

Pantai Baptist Church
Constitution and By-Laws

Pantai Baptist Church
Constitution and By-Laws
2nd Edition
Dated 29 June 2014

CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this church is PANTAI BAPTIST CHURCH.

This Church - a body of believers of the Christian faith - exists on the basis of the freedom of worship guaranteed in the Federal Constitution of Malaysia (Article 11).

ARTICLE II. STATEMENT OF FAITH

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy.

It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. The True God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe.

God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures.

To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin.

He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ.

He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man and Sin

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. God created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice.

By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. So the world and all mankind are under condemnation.

Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. The Way of Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

- A. *Regeneration*, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. *Repentance* and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.
- C. *Justification* is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.
- D. *Sanctification* is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.
- E. *Glorification* is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ.

Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

VII. Civil Government

Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The church and state should be separate.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

VIII. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ.

Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

IX. Marriage and the Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

X. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are elders/pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of elder/pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

XI. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin,

the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

XII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

XIII. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others.

The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every Christian to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XIV. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions.

According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their time, talents, and material possessions cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XV. Cooperation

Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XVI. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

ARTICLE III. OUR CHURCH COVENANT

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

1. We engage, 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 peace; to promote its spirituality and fruitfulness; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.
2. We also engage to maintain personal and family devotions; to educate our children in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our behavior; to avoid all gossiping, backbiting and excessive anger; to seek God's help in abstaining from all things and practices which bring unwarranted harm to the body or jeopardize our own or another's faith.
3. We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another 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 secure it without delay.

4. We moreover engage that should we leave this Church, we will, if possible, unite with a likeminded church where we can carry out the articles of this confession and the spirit of this covenant.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1 General Principles

Under the authority of Jesus Christ and the Word of God, the Congregation of the Church is the final authority within this local Church. This authority is normally exercised through the election of officers to govern the Church.

However, the vote of the membership of this Church at a properly called meeting, as provided in this Constitution and By-Laws (collectively 'this Constitution'), shall be required to effect the following actions:

- Accept members into the Church;
- Elect officers of the Church;
- Discipline members by dismissing them and discipline officers by removing them from office;
- Approve annual budgets of the Church, authorize any expenditure of the funds of the Church when such expenditure is not covered by an approved budget, and approve any transactions regarding real property;
- Accept, reject or otherwise dispose of any matter submitted to the membership of the Church by the Council of Elders, or raised by motion at a Members' Meeting;
- Adopt, amend, or repeal the Constitution of this Church;
- Approve the call and job description of Pastors.

1.2 Qualifications

To be a member of this Church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized, in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, and whole-heartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. The minimum age for full membership shall be at least 21 years old.

Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith (Article II) and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant (Article III). The Council of Elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership.

1.3 Admission of Members

All membership applications shall be made to the Council of Elders, who will arrange to interview each candidate. The Council of Elders will then recommend the applicant to the Church when satisfied that the person qualifies for membership.

Where the candidate was a member elsewhere holding like faith, a letter of commendation from their former church will be requested. Additional information may be requested as determined by the Council of Elders.

Names of all applicants shall then be made known to members in such manner as the Council of Elders may deem appropriate, to enable any member with objections to voice them. If no objections are received within fourteen (14) days, the consent of members shall be deemed given and the applicant shall be

accepted as a member at any regular or special meeting and shall be granted all the duties and privileges belonging to members.

1.4 Duties and Privileges of Membership

In accord with the Church Covenant, each member shall be expected to contribute toward the development of true spiritual fellowship by the pursuit of practical holiness, love for all the members, faithful attendance at our regular meetings for worship, ministry, and prayer, as well as practical support for the work of the Gospel.

Any member consistently neglecting his responsibility or guilty of action by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored shall be subject to discipline by the Council of Elders.

Members are entitled and encouraged to serve in the ministries of the Church. Non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the Council of Elders. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the Church for purposes of administration and professional consultation.

Under the Lord Jesus Christ, this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such matters as may be submitted to a vote.

1.5 Associate Membership

Applicants may choose to apply for associate membership. Qualifications are identical to those for full membership, except for the minimum age requirement as set out above in Article 1.2.

This may include those who do not reside in this city for the majority of the year, or those who are temporarily residing in this city but who are already members of an evangelical church elsewhere. Where applicable, home church membership may be retained, and a letter of commendation may be sought from the applicant's home church.

