

Constitution of New City Baptist Church

PREAMBLE

We, the members of New City Baptist Church, do ordain and establish the following Articles, to which we voluntarily and solemnly submit ourselves. We also humbly thank the churches of the Sovereign Grace Fellowship and the Reformed Baptist Church of Grand Rapids and Grace Fellowship Church of West Toronto for their help and assistance in the production of this document.

ARTICLE 1: NAME

The name of this church shall be New City Baptist Church (herein referred to as “New City,” “the church,” or “this church.”)

ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE

The purpose of this church is to glorify and delight in the God of the Bible by maintaining and promoting His worship, by evangelizing sinners, and by edifying His saints. Therefore, we are committed to:

- The proclamation of God’s perfect Word and His glorious gospel of grace through the entire world.
- The defence of that faith “the Lord has once for all entrusted to us, his people.” (Jude 3)
- The pure and faithful celebration of the ordinances of the New Covenant.

ARTICLE 3: ARTICLES OF FAITH

The church accepts the Holy Scriptures as the only supreme and complete authority in all matters of doctrine and practice. We also recognize that certain Confessions of Faith can be helpful in expressing those things we believe.

The following is the Church’s basic confession of faith to which every member must subscribe without reservation:

1. The Bible is the inspired, infallible, completed Word of God without error in its original manuscripts.
2. There is only one, living and true God, composed of three Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; each eternally coexistent and fully God.
3. God is sovereign over all creation, and He directs all things in accordance with His eternal, immutable purpose.
4. The first man was created perfect, but wilfully disobeyed God, severing his communion with God, thus leaving his descendants—all humanity—at enmity with God and spiritually dead in their sin.
5. For no reason, other than to glorify His own Self, God in His eternal purpose chose to reconcile a multitude of people to Himself through the Person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. For this multitude Jesus Christ took on the form of a man and became their perfect Substitute on the cross, satisfying divine justice on their behalf. His sacrifice purchased all things necessary to ensure their eternal salvation.
6. Although God commands people everywhere to repent, such is the power of sin that people will not of themselves obey this command. Therefore God, determining to save those for whom Christ died, draws them by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit; who renews their minds, hearts, and wills so that they freely trust in Christ.
7. Saving faith—by its very nature—will always be accompanied by repentance, which involves the recognition of, sorrow over, and the turning away from all known sin, with a new desire to live in obedience to Jesus Christ.

8. Jesus Christ alone is the Head of the one true Christian Church, which is made up of only those people who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. All these are presently indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and by their words and deeds show their allegiance to Christ.
9. There are two ordinances which have been instituted by the Lord Jesus: the baptism of believers and the Lord's Supper. Neither of these has, in itself, the power to save people from their sins, but both are outward symbols of inward, spiritual realities.
10. God, in His eternal purpose, has also appointed a day of judgment; a day in which He will judge all humanity in righteousness by Jesus Christ. Every human who has ever lived will appear before Christ to give an account of their life and to receive either everlasting life in the presence of God, or everlasting torment in hell.

More complete statements of the doctrines believed and taught by the Church are found in the historic document known as the Second London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689. Elders and deacons must fully subscribe to this confession. This is a more comprehensive statement of the Church's doctrinal position.

However, although this is an historic and widely used Confession, there are some sections that are recognized as being controversial, and where exact agreement is not required. We are not making a statement about the accuracy of these sections, but we simply believe that tolerance should be given to those who differ from the Confession at these points.

The paragraphs are:

Chapter 10, paragraph 3. The salvation of the mentally incompetent and infants. Godly Christians differ with one another on this point.

Chapter 22, paragraphs 7 and 8: This deals with the Sabbath. We recognize that many godly Christians hold to a sabbatarian position. Others, equally godly and informed, do not.

Chapter 19. The Law of God. Many would take the position that the believer is under Christ's law, rather than the Ten Commandments. We are happy to accept people who hold either view.

ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the church of Jesus Christ is based on salvation.

