

Constitution of the Maranatha Baptist Church of Phillips

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this church shall be Maranatha Baptist Church of Phillips. It is incorporated in Wisconsin, Price County, as of June 1992.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of this church shall be to glorify God through evangelism (reaching), religious instruction (teaching), the administration of the New Testament ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper and regular worship services (preaching).

ARTICLE III - COOPERATION

This church shall be an independent, and autonomous church, subject only to Jesus Christ, the Head of the church. The government of this church shall be vested in its assembled membership through its duly elected officers and shall never be subject to the control of any ecclesiastical body. No denominational or associational representatives shall ever sit in judgment over its affairs. This church has the right to associate or fellowship with other Biblical groups on a voluntary basis. There shall be no cooperation with any group that permits the presence of apostates or apostasy, or that endorses groups that permit the presence of apostates or apostasy.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 **Qualifications for Church Membership**

Each applicant for membership shall give evidence of having been born again, shall have been baptized by immersion, shall state his complete agreement with the Statement of Faith of this church, shall promise to uphold the principles of the Church Covenant, and shall agree to be governed as a church member by this Constitution and any By-laws or duly adopted rules of this church. No member shall retain membership in any secret society (as defined by the pastor and deacons). Prospective members shall be voted on by the congregation after having given a satisfactory statement of their salvation experience and upon recommendation by the pastor and deacons. A person meeting those qualifications may be admitted by:

- A **Baptism** - A person who gives testimony of his salvation and whose life gives evidence of a change of heart may be baptized upon vote of the church. Upon immersion, such a person shall be a member of the church.

- B **Letter** - A member of another Baptist church of like faith and practice may become a member of this church by having a letter sent from the former church stating that he/she is a member in good standing. He shall become a member when the church votes to accept him.

- C **Statement** - A person who testifies that he has been saved and baptized by immersion, and who by his life gives evidence of having been born again, may be received into the membership by a vote of the church.
- D **Restoration** - Any person who has been excluded from membership because of sin or a lack of attendance may be restored to membership when that person gives adequate proof that the error which led to his exclusion has been corrected. Such a person becomes a member when the church votes to accept him.

SECTION 2 **Duties of Members**

In order that persons applying for membership may be informed as to the duties of members, they shall have the Church Constitution presented to them, and they shall subscribe to it both in letter and in spirit. New converts or other candidates for membership who need it shall take a course in Baptist policy to be determined by the pastor and deacon-trustees. Members in good standing will strive to keep their covenant obligations. They will honor and esteem their pastor, pray regularly for him and assist him in carrying out the program of the church.

They will endeavor to preserve the unity of the church, and if at any time they find themselves opposed to the fundamental doctrines of the church, they will not seek to disrupt the fellowship but will quietly withdraw from its membership.

SECTION 3 **Dismissal of Members**

- A **Voluntary** - Members in good standing may at their own request have their church letter sent directly to the church with which they wish to unite.
- B **Exclusion** - The New Testament recognizes three principle causes for exclusion:
 1. Personal difficulties that are hindering the ministry and fellow-ship of the church (Matthew 18:15; II Thessalonians 3:6),
 2. Heresy in doctrine (Titus 3:10; II Timothy 2:14-18; II John 1:11),
 3. Immorality (I Corinthians 5).Any member who is guilty of any of these and who persists in the same may, after a fair hearing by the pastor and the deacons, be excluded from the membership by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.
- C **Absenteeism** - Members failing to support the church by their attendance within a period of three months without a legitimate cause (such support and cause to be defined by the pastor and deacons) may be removed from the church membership roll by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.

ARTICLE V - CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the public confession of our faith, having been immersed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We purpose, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to attend its services regularly; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to give faithfully of time and talent in its activities; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered us, to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations.

We also purpose to maintain family and private devotions; to train our children according to the Word of God; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealing, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct; to avoid all gossip, backbiting and unrighteous anger; to abstain from all forms of activity-including the sale and use of intoxicating beverages-which dishonor our Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior; and to give Him preeminence in all things.