The Council of Elders may waive any qualifications or conditions for admission of associate membership as the Council of Elders deems fit and appropriate in the best interest of the Church.

Duties and privileges of associate members are the same as for other members except that:

- A. When absent from this city for extended periods of time they are released from the responsibility to attend our regular meetings; and
- B. While they will be encouraged to participate in Members' Meetings, they will not be eligible to stand for any office or to vote.

Termination of associate membership as a disciplinary measure will be as it is for other members, except that elders shall notify the pastor or elders of the home church of that termination. Associate membership will normally terminate immediately upon the ending of the period of temporary residence in this city.

1.6 Church Discipline

Any member, who consistently neglect their membership duties, or are guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the Church, shall be subject to the discipline of the Church, according to biblically based principles.

Church discipline should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed. Discipline can include admonition by Elders or Congregation, suspension from the Lord's Supper for a definite period, removal from office, and excommunication. (See Matthew 18:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 5:19-20; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5.)

The purpose of such discipline should be for:

- The repentance, reconciliation and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined;
Proverbs 15:5, 17:10, 25:12, 27:5, 29:15; 1 Corinthians 4:14, 5:5; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:4-5; Hebrews 12:1-11; Psalm 119:115, 141:5; Matthew 7:26-27, 18:15-17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; Galatians 6:1-5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15; Titus 1:13-14; James 1:22.
- The instruction in righteousness and good for other Christians, as an example to them;
Proverbs 13:20; Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 5:11, 15:33; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 10:24-25.
- The purity of the church as a whole;
1 Corinthians 5:6-7; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27; 2 John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21:2.
- The good of our corporate witness to non-Christians; and
Proverbs 28:7; Matthew 5:13-16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1-14; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Peter 2:2; 1 John 3:10.
- Supremely, the glory of God by reflecting his holy character.
Deuteronomy 5:11; 1 Kings 11:2; 2 Chronicles 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 9:2; Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 36:20; Matthew 5:16; John 15:8, 18:17, 25; Romans 2:24, 15:5-6; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Ephesians 1:4, 5:27; 1 Peter 2:12.

1.7 Termination of Membership

The Church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her death, voluntary resignation or joining another church.

Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (ordinarily but not necessarily at the recommendation of the Council of Elders) at any members' meeting or special meeting by a vote of simple majority of members present.

The Church shall have the authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline, or for any other biblical reason.

Membership may also be terminated by the Elders if any member has been absent for a period of six (6) months without giving satisfactory reason for absence. Before removal, the Council of Elders must first try to contact the member, determine the reasons for their absence and attempt to restore them to fellowship.

No member holding office as Elder or Deacon shall have his/her church membership terminated prior to his/her removal from office as set out in Article 2 hereof.

ARTICLE 2. CHURCH GOVERNMENT

2.1 General Principles

A. Officers.

The biblical offices in the Church are Elders and Deacons. The purpose of the officers is to lovingly govern, care for, and equip the membership to do the work of ministry.

Elders are responsible for the governing, teaching the Word and tending to the flock of God in this Church. Deacons shall assist the Council of Elders by performing services of advice, administration and implementation.

Officers shall be called to office by vote of the membership of the Church as provided for in Article 4 of these By-Laws. All officers of the Church must be members of the Church in good and regular standing. The Council of Elders shall be composed of men only. The Board of Deacons may be composed of both men and/or women.

B. Committees and Appointees.

The Council of Elders has the authority to create committees and positions to which it may delegate any specified aspect of its responsibility. The Council of Elders has the authority to dissolve any committee or position which it has created. The Council of Elders also has the authority to appoint Elders, Deacons and other members of the Church to serve as members of such committees and to act as its agents in such positions.

The Board of Deacons may nominate candidates for any committee or position, with appointment by the Council of Elders. The Council of Elders may delegate to the Deacons the authority to appoint Deacons or other members of the Church to serve as members of such committees and as agents of the Council of Elders in such positions.

Every committee shall have a chairperson, responsible for the overall operation of the committee, who shall be appointed by the Council of Elders. The Council of Elders may delegate the responsibility for selecting the chairperson to the Board of Deacons or to the committee.