4.1. Basic Requirements to be a Member

Any person shall be eligible for membership who:

- Professes allegiance to and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ
- Has been baptized in water upon profession of their faith¹
- Is not under the biblically warranted corrective discipline of a genuine church²
- Expresses substantial agreement with the teachings, aims and organization of this church³

¹ The only form of baptism that we practice is baptism by immersion in water for we feel that this most accurately reflects the Biblical data and imagery. We are willing to consider for membership, however, those that have been baptized by other means (such as pouring, sprinkling) after (or, "at") their profession of faith in Jesus. Our conscience does not permit us, however, to accept into membership any who were baptized as an infant (or in any other way unknowingly) as we believe the Bible teaches this ordinance must always follow faith in Christ. Recognizing that good Christian people differ on this aspect of baptism, we will consider someone who is trusting in Christ and looks to their infant baptism as sufficient as a potential "Adherent." See Section 4.8.

² Matt. 18:17,18; 1 Cor. 5:11-13; 2 Thess. 3:6,14,15; 3 John 9,10; 2 Cor. 2:6-8.

4.2. Method of Becoming a Member

- (i) First, notice is given to an elder by the individual that they would like to become a member of New City in one of two ways:
 - a. By verbal request. Any person who meets the above mentioned requirements may make their desire for membership known to one of the elders.
 - b. By letter of transfer. Any person who meets the above mentioned requirements, and is coming from another evangelical church desiring to unite with this church may present a letter of recommendation from the other church to the elders.
2. Second, the applicant is interviewed by the elders and congregation.
 - a. A minimum of two elders will meet with the applicant, who will be questioned as to their basic Christian experience, doctrinal beliefs and seriousness of intention to wholeheartedly support the total ministry of this church. At this meeting, the elders will invite the applicant to provide a written testimony for distribution to the members explaining their understanding and experience of the Gospel of Christ. This written testimony is intended to promote a proper evaluation of the

³ Mastery of church confessions is not required of any new disciple before he is admitted to church membership. Such a requirement would violate the order of Matt. 28:19,20, which instructs us to disciple, to baptize, and then to teach the baptized disciple to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded. It is necessary, however, that any disciple applying for membership manifest a willingness to be taught and possess substantial agreement with what they already know concerning the church's doctrine and government.

potential member and to encourage knowledgeable fellowship with them. The elders may request further clarification and/or expansion of this written testimony before proceeding with the application process. The purpose of this process will be to determine whether or not the applicant meets the qualifications as stated in Section 4.1 of this Constitution.

- b. If the applicant has been a member of another church, the elders will investigate their standing in that church before they are accepted as a member in this church. Where it is possible and appropriate, a letter of transfer will be requested. Reception by transfer does not negate any of the requirements for becoming a member in this assembly.
 - c. Upon the reception of an acceptable written testimony, the elders may, at their discretion, ask for another meeting with the applicant. Otherwise, the written testimony will be distributed to all members at least two weeks (14 days) prior to the membership vote. This time period is for the purpose of enabling the members to read his testimony and to raise any questions or objections concerning the applicant's qualifications. Members are expected to consider this a personal duty of the most serious nature. They are expected to voice privately to the elders all questions or objections that have not yet been resolved, after personal contact has been made with the applicant (Matt. 18:15ff; Lev. 19:16, 17).
3. Finally, the applicant is publicly received into the church membership.

If the elders are satisfied that the applicant meets the qualifications for membership, and any objections raised by the membership are effectually

resolved, the person will be received at a stated meeting of the church (Matt. 3:6-12; Acts 9:26, 27; 1 John 4:1; Rev. 2:2).

4.3. Reaffirmation of Membership

It will be the custom of this church that all members present will renew their membership promise at the induction of any new members, using this time to evaluate how well they have lived out their commitment and to thoughtfully consider how to fulfill their promise even more.