We further purpose to encourage one another in the blessed hope of our Lord's return; to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and, mindful of the rules of our Savior, to seek it without delay.

We moreover purpose that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church of like faith and order where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word. If there is no such church, we shall seek, with the Lord's help, to establish one.

ARTICLE VI - STATEMENT OF FAITH

SECTION 1 **The Scriptures**

We believe in the authority and sufficiency of the Holy Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, as originally written; that it was verbally and plenary inspired and is the product of Spirit-controlled men, and therefore is infallible and inerrant in all matters of which it speaks.

We believe the Bible to be the true center of Christian unity and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creed and opinions shall be tried (II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:19-21).

SECTION 2 **The True God**

We believe there is one and only one living and true God, an infinite Spirit, the Maker and supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love. We believe that in the unity of the Godhead there are three Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (Exodus 20:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11).

SECTION 3 **The Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the Evil One until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; that He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the Agent in the new birth; and that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer (John 14:16,17; Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Genesis 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; Acts

5:30-32; John 3:5, 6; Ephesians 1:13, 14; Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; Romans 8:14, 16, 26, 27).

SECTION 4 The Devil, or Satan

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, the Devil; and that he was created by God as an angel but through pride and rebellion became the enemy of his Creator; that he became the unholy god of this age and the ruler of all the powers of darkness and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire (Matthew 4:1-11; II Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:10).

SECTION 5 Creation

We believe the Biblical account of the creation of the physical universe, angels and man; that this account is neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of God without any evolutionary process; that man was created by a direct work of God and not from previously existing forms of life; and that all men are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race (Genesis 1, 2; Colossians 1:16, 17; John 1:3).

SECTION 6 The Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in innocence (in the image and likeness of God) under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression Adam fell from his sinless and happy state, and all men sinned in him, in consequence of which all men are totally depraved, are partakers of Adam's fallen nature, and are sinners by nature and by conduct, and therefore are under just condemnation without defense or excuse (Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 3:10-19; 5:12, 19; 1:18, 32).

SECTION 7 The Virgin Birth

We believe that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can be born of woman, and that He is both the Son of God and God the Son (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14).

SECTION 8 Salvation

We believe that the salvation of sinners is divinely initiated and wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who, by the appointment of the Father, voluntarily took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin, and honored the divine law by His personal obedience, thus qualifying Himself to be our Savior; that by the shedding of His blood in His death He fully satisfied the just demands of a holy and righteous God regarding sin; that His sacrifice consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ the Lord bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; that having risen from the dead He is now enthroned in Heaven, and uniting in His wonderful Person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.

We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation. Repentance is a change of mind and purpose toward God, prompted by the Holy Spirit, and is an integral part of saving faith (Jonah 2:9; Ephesians 2:8; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24, 25; John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7, 8; Hebrews 2:14-17; Isaiah 53:4-7; I John 4:10; I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21; I Peter 2:24).

SECTION 9 Resurrection and Priesthood of Christ

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ and in His ascension into Heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of the Father as our High Priest, interceding for us (Matthew 28:6, 7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; I Corinthians 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6, 51; Acts 1:9-11; Revelation 3:21; Hebrews 8:6; 12:2; 7:25; I Timothy 2:5; I John 2:1; Hebrews 2:17; 5:9, 10).

SECTION 10 Grace and the New Birth

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again by grace through faith alone; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about by our sovereign God in a manner above our comprehension, by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth (John 3:3; II Corinthians 5:17; I John 5:1; Acts 16:30-33; II Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1, 5, 8-9; Colossians 2:13; John 3:8; John 20:31).

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SECTION 11 Justification

We believe that justification is that judicial act of God whereby He declares the believer righteous upon the basis of the imputed righteousness of Christ; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's shed blood (Romans 3:24; 4:5; 5:1, 9; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9).

