## ARTICLE 4 – Membership

### Section 1 – Qualifications for Membership

- Qualifications for Membership** Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior may be received into its membership, having:
- Given evidence of a change of heart.
  - Been baptized by immersion since conversion.
  - Adopting the views of faith and practice held by the Wilton Bible Church.
- The Membership shall seek to carry out the objectives of this church, as outlined in Article 2.
- It is understood to be a responsibility of the members, as God directs and enables, to:
- Have faithful attendance
  - Give financial support
  - Serve
- God expects a submissive attitude toward those in authority in the church.

### Section 2 – Procedure for Receiving Members

- Procedure for Receiving Members**
- 1 Each applicant for membership shall be requested to read and accept the Constitution of this church.
  - 2 The applicant for membership shall submit the application form provided by the church for this purpose to the pastor.
  - 3 The applicant for membership shall appear before the Board of Elders.
    - Upon satisfactory examination, the applicant shall be recommended to the church for a vote of acceptance.
    - The Board of Elders shall make special provision for membership of children after their profession of faith and baptism.
      - The Pastor shall determine the degree of the child's sincerity and understanding for baptism and membership.
  - 4 Members shall be received by not less than 2/3 [two-thirds] majority vote of members present in a regular church service.
  - 5 An approved applicant having membership in another church will have a letter of acceptance sent to the former church to avoid dual membership. The church office can provide this service.

### Section 3 – Termination of Membership

- Termination of Membership** *Following are reasons and steps for removal of membership:*
- 1 By death
  - 2 Church letters will be granted, upon request, to departing members who are in good and regular standing in the church, and who can be recommended by the Pastor and the Board of Elders.
  - 3 By removal
    - Any member having united with another church thereby automatically ceases to be a member of this church, and his name shall be removed from the roll.
    - Any member not attending any of the meetings of the church for a period of 1 [one] year, with reason, and otherwise inactive, may be removed from membership upon recommendation of the Board of Elders.
    - Members whose whereabouts are unknown, or who have not been in faithful attendance for a period of 3 [three] months or longer without good reason, shall be placed on the Inactive Membership List.

- Faithful attendance shall be interpreted as attendance a majority of weeks within any quarter.
  - Inactive members shall not be eligible to vote.
- 4 By exclusion
- To safeguard the testimony of this church, any member who in life or teaching violates the principles of this church or its Constitution, shall be subject to discipline.
    - According to the pattern given in Matt 18.15-17
    - In the spirit taught in Gal 6.1
    - Discipline is necessary lest the “whole lump should be leavened”.
  - All discipline shall be administered by the Board of Elders.

## ARTICLE 5 – Government

- Government**
- The government of this church shall be vested in its membership.
- Authority is delegated to the Board of Elders, which shall be duly elected by the membership.
- The Board of Elders shall be limited in the exercise of authority by the Constitution and By-laws of this church.
- They shall designate to other officers, staff, and committees their several responsibilities and require accountability.

### Section 1 – Elders

- Elders**
- QUALIFICATIONS** – Each member of the Board of Elders must:
- Be an active member of this church for at least 1 [one] year.
  - Manifest the Fruit-of-the-Spirit
    - 📖 *Gal 5.22-26*
  - Possess qualifications described in:
    - 📖 *1 Tim 3.1-7*
    - 📖 *Titus 1.6-9*
  - Failure to maintain the qualifications or the spirit of this Constitution shall be cause for dismissal by a vote of the Board of Elders or the membership.
- ELECTION** –
- There shall be no fixed number of Elders, but such as is deemed as necessary.
  - They shall be elected for a period of 3 [three] years, so arranged that a majority will not go out of office at the same time.
  - No Board Member shall serve more than 2 [two] consecutive terms.
- DUTIES** -
- The Board of Elders has the ruling, administration, and control of all spiritual welfare of the church.
    - 📖 *Heb 13.7, 17*
    - 📖 *1Tim 5.17*
  - They are to give themselves primarily to the Word of God and prayer.
  - All spiritual matters are to be referred to them for final authority.
  - The Board of Elders shall constitute the membership, nominating, and pulpit committees.
  - At the first meeting of the fiscal year, they shall elect their own officers.
  - At any meeting, 51% [fifty-one percent] attendance shall be required for a quorum.
  - They shall establish policies and determine practices for the church.
  - They shall hear and consider all reports and recommendations submitted by pastors, committees, and staff.
  - They shall assist the Pastor in the administering of the ordinances.
  - They shall appoint and remove such non-pastoral staff as necessary for the administration and spiritual welfare of the church.
    - Their goal shall be to have only members of the church in regular teaching responsibilities.
    - Exceptions will be handled by the Board of Elders.
    - While exercising general oversight of all financial matters and church property,



they may delegate various responsibilities to other.

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## Section 2 – Pastor and Pastoral Staff

### Pastor and Pastoral Staff

*[...including Associate Pastor(s), Music Director, School Principal, etc.]*

**QUALIFICATIONS** – These shall meet the qualifications of an Elder and shall become members of the church.

 1 Tim 3.1-7

### **ELECTION** –

- These shall be elected for an indeterminate term.
- Selection of a name will be made by the Board of Elders.
- Confirmed by the members of the church.
  - At a special business meeting.
  - Minimum 2 [two] week notice.
- Only 1 [one] candidate shall be considered at a time.
- $\frac{3}{4}$  [three-fourths] affirmative vote of all voting members present is necessary for a confirmation or dismissal.
  - Vote of the membership is NOT required when the dismissal is the result of discipline action by the Board of Elders.
- When termination is by resignation or request of the Board of Elders, there shall be 30 [thirty] day notice.
  - In the case of doctrinal infidelity or immoral conduct, the Board of Elders will dismiss immediately.
  - Otherwise, changes in the above will be by mutual agreement.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES** -

- The Pastor shall be a member of the Board of Elders, and shall be an ex-officio member of all other boards and committees.
- He shall arrange for and/or conduct all regular services of the church.
- The responsibilities of the pastoral staff shall be determined by the Pastor, under advisement of the Board of Elders.