4.4. Termination of Membership

- (i) By transfer. Upon recommendation by the elders, letters of transfer will be granted by the church to members who apply for them, providing they are in good standing at the time of the application. Letters of transfer shall only be given to other evangelical churches.
- (ii) By request. A member may request to remove their membership from the church. This may be done at any time. All those who so remove their memberships must go through the original application process if they want to rejoin the church again.
- (iii) By exclusion. Any member who is habitually absent from the stated meetings of the church for a period of six months or more, or is unwilling to settle matters of private offence with others in a biblical manner, or requests severance of membership may be excluded from the membership at the discretion of the elders, subject to the approval of the members.
- (iv) By excommunication. It is right and in harmony with the Scriptures for the elders, upon approval of the congregation, to exclude from this fellowship any person who persists in holding false doctrine or who

obviously and persistently lives inconsistently with their Christian profession or who persists in disturbing the peace and unity of the Church (see Matthew 18:15ff; 1 Corinthians 5:1ff; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; Romans 16:17).

4.5. Blessings of Membership

Membership in this church includes the following privileges:

- (i) Participation in the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor. 11:18-26, 33).
- (ii) Attendance at, appropriate participation in, and voting during church business meetings (Acts 6:1-6 [cf. Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:13-14]; 1 Cor. 5:4-7; 13 [cf. 1 Cor. 1:2]).
- (iii) Labouring to extend God's Kingdom in ministries of the church (as one's gifts, graces and calling make appropriate) (1 Cor. 12:4-27 [cf. 1 Cor. 1:2]; Eph. 4:7; 11-12; 16; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).
- (iv) Reception of the committed oversight and care of the pastors of the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2-3).
- (v) Reception of the committed care and discipline (as needed) of the membership of the church (Acts 6:1-2 [cf. Acts 2:41; 5:13-14; 9:26]; 1 Cor. 5:4-5 [cf. 1 Cor. 1:2]; Gal. 6:10).

4.6. Expectations of Members

There are also biblical expectations upon every member:

- (i) All members are expected and encouraged to attend the corporate meetings of the church whenever possible.⁴
- (ii) Each member is expected to regularly read the Bible and pray, and to tell others what God has done for them in Jesus Christ.
- (iii) All members are expected to support the church financially by systematically giving a generous proportion of their income as the Lord directs them according to the principle laid down in 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8, 9. The tithe (ten percent of one's gross personal income) is not imposed on the people of God as a tax but is strongly urged as an excellent starting place in our worship through basic giving. Added to this should be gifts and offerings according to one's ability and the willingness of his heart (2 Cor. 8:1-5; Exod. 36:2-7).
- (iv) All the members of this church are required to obey the teachings of Scripture in respect to the life and government of the family. The husband is the God-appointed head of the family and must rule his household with gentleness, love, wisdom, and firmness (Eph. 5:25ff; 1 Tim. 3:4, 5; 1 Pet. 3:7). The wife must be in Scriptural subjection to her husband in all things (Eph. 5:22-24; 1 Pet. 3:1-6). The husband and wife must bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, being careful to not provoke them to anger (Eph. 6:1-4). This includes setting a godly example before them, consistently instructing them from the Scriptures (Deut. 6:4-9), and administering discipline (Prov. 13:24; 22:15; 29:15; Heb. 12:7).
- (v) It is the duty of every Christian, as an individual and as a member of a local church, to labour by prayer, word, and deed for the extension of the kingdom of God in ever widening circles, beginning at home and stretching forth to the ends of the earth (Isa. 54:1-3; Acts 1:8). Therefore, every member of this church is expected prayerfully to recognize and to seize every opportunity to bear witness to their faith in Christ, both by consistent Christian conduct and by the testimony of their lips.
- (vi) Each member of the church is required to render loyal obedience to all the moral precepts of God's Word in their daily life (Rom. 8:3, 4; 1 Cor. 9:20, 21; James 2:12). If God has not condemned or forbidden a practice in His Word, a Christian is at liberty to participate in it. The exercise of Christian liberty, however, must at all times be governed by an earnest desire to walk in the fear of God and to glorify Him in all things (1 Pet. 1:17; 1 Cor. 10:31), a loving regard for the consciences of weaker brothers and sisters (1 Cor. 8:9; Rom. 15:1-3), a compassion for the lost (1 Cor. 9:19-22), and a zealous regard for the health of one's own soul (Rom. 13:14; 1 Cor. 6:12; 9:24-27; Gal. 5:22, 23; 1 Pet. 2:16).
- (vii) All who come into the membership of this church are expected to recognize and to submit to the authority of the overseers of the church (1 Cor. 16:15, 16; 1 Thess. 5:12, 13; Heb. 13:17). This responsibility will include willingly scheduling an oversight meeting with (an) elder(s) when requested.
- (viii) We who have been joined to Christ by faith and are members of this church are also members one of another (Rom. 12:5). With this privileged relationship come particular responsibilities. We must maintain mutual transparency and honesty (Eph. 4:25). We must