SECTION 12 Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God, accomplished in a threefold manner; first, an eternal act of God, based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he trusts the Savior; second, a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the life; third, the final accomplishment of this process upon the Lord's return (Hebrews 10:10-14; 3:1; John 17:17; II Corinthians 3:18; I Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 5:25-27; I Thessalonians 4:3, 4; 5:23, 24; I John 3:2; Jude 24, 25; Revelation 22:11).

SECTION 13 The Security of the Saints

We believe that all who are truly born again are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6; John 10:28, 29; Romans 8:35-39; Jude 1).

SECTION 14 The Church

We believe that a local church is an organized congregation of immersed believers, associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its officers are pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures. We believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity. We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only Superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit. We believe that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; and that on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final (I Corinthians 11:2; Acts

20:17-28; I Timothy 3:1-13; Acts 2:41, 42). We believe in the unity of all New Testament believers in the church which is the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:12, 13; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 3:1-6; 4:11; 5:23; Colossians 1:18; Acts 15:13-18).

SECTION 15 Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is the single immersion of a believer in water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our identification with the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, through Whom we died to sin and rose to a new life; that baptism is to be performed under the authority of the local church; and that it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He come, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. We believe that the Biblical order of the ordinances is baptism first and then the Lord's Supper, and that participants in the Lord's Supper should be immersed believers (Acts 8:36, 38, 39; John 3:23; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 3:16; Colossians 2:12; I Corinthians 11:23-28; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:41, 42).

SECTION 16 Separation

We believe in obedience to the Biblical commands to separate ourselves unto God from worldliness and ecclesiastical apostasy (II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; I Thessalonians 1:9, 10; I Timothy 6:3-5; Romans 16:17; II John 9-11).

SECTION 17 Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed, except in those things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming King of kings (Romans 13:1-7; II Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21, 22; Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:29; 4:19, 20; Daniel 3:17, 18).

SECTION 18 Israel

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people, that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ, and that she will be regathered in the Holy Land and, after the completion of the Church, will be saved as a nation at the second advent of Christ (Genesis 13:14-17; Romans 11:1-32; Ezekiel 37).

SECTION 19 Rapture and Subsequent Events

We believe in the premillennial return of Christ, an event which can occur at any moment, and that at that moment the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death, and all shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the seven years of the Tribulation (I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15:42-44, 51-54; Philippians 3:20, 21; Revelation 3:10).

We believe that the Tribulation, which follows the Rapture of the Church, will be culminated by the revelation of Christ In power and great glory to sit upon the throne of David and to establish the millennial kingdom (Daniel 9:25-27; Matthew 24:29-31; Luke 1:30-33; Isaiah 9:6, 7; 11:1-9; Acts 29:29, 30; Revelation 20:1-4, 6).

SECTION 20 The Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that only those who are justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in the lake of fire (Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17, 18; I John 5:19; Romans 7:6; 6:23; Proverbs 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matthew 25:34-41; John 8:21; Revelation 20:14, 15).

SECTION 21 Charismatic Movement

We reject the charismatic movement, known by various designations, involving tongues experiences of manifold types and descriptions. We believe that speaking in tongues is not a sign of either regeneration or sanctification and that the New Testament gift of tongues was among those temporary spiritual gifts bestowed by God upon His churches in apostolic times; and that when its purpose was accomplished, the gift ceased (I Corinthians 13:8). We believe that the gift of tongues was never required as an outward demonstration of either the baptism or the filling of the Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13; 12:30; Ephesians 5:18).

SECTION 22 Apostasy

We believe that this local church is obligated to separate itself from the ecclesiastical apostasy and compromise which is characteristic of this age and that its members are obligated to observe personal separation from the things of the world (Romans 16:17-18; I Corinthians 5:1-13; 6:19-20; II Corinthians 6:14-18; I Timothy 3:1-5; II Peter 2:1-3; Jude 3-4).

We are opposed to any kind of compromise with error. We are disheartened and alarmed by the following trends among evangelicals throughout the world.