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## Section 3 – Deacons

### Deacons

**QUALIFICATIONS** – Each deacon must:

- Be an active member of this church for at least 1 [one] year.
- Manifest the Fruit-of-the-Spirit

 1 Tim 3.8-13

**APPOINTMENT** - These shall be appointed by the Board of Elders.

**DUTIES** – Various duties shall be assigned to these members to allow the Board of Elders to care for ministering to the spiritual welfare of the church.

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## Section 4 – Staff and Committees

### Staff and Committees

The Board of Elders shall appoint various staff [not pastoral] and committee chairs.

These shall perform tasks related to financial and membership records, and various ministries of the church, solely in accordance with the duties and powers specifically delegated by the Board of Elders.

It shall be their responsibility to report to the Board of Elders annually, and at such times as necessary.

Committee chairs shall select their committees:

- From within the church.
- With the approval of the Board of Elders.

## ARTICLE 6 – Meetings

### Section 1 – Annual Business Meeting

**Annual Business Meeting** This shall be held at a designated time in June.

This meeting shall be for:

- The election of all church officers.
- Reports from various staff and committees.
- Such other business as shall be necessary.

### Section 2 – Congregational Meetings

**Congregational Meetings** All other business meetings of the corporate body shall be called by:

- The Pastor
- The Board-of-Elders
- A petition signed by 30% [thirty percent] of the active voting members.

These meetings shall be announced from the pulpit 2 [two] Sundays previous, stating the nature of the business to be transacted.

### Section 3 – Quorum and Voting

**Quorum and Voting** All members present, at the Annual Business Meeting or a special business meeting shall constitute a quorum.

Voting privileges are restricted to active members who have passed their 18<sup>th</sup> [eighteenth] birthday.

Motions shall be considered passed with a majority vote, except where otherwise specified.

- When less than 50% [fifty percent] of the active membership is present, 2/3 [two-thirds] of the voting members shall constitute a majority.

All voting shall be by ballot unless recommended by the Board of Elders, and/or recommended by the membership.

Roberts' "Rules of Order" shall be followed for any parliamentary questions not covered by this Constitution.

## ARTICLE 7 – Commissioning And Ordaining

**Commissioning and Ordaining** When, in the judgment of the Board of Elders, a member, or in special cases, a non-member, is called to the Christian ministry, it shall be within the authority of the Board of Elders to call and conduct a Council of Examination.

Such candidates must adhere to the doctrinal statement of this Constitution.

If approved by the Council:

- A missionary candidate may be commended for a commissioning service.
- A pastoral candidate may be commended for ordination.

An appropriate public service shall be held before the church.

## ARTICLE 8 – Financial Policy

### Section 1 – Giving

**Giving** The regular financial needs of the church shall be met by voluntary offerings and contributions of its members and friends.

The church shall not receive for, nor dispense funds to any individual or organization where there is a reason to question their doctrinal standards, as compared to those of this church.

- Questions will be settled by the Board of Elders

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## Section 2 – Property

### Property

The congregation by a 2/3 [two-thirds] vote of the voting members present, at a regularly called business meeting, shall determine whether to purchase, sell, lease, or mortgage church or real property.

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## Section 3 – Dissolution Clause

### Dissolution Clause

In the event of dissolution, net assets after paying all debts shall be distributed to the Independent Fundamental Churches of America [IFCA].

- Providing that at the time of distribution, the IFCA is exempt from federal taxes based on income.
  - Otherwise, said assets shall be distributed to any fund, foundation, or corporation, organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes, based on the Word of God, and which is exempt from federal tax based on income.

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## ARTICLE 9 – Organizational Membership

### Organization Membership

The Wilton Bible Church, having testified to being in hearty sympathy with the aims and purposes of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America [IFCA], having complied with all the requirements of the Constitution, and having fully subscribed to the Doctrinal Statement of the IFCA, was received into the membership and full fellowship in November, 1950.

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## ARTICLE 10 – Amendments

### Amendments

This Constitution may be changed at any business meeting, providing:

- Notice of such change is presented in writing.
- Has been announced from the pulpit 2 [two] previous Sundays.
- Change is agreed to by 2/3 [two-thirds] vote of the voting members present.

Such a motion for change must be present by the Board of Elders.

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## Document Data

### Document Data

*This document represents the Constitution as approved by the membership in accordance with the outlined requirements. It has been re-formatted in Revision 4 for better clarity and ease of use. A copy of Revision 3 remains on file for review.*

Rev	Approval Date	Doc By	Date	Doc Approved	Date
4	30 Nov 2008	J. Schlaegel	12 Dec 08		

### Constitution History

Revision history for Wilton Bible Church Constitution.

Rev	Approval Date
0	19 April 1989
1	19 August 1992
2	6 December 1995
3	18 May 1997
4	30 November 2008