⁴ The term "corporate meetings" refers to: (1) The Lord's Day corporate worship service (the Lord's Supper, and baptisms); (2) Midweek prayer service; (3) Church business meetings; and, (4) Any special meetings that the elders shall occasionally deem necessary.

rejoice in each other's honour and bear one another's sorrows (1 Cor. 12:26). We must discreetly confess our faults one to another (James 5:16). We must mutually oversee each other, faithfully admonish and encourage one another, avoid all backbiting and gossip, and keep in strict confidence all matters which the elders determine are of private concern to the church (Prov. 11:13; Matt. 18:15ff; 1 Thess. 5:14, 15; Heb. 3:12, 13; 10:24, 25). Also, we must, when necessary, help meet the material needs of our brethren (Gal. 6:10; James 2:14-16; 1 John 3:16-18).

4.7. Records of Membership

The elders shall keep a file of all past and present members.

4.8. Adherents

4.8.1. The Definition of an Adherent

An adherent is a Christian who for theological reasons is unable to comply with our requirements for membership, but who still desires to place themselves under the spiritual care and oversight of this church and its elders.

4.8.2. The Benefits and Limitations of Being an Adherent

An adherent will receive all the blessings of membership explained in Section 4.5 with the following exceptions:

- (i) Though they will be welcome in members-only meetings, they will not enjoy voting privileges on motions being presented.
- (ii) They will be restricted from the offices of deacon and elder.

- (iii) They will be restricted from any teaching role in the church.

4.8.3. The Requirements and Process for Becoming an Adherent

The requirements and process for becoming an adherent are the same as those outlined for members in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 respectively with the following exceptions:

- (i) One may apply to become an adherent who is paedobaptist by theological conviction and has therefore not been baptized as a believer. An applicant in this category must meet with elders of the church on at least one occasion for the expressed purpose of discussing the doctrine of baptism before they may be accepted as an adherent.
- (ii) One may apply to become an adherent who is not persuaded of the "doctrines of grace" as presented in the 1689 Confession of Faith. An applicant in this category must meet with elders of the church on at least one occasion for the expressed purpose of discussing the doctrines of salvation before he/she may be accepted as an adherent.

4.8.4. Expectations of an Adherent

The expectations upon adherents will be the same as those placed upon members in Section 4.6.

ARTICLE 5: THE ORDINANCES

5.1. Introduction

We believe that there are two ordinances that Jesus Christ has commanded us to observe, namely baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is a public testimony in which the believer identifies themselves with the Saviour, who died, was buried and rose again. The Lord's Supper is a visible, symbolic reminder that Jesus Christ gave His body and shed His blood on Calvary for our redemption.

5.2. Regarding the Lord's Supper (Communion)

All who profess faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour are welcome to join this church in taking of the Lord's Table. However, known unbelievers or children without proper understanding must not partake otherwise they eat and drink judgment upon themselves.