- (1) The making of concessions to unsaved Intellectuals.
- (2) The willingness to accept theistic evolution.
- (3) The recognition of the ecumenical movement.
- (4) The willingness to reconsider Biblical inspiration.
- (5) The belittling of the precious doctrine of the imminent return of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.
- (6) The willingness to cooperate beyond proper doctrinal lines for the sake of evangelism.
- (7) A compromising attitude toward worldly practices, such as social drinking, smoking, dancing, theater attendance, watching corruption on television, membership in secret orders, and critical attitude toward those who oppose worldliness among believers. We are opposed to liberal theology, neo-orthodoxy, and new-evangelicalism.

We desire to obey the Bible which, in regard to apostates says to:

- (1) Try them - I John 4:1
- (2) Mark them - Romans 16:17
- (3) Rebuke them - Titus 1:13
- (4) Have no fellowship with them - Ephesians 5:11

- (5) Withdraw thyself from them - II Thessalonians 3:6
- (6) Receive them not - II John 10-11
- (7) Have no company with them - I Thessalonians 3:14
- (8) Reject them - Titus 3:10
- (9) Be separated from them - II Corinthians 6:17

ARTICLE VII - OFFICERS AND PERSONNEL

SECTION 1 Officers of the Church

The officers of the church shall consist of pastor(s) and deacon-trustees. They must be members of this church in good standing.

SECTION 2 Faithfulness to the Church

All officers and elected or appointed personnel should be members, regular in their attendance at the Sunday and mid-week services and should be faithful and loyal in their support of the church and its program.

SECTION 3 Length and Term of Church Officers and Personnel

A Pastor

The relationship between the pastor and the church shall be a permanent one until dissolved at the option of either by giving two month's notice. A shorter period of notice by mutual consent or as provided for in Article VIII, Section 3 will be permitted.

B Deacon-Trustees

The deacon-trustees shall have a three year term of office. They may serve any number of consecutive terms. The number of deacons shall be determined by the body, depending upon those scripturally qualified to serve. They shall begin their terms at the beginning of the fiscal year.

C Elected or Appointed Personnel

The term of duty for all personnel, other than pastor(s) and deacon-trustees, shall be one year. They may be reelected or reappointed to succeed themselves.

D Tenure of Service

All elected and appointed personnel shall serve in their respective capacities until their successors are duly elected or appointed and take office.

E Declining and Resigning

When any officer of this church, and any elected or appointed personnel of this church, shall decide that he cannot cooperate, qualify, or perform the duties of his position, he shall so declare himself by either declining to accept the position or by resigning from the position.

SECTION 4 Annual Election of Officers and Personnel

Annual election of officers and personnel shall occur at the time of the annual business meeting. The newly elected individuals shall take office on July 1 and serve through the following June 30 or until their successors assume their duties.

SECTION 5 Paid Employees

The paid employees of the church, unless designated in this constitution, shall be under the supervision of the deacon-trustees who have the authority to hire and dismiss same except for the pastor and his assistants.

SECTION 6 Pastor's Beliefs

The pastor of this church shall be a believer in and a preacher of the Gospel and of the fundamental doctrines of the faith as held by this church.

SECTION 7 Pastor's Salary and Vacation

The salary of the pastor of this church shall be fixed at the time of call and may be changed by vote of the church upon recommendation of the deacon-trustees. The pastor's salary shall be reviewed-annually by the church.

The pastor shall be entitled to an annual vacation of two weeks with full salary during his first two years as pastor. After two years as pastor of this church, he shall be entitled to three weeks of vacation with full salary annually. With the approval of the deacon-trustees he shall be allowed additional time for camps, associational and other meetings.

SECTION 8 Pastoral Staff

Members of the pastoral staff shall be considered assistants to the pastor and will be appointed by the pastor and the deacons, subject to church ratification. Financial arrangements will be determined by the pastor and deacons in accord with the church budget. Members of the pastoral staff will serve indefinitely, until their own resignation, the request of the pastor, or termination by church action.

ARTICLE VIII - QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF THE PASTOR

SECTION 1 Qualifications of the Pastor

A Spirituality

I Timothy 3:16 and Titus 1:7-9 give the Scriptural qualifications of the pastor. The life of the pastor and his family should be an example of godliness and spirituality. They should not indulge in worldliness or sinful practices which would tend to weaken the testimony of the church (I Thessalonians 5:22). No one who indulges in the use of intoxicating liquors, drugs, or tobacco in any form, who belongs to a secret society, or who brings disrepute upon his ministry through sinful language, practice, or association, shall be considered for pastor, or having fallen into such practice be retained as pastor if he persists in such a course (Romans 12:1-2; II Corinthians 6:11-18).

B Divorce

No divorced person shall be pastor of this church (Matthew 19:3-9).

C Doctrinal Position

No person shall be considered for the office nor serve as pastor of this church whose beliefs and teachings are not in accordance with the Articles of Faith or who will not declare himself to be a Fundamental (Webster -- Fundamentalism), Premillennial, Pretribulational, Independent Baptist.

SECTION 2 Duties of the Pastor

A Position

The word pastor (Webster) means a shepherd or spiritual overseer. The Scriptures refer to the pastor as an Elder or Bishop (Acts 20:24; I Thessalonians 5:12-13; I Timothy 3:1-5; Hebrews 13:7; I Peter 5:1-4). These Scriptures show clearly that the pastor is to oversee and supervise the affairs of the church. He shall not only have the general supervision of the church, but also shall have unrestricted liberty in his teaching and preaching ministry to present any matter for the church's consideration that he deems necessary.

B Ministry

The pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly, administer the ordinances, act as moderator of all meetings of the church for the transaction of business, extend the right hand of fellowship to all new members on behalf of the church, supervise the teaching ministry of the church, tenderly watch over its membership and spiritual interests, organize and develop its strength for the best possible service, and perform such other duties as generally appertain to such a position.

C Authority

In light of the following Scriptures (Psalm 105:15; Acts 20:28; I Thessalonians 5:12-13; I Timothy 3:1-5; 5:17-19; Hebrews 13:7, 17; I Peter 5:1-4), and because this church has adopted the Holy Scriptures as final authority, the members and officers of the church shall recognize the leadership vested in the Scriptural office of pastor (called Elders and Bishops in the King James Version), and shall earnestly pray for and uphold such in the work of the Lord. All officers and personnel should welcome the Pastor's counsel and suggestions and should never feel such a pastoral function is an intrusion.

SECTION 3 Accusations Against the Pastor

Accusations against the pastor shall be submitted to the deacon-trustees and shall not be considered unless supported by the testimony of two or three witnesses (I Timothy 5:19). If he err in doctrine or conduct, the deacon-trustees shall, in brotherly love, attempt to correct him (Galatians 6:1-2). If this is not effective, the matter shall be referred to the church which alone has the authority to act. The pastor may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the eligible members present and voting after the meeting has been announced at two regular Sunday services immediately prior to this meeting. The vote shall be by written ballot. If the pastor is dismissed, he shall vacate the pulpit immediately, but shall receive thirty days' salary. He shall vacate the parsonage within thirty days of his dismissal or at the discretion of the church.

ARTICLE IX - QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF THE DEACON-TRUSTEES