5.3. Believer's Baptism

Following the direction of the Scriptures we practice baptism of believers by immersion and only admit into membership those who have testified to their faith in the waters of baptism. Any person who professes allegiance to and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and whose life gives tangible evidence that this is the case may make known their desire to be baptized to one of the elders. A minimum of two elders will then meet with the applicant who will be examined concerning their Christian experience, and understanding of the meaning of baptism.

ARTICLE 6: OFFICERS

6.1. General Statement

Jesus Christ alone is the Head of His Church (Col.1:18). He has ordained that individual churches should be governed by Himself through officers whom He appoints, who are endowed by His Spirit with the gifts and graces needed to accomplish their work. Christ has ordained that local churches are to be administered by elders and deacons. Beside these two offices the Scriptures acknowledge no office which continues in the church today (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-13).

6.2. General Prerequisites

- (i) All officers of this church must be members, except as provided in Section 6.7.

Any individual set apart to one of these offices must be able to conscientiously affirm their agreement with the church's Confessions of Faith and Constitution. If they should at any time move from this position, they would be under spiritual and moral obligation to immediately make that fact known to the elders in an orderly manner.

- (ii) While we acknowledge the valuable gifts which God has given women and the valuable assistance they may render to the officers of the church (Rom. 16:1-6; Phil. 4:3; 1 Tim. 3:11), the Bible prohibits women from holding the office of elder in the church (1 Cor. 14:33b-35; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:1-7). Also, in keeping with 1 Tim 2:11-15, where a woman is forbidden to teach or have authority over a man in a church worship context, no woman shall be appointed to a teaching ministry of the church where adult men would be under her ministry. Nevertheless, we acknowledge and encourage the

valuable gifts and assistance of women in the formal instruction of children and other women (Titus 2:3-5), in the informal instruction even of men (1 Cor. 11:5; Acts 18:26), and in the diaconal and benevolent ministries of the church (1 Tim. 3:11; 5:9, 10).

6.3. Elders

- (i) Those who have been called of God to rule and teach in the church are called elders, pastors, or bishops. These are three interchangeable names designating one and the same office in a New Testament church (Acts 20:17, 28; Eph. 4:11, 12; Titus 1:5, 7).
- (ii) Anyone desiring the office of an elder must evidence to God's people the personal, domestic, and ministerial qualifications that are set forth in the Scriptures (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).
- (iii) Because the authority of the elders of the church is human authority exercised in the house of God, it has both high prerogatives and important limitations (see Appendix)
- (iv) One crucial aspect of the elders' duties is personally overseeing the flock of God. Fulfillment of this duty shall include regularly and systematically meeting with each member of the church on at least an annual basis, except when physically impossible due to distance.
- (v) Elders will be maintained in material necessities and disentangled from the cares of another vocation according to their gifts, the needs and capability of the church, and the direction of Christ her Head (1 Tim. 5:17ff).
- (vi) Though a plurality of elders is the New Testament norm for every church, the New Testament does not specify the number of elders each church should have, nor does

it dictate the length of an elder's term of office. One truly called to this office is usually called to it for life. He is a gift of Christ to the church. Only when an elder fails to meet the necessary scriptural qualifications for his office does he disqualify himself from being an elder.

recognized by means of that individual's possession of those graces and gifts required by Scripture for the particular office and his own conviction that the Lord is calling him to minister in that office. The recognition of officers is a matter of such importance that it should never be dealt with without much prayerful waiting upon God, an honest perusal of the relevant passages of Scripture, and a frank evaluation of those who are being considered. Each member of the church has a spiritual responsibility to be intelligently informed regarding these matters.

ii. Procedure of Appointment

The recognition of those whom the Lord has appointed to bear office in this church is executed in three steps: nomination, election, and ordination.

(i) Nomination. Nominations to either office are made by the eldership.