SECTION 1 **Qualifications of the Deacon-Trustees**

- A I Timothy 3:19 gives the qualifications of deacons and their wives, and they shall, by the help of God, try to live thereby. The life of a deacon and his family should be one of Godliness and spirituality. They should not indulge in worldly and sinful practices which would tend to weaken the testimony of the church (I Thessalonians 5:22). No one who is divorced, indulges in intoxicating liquor, drugs, or tobacco in any form; or who belongs to any secret society; or who brings disrepute upon the church through sinful language, practice, or association; or who having fallen into such practices persists in the same, shall be retained. In keeping with the Scriptures, gossiping, tattling, backbiting, undermining, holding grudges, violent uncontrolled temper, etc., are unbecoming to the office, and if indulged in by either a deacon or his wife, shall be grounds for dismissal.
- B No person shall be elected to the office of deacon-trustee who has not been a faithful member of the church for a period of six months or longer (I Timothy 3:10).
- C No one shall be considered for, nor serve as a deacon-trustee who is not in accord with the Articles of Faith of this church.
- D The deacon-trustees shall select three from their number to exercise the power of trustee according to the laws of the state of Wisconsin. They shall act in conjunction with the other deacon-trustees but shall be empowered to convey, acquire, and encumber land and buildings, real and personal property of the church and to receive the proceeds therefrom when so instructed by a majority vote of the voting membership present and voting at a duly called business meeting of the church. They shall be authorized to sign deeds, mortgages, and legal documents on behalf of the church and the signatures shall be sufficient to make such instruments legal and binding upon the church.

SECTION 2 **Duties of Deacon-Trustees**

- A The deacon-trustees shall assist the pastor in the furtherance of the spiritual ministry of the church.
- B The deacon-trustees shall have custody of all church properties, real and personal, including maintenance and repair.
- C The deacon-trustees shall prepare and distribute a budget covering proposed expenses for the ensuing year, presenting it to the church for considerations and approval at the annual meeting.
- D The deacon-trustees shall be authorized to make expenditures of up to \$300.00. Any expenditures exceeding \$300.00 must be authorized by a majority vote of the voting membership present and voting at any regular or special business meeting.
- E The deacon-trustees shall, with the pastor, be responsible for the educational ministry of the church.

ARTICLE X - ELECTED OR APPOINTED PERSONNEL OF THE CHURCH

SECTION 1 **Deaconesses**

The deaconesses shall be the wives of the deacons. They are to prepare the Lord's Table, help with baptisms, visit those in need, and send flowers and cards to the sick. They shall elect from among themselves a chairman, secretary, nursery coordinator, and social chairman and perform other duties assigned by the pastor.

SECTION 2 **Church Clerk**

The clerk shall keep a record of the proceedings of the church; keep a record of all baptisms; issue letters and certificates of Christian character as directed by the church; handle official correspondence; preserve all documents, papers and letters coming into his hands during his term of office, and deliver the same with all records kept by him to his successor. He shall keep an account of any special events in the life of the church which are of historical interest and value. The church clerk shall be elected at the annual meeting.

SECTION 3 **Financial Secretary**

The financial secretary shall be responsible for recording and depositing all funds received by the church. He shall keep a record of individual giving and furnish to each member who requests it a report of his tithes and offerings. The financial secretary shall be elected at the annual meeting.

SECTION 4 **Treasurer**

The treasurer shall receive a report from the financial secretary of all funds contributed and shall be responsible for the dispensing of the funds as ordered by the church or deacon-trustees. He shall prepare for the regular business meetings of the church a written report of receipts and disbursements showing the actual financial condition of the church. All expenditures of the church shall be paid by check. The treasurer shall be elected at the annual meeting.

SECTION 5 **The Sunday School Superintendent**

The superintendent of the Sunday School shall be appointed by the pastor, after consulting with the deacon-trustees. The pastor and the superintendent of the Sunday School shall have the supervision of the work of the Sunday School, endeavoring to enlist the hearty cooperation of the whole church in Bible study and instruction. The pastor and the superintendent of the Sunday School shall see that each teacher fulfills his obligation and magnifies the Word of God in each class, and seeks the salvation of all who are under his care.

SECTION 6 **Teachers**

The teacher shall zealously attend to the class assigned to him. He must live a separated life and strive for the salvation and spiritual growth of each pupil in the class. Each teacher shall seek new prospects, and provoke the class to good works, contact those in the class who are absent, and do everything humanly possible to build up the class. In case of absence, each teacher shall select a suitable substitute, with the approval of the pastor or superintendent. No teacher shall teach contrary to the Articles of Faith of this church. Each Sunday School teacher shall be appointed by the pastor and Sunday School superintendent.