6.4. Deacons

- (i) Deacons are responsible primarily to administer the benevolent concerns of the church as well as its business affairs (Acts 6:1-4). They must fulfill the duties of their office in cooperation with, and in subjection to, the elders.
- (ii) The number of deacons shall not be fixed. The church shall set apart according to its need those who evidence the scriptural qualifications for that office (Acts 6:1-7; 1 Tim. 3:8-13). This office is open to both qualified men and women.

a. Appointment of Officers

i. General Statement

The appointment of elders and deacons is the prerogative of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. However, He has ordained that each local church exercise the responsibility of recognizing those whom He is appointing to be elders and deacons in that particular church. Elders and deacons are ordained to office by the laying on of hands by the eldership (1 Tim. 4:14). This is an expression of approval for which the elders are responsible (1 Tim. 5:22). Therefore, each officer must have the approval, not only of the church as a whole, but of the eldership in particular. The Lord's appointment of an individual to either of these offices is

- (ii) Election. Any church meeting for the election of officers shall be announced on two consecutive Lord's Days previous to its being held. The names of all nominees shall be separately discussed and voted upon. During the discussion the nominee under consideration and members of his immediate family shall leave the presence of the church until the written ballot is taken. The scriptural qualifications shall be read and expounded, and the nominee's qualifications openly discussed in the fear of God and with due respect for the reputation of the nominee. The church should seek unity of mind concerning each nominee, but should such unity not be fully realized, no fewer than three-fourths of those ballots cast shall be required for election. This vote shall take place by written ballot subsequent to a full and free discussion oriented to the relevant Scriptural passages. The vote shall stand as it is first given in the written ballot.

- (iii) Ordination. Following the election of an officer there shall be a portion of a regular worship service set aside at which time the officer shall be ordained by the laying on of the hands of the eldership. This solemn act should always be accompanied by the special prayers of the whole church (Acts 13:1-3). The laying on of the elders' hands shall signify their approval of an officer-elect. Should the elders be unable to conscientiously ordain an officer-elect (1 Tim. 5:22), they shall inform each member of their reasons in an appropriate manner.

6.6 Review of Officers

- 6.6.1 Officers shall hold office only as long as they meet the biblical qualifications for their office in the esteem of the church. The church, therefore, shall reconfirm (or withdraw) its confidence in the biblical qualifications of each officer four years after their ordination and every fourth year thereafter.
- 6.6.2 There may arise reasons that would require an officer to be reviewed before the regularly scheduled time. Such a review meeting may be called by a majority of the elders (or a majority of the other elders in the case of an elder). The members may also request such a meeting. This request must be set forth in writing with the signatures of one-fourth of the total voting membership of the church. It must be presented to the elders, who shall in a timely and constitutional way (see Section 6.6.3 below) call such a meeting.

- 6.6.3 Any meeting for the review of an officer shall be announced on two consecutive Lord's Days previous to its being held. During the discussion, the officer under consideration and members of his immediate family shall leave the presence of the church until the written ballot is taken. The scriptural qualifications shall be read and expounded, and the officer's qualifications openly discussed in the fear of God and with due respect for the reputation of the officer. Any member who publicly suggests in such a meeting that the officer being reviewed is unqualified for his office must have previously spoken with the officer himself and informed the elders of the church of his concerns (1 Tim. 5:19). He must also present biblical and factual warrant for his concerns at the review meeting. Just as it is wrong for a church to retain an officer who is not biblically qualified, so also it is rebellion against the head of the church to reject an officer for any but biblical grounds. Additionally, any officer about whom such concerns are raised must be permitted, if he wishes, to return to the meeting and defend himself. The church should seek unity of mind concerning the matter, but should such unity not be fully realized, no fewer than three-fourths of those ballots cast shall be required for the confirmation of an officer in his office. Any officer failing of confirmation no longer holds office in the church. This vote shall take place by written ballot; and the vote shall stand as it is first given in the written ballot.