SECTION 7 Head Usher

A head usher shall be appointed by the pastor, after consulting with the deacon trustees. He, in counsel with the pastor and deacon-trustees, shall appoint a sufficient number of assistants to ably care for the work of ushering and extending the official hospitality of the church to its members and visitors.

SECTION 8 Records and Reports

All officers or elected or appointed personnel, if required, shall make a written report of their work for the regular business meetings of the church and shall at the conclusion of their term of office relinquish all records to the church clerk.

SECTION 9 Faithfulness to Responsibilities

Any officers or elected or appointed personnel who neglect their duties as outlines in the constitution for a period of three months will be automatically dropped from office. A replacement will then be elected or appointed to fill the unexpired term.

ARTICLE XI - COMMITTEES

SECTION 1 Committee Members

All members of every committee shall be members in good standing of the church.

SECTION 2 Auditing Committee

The church shall appoint an auditor or auditing committee who shall audit the books of the treasurer at the close of the fiscal year.

SECTION 3 Nominating Committee

A nominating committee shall be appointed by the pastor and deacon-trustees. The committee shall prepare a list of candidates for the various offices to be filled. They shall post and announce their report at the March monthly business meeting. Other nominations may be made by the members, but not from the floor at the time of the election. The names of all nominees must be posted at least one week prior to the annual meeting. The names must be given to the pastor who will contact the nominees as to their qualifications, duties, and willingness to serve if elected.

SECTION 4 Committee Constituency

All committees shall be appointed by the pastor and deacon-trustees unless otherwise provided for in this constitution. The pastor, by virtue of his office, shall be a member of all committees, boards, and organizations of the church.

SECTION 5 Pulpit Committee

The pulpit committee shall be made up of the deacon-trustees.

ARTICLE XII - MEETINGS

SECTION 1 **Meetings for Worship**

Unless otherwise provided, the church shall meet each Sunday for public worship, both morning and evening, and at least once during the week for Bible study and prayer. The time of observance of the Lord's Table shall be determined by the pastor and the deacon-trustees.

SECTION 2 **Meetings for Business**

The church shall hold a monthly business meeting the second Sunday evening of each month. A quorum of 20% of the resident members of voting age shall be necessary to transact business. Voting age shall be 18 unless further restrictions are necessary by state law. The pastor shall be the chairman of all business meetings, unless he asks someone to take the chair, and no business meeting shall be valid without his presence or consent. The only exception to this will be when the church is without a pastor, in which case the chairman of the deacons will preside.

SECTION 3 **Special Business Meetings**

The pastor, or chairman of the deacons when the church is without a pastor, shall call a special business meeting when necessary. Any five members of the church may call a special business meeting by giving written notice to the church clerk stating the time of the meeting and the purpose for which it is called and by announcing it from the pulpit at least fourteen days prior to said meeting.

SECTION 4 **Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the church shall begin July 1 and end June 30.

SECTION 5 **The Annual Meeting**

The annual business meeting shall be held in June. Its purpose shall be to elect officers and adopt budget.

ARTICLE XIII - AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be revised or amended by two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any regular business meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing to the pastor and deacon-trustees, has received their approval, and has been announced from the pulpit two weeks before the vote is taken.

ARTICLE XIV - AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

SECTION 1

Every organization, department, class, or any other group within this church will be an integral part of the church and not an entity in itself. They shall, therefore, have as their aims and objectives that of assisting the church in discharging the obligations and responsibilities which it has imposed upon itself, rather than having separate aims and objectives. The pastor's supervision shall be recognized by such organizations and groups whether meeting in the church, a home, or elsewhere.

SECTION 2

The purpose of all auxiliary organizations shall be the winning of the lost to Jesus Christ and the edification and fellowship of the saints.

SECTION 3

The officers of all auxiliary organizations shall be members of this church in good standing, elected by their respective organizations, subject ratification by the pastor and deacon-trustees.

SECTION 4

The constitution of auxiliary organizations shall be drawn so as not to conflict with the constitution of this church.

SECTION 5

Auxiliary organizations may hold meetings at such times as will not conflict with the meetings of the church and shall be under the control of the pastor and deacon-trustees.

ARTICLE XV - POLICY OF THIS CHURCH

SECTION 1 **Financial Policy**

Scriptural giving is an expression of love to the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore, the church shall be sustained by free-will offerings uninfluenced by any consideration of material or worldly reward. No solicitations, sales, or bazaars shall be permitted in the name of the church. The bringing of tithes and offerings into the treasury of the church is the only method of finance found in the Scriptures, and it shall therefore be the duty of the members to bring their tithes into the church (I Corinthians 16:2).

The use of all regular funds or of properties of organizations or classes of this church must be approved by the pastor and deacon-trustees.

SECTION 2 **Missionary Policy**

Missionaries voted upon and supported by this church:

- (1) Will be in agreement with our doctrine as outlined in the Articles of Faith.
- (2) Will accept the Great Commission: to win, baptize, and teach those won so as to establish indigenous churches on the field.
- (3) Will not cooperate with the World Council of Churches or other apostate groups of false cults in their efforts of evangelization.
- (4) Will meet the characteristics of the third chapter of I Timothy.
- (5) Will fill out our church report annually, if requested.
- (6) Will be supported for a full term except when moral or doctrinal problems are involved.
- (7) Will be reconsidered for support at the end of each term.
- (8) Will be required to sign a copy of this missionary policy, and the Articles of Faith of this church each term.

SECTION 3 Policy Regarding Publicity

All publicity and advertisements of any and all departments or organizations, whether free or paid, must first receive the approval of the pastor or one appointed to review such matters.

SECTION 4 The Place of the Holy Bible

The Holy Bible shall never be subjected to ridicule or brought into disrepute by any pastor, officer, teacher, worker, or member of this church; and those doing so shall be counted enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ and shall be subjected to church discipline (II John 9-11). The Holy Scriptures shall be accepted as the authority in all matters relative to the faith and practice of this church.

The Sunday School literature used in this church shall teach the Bible according to the Articles of Faith of this church.

ARTICLE XVI - PROPERTY

The property of this church shall not revert to any convention, conference or association but may be deeded to another Baptist congregation of like faith and practice by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting in a meeting; notice of which has been published in the local newspaper for one month.

ARTICLE XVII - AUTHORITY

The authority of this church shall be vested in its members who by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting (unless excepted by this constitution) may review, revoke or rule any action of its officers, departments, boards, or committees. However, the church recognizes as legal and binding all contracts or agreements entered into by duly authorized persons acting in behalf of the congregation.

AMENDMENTS

AMENDMENT I

(adopted June 10, 2001)

To ARTICLE XI, Section 5 add: If the pulpit committee deems it necessary to have help, at their discretion they may request up to two other members of the congregation to join them. Their duty shall be to see that the pulpit is filled by a sound teacher in absence of a pastor, and to present suitable candidates for the pastorate to the congregation.

AMENDMENT II

(adopted June 9, 2002)

To ARTICLE X, add new Section 10

The school board shall consist of the pastor and deacons and members of the congregation recommended by the nominating committee, to be voted upon by the church at the annual meeting for a one year term.

AMENDMENT III
(adopted June 10, 2007)

To ARTICLE X, Section 4

Modify second to last sentence from “All expenditures of the church shall be paid by check.” to “All expenditures of the church shall be paid by check **or debit card.**”

AMENDMENT VI
(adopted December 14, 2014)

To ARTICLE VI add new Section 23

We believe that marriage is a divine institution between one man and one woman for life. (Genesis 1:27-28; 2:18-25; Romans 1:19-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 7:2, 12-16; Matthew 19:3-9; Romans 7:1-3)