6.6.4 An officer may resign his office without prejudice if he does so in an orderly fashion and for good and valid reasons. This resignation together with its reasons and the date upon which he wishes his resignation to be effective shall be submitted in writing to the elders of the Church.
Loss of a Plurality of Elders

6.7.1 This Constitution assumes, and the norms of biblical church order require, that a plurality of elders oversee this local church. Therefore, if at any period in the life of the church there no longer exists a plurality of elders in office and this lack cannot in a timely way be supplied, the remaining elder (or the church, if there are no elders) shall seek the temporary oversight of the pastors of a trusted sister church holding as its doctrinal standard the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689. The purposes of such an arrangement are to provide pastoral care and leadership in the recognition of a plurality of elders.

6.7.2 When an eldership meeting this requirement and willing to undertake these responsibilities is located, the church shall within a reasonable period of time officially place itself under this eldership. If the church has a remaining elder, this eldership shall function as his fellow elders. This action shall be taken by a written ballot at a properly called meeting of the church. A three-fourths majority of those present and voting is necessary for such an action. The recognition of the oversight of such an eldership shall be confirmed (or failing a three-fourths majority withdrawn) in the same way at the annual meeting of the church in succeeding years. When a plurality of resident elders is raised up, the oversight arrangement here described shall immediately cease.

ARTICLE 7: FINANCES

The organization of this church shall be carried on without purpose of financial gain for its members. Any profits or other financial

gains to this church shall be used in promoting its objectives as outlined above.

This church depends entirely on the prayers, personal services, and gifts of God's people. Before the annual business meeting the church board will prepare a detailed budget of the proposed expenditures for the coming year. Once the budget is approved by a majority vote of the congregation it will be the basis for the utilization of church funds.

ARTICLE 8: AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended, modified, or rescinded by a two-thirds majority of church members voting at any regular or special meetings for business. Such amendments must be submitted to the church membership two weeks prior to the meeting by a public and written announcement. Any considerations for by-laws will follow the same procedure.

ARTICLE 9: CHURCH MEETINGS

9.1. The Annual Business Meeting

An annual business meeting of the church shall be held in May or June of each year. At this annual meeting, a report shall be given by the elders which shall contain an account of the membership of the church. The status of those whose membership involves unusual circumstances will be reviewed. A financial report for the previous year and the proposed budget for the coming year shall also be presented. These reports including the proposed budget shall be approved by a vote of the church.

9.2. The Occasional Members Meetings

Church meetings may be called by the pastors or when one-fourth of the voting members make a written request for such a meeting. This request must state the reason for the meeting, be signed by one-fourth of the

members in good standing, and must be presented to the pastors, who shall in turn make the proper announcement of the meeting. Every meeting at which business is to be transacted shall be announced at regular services for at least two successive Sundays. Other business meetings at which there is no business transacted by vote may be called at the discretion of the pastors without previous notice.

decision relevant to the Board of Trustees. The voting members of this board shall serve as the legal representatives of the church.

9.3. Voting

All members except those suspended by a vote of the church shall constitute the voting membership of the church (see sections 4.1–4.3). All voting members should regard their presence at a duly called church meeting with the same seriousness with which they would regard their attendance at a stated service of worship. It shall be our goal to prayerfully discern the mind of God so that in all matters of church business it may be said of us, as it was said of that church business meeting recorded in Acts 6, that this thing “pleased the whole multitude.” However, in situations in which this unanimity is not realized, no less than a two-thirds majority of those voting will make a resolution valid. In other matters wherein the Constitution requires a different proportionate vote, this two-thirds figure will be overridden by the express statements of the Constitution regarding those categories of business. The voting members present at any properly convened meeting of the church shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The elders shall cancel any previously announced business meeting of the church if through an act of God (such as inclement weather) an unusually large proportion of the members of the church cannot be present.

ARTICLE 10: TRUSTEES

In order to “render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s,” this church shall have an official Board of Trustees. The official board shall consist of the resident pastors (elders) as voting members and deacons as non-voting members. In the absence of a resident plurality of elders, both the eldership and the deaconate must approve any