2.2 Elders

A. **Composition.** The Council of Elders shall comprise of not less than three (3) men who satisfy the qualifications for office set out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. A majority of the Council of Elders shall be composed of Church members not in regular pay of the Church. The Elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function. No Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure.

- B. **Term Limits.** An Elder shall be called by the Church for a normal term of three (3) years. He shall stand for reaffirmation not later than the third annual meeting of the Church following his call. An Elder shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms. Following two (2) consecutive terms the Elder will not serve actively in office for a period of one (1) year. Following this period he is again eligible for nomination as Elder. Calling or reaffirmation of an Elder shall be by two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present and voting at the Members' Meeting. If an Elder stands for reaffirmation and fails to be reaffirmed, the Elder shall step down from office. Removal from office by this means shall not be considered disciplinary action.
- C. **Responsibilities.** In accordance to the principles set out in Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Peter 5:1-4, the Elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock. The Council of Elders shall take particular responsibility to:
- Encourage sound doctrine and practice;
 - Admonish and correct error;
 - Examine and instruct prospective members;
 - Oversee the process of church discipline;
 - Recommend all prospective candidates for office;
 - Oversee the work of the Deacons and appointed Committees;
 - Equip members for the work of the ministry;
 - Administer the ordinances;
 - Coordinate and promote the ministries of the Church; and
 - Mobilize the Church for world missions.

No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the Church or any of its ministries without the approval of the Council of Elders. The Council of Elders shall elect a chairman of Elders' meetings.

- D. **Removal.** An Elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or removal. Where a grievance exists against an Elder, either due to his adherence to and propagation of beliefs contrary to the beliefs of the Church set forth in Article II of this Constitution or to an alleged conduct unfitting an Elder, such grievance may be brought by any two (2) members in good standing to the Council of Elders. If the Council of Elders, after thorough investigation and consideration, believes the grievance to be true and substantial, then the Elder may be removed from office at any Members' Meeting upon the recommendation of the Council of Elders. Any Elder may be removed from office by two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present and voting at the said Members' Meeting. Any action related to the discipline of an Elder shall be done in accordance with Scripture (see Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Timothy 5:17-21).

2.2.1 Pastors

The Pastor shall be an Elder. Qualifications for office and responsibilities are those described in Section 2.2.A above. The Pastor shall be recognized by the Church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. The Pastor shall not be subject to the term limitations set out in Section 2.2.B for Elders. His term of office may only be terminated by resignation or removal as described in Section 2.2.D for Elders.

The Church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the Pastor is that of an associate or assistant. Qualifications for office are those set out in Section

2.2.A above. Associate and Assistant Pastors shall not be subject to term limitations set out in Section 2.2.B and their term shall be terminated by resignation or removal as described in Section 2.2.D for Elders. Associate and Assistant Pastors may only be recognized as Elders should they be nominated by the Council of Elders and elected by the members.

2.3 Deacons

- A. **Composition.** Deacons may be both men and/or women. The number of Deacons shall be determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of men and women in the Church. Qualifications for office are set out in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-7. No Deacon shall hold the office of Elder during their tenure.
- B. **Term Limits.** A Deacon shall be called by the Church for a normal term of three (3) years. They shall stand for reaffirmation not later than the third annual meeting of the Church following their call. A Deacon shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms. Following two (2) consecutive terms the Deacon will not serve actively in office for a period of one (1) year. Following this period he/she will again be eligible for nomination as Deacon. Calling or reaffirmation of a Deacon shall be by two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present and voting at a Members' Meeting. If a Deacon stands for reaffirmation and fails to be reaffirmed, the Deacon shall step down from office. Removal from office by this means shall not be considered disciplinary action.
- C. **Responsibilities.** Deacons shall advise and be ready to assist the Elders in any service that shall support and promote the ministry of the Word, new and existing ministries of the Church, and the care for members of the congregation. Deacons shall ensure that all funds and securities of the Church are properly secured and adequate controls are implemented. Their responsibilities may include: holding and disbursing funds for benevolence, maintaining the Church properties, and administering the business affairs of the Church that pertain to its material assets including the presentation of the annual budget after consultation with the Elders. The Board of Deacons, with the agreement of the Council of Elders, may establish committees of members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities to the Church.
- D. **Removal.** A Deacon's term of office may be terminated by resignation or removal. Where a grievance exists against a Deacon, either due to his/her adherence to and propagation of beliefs contrary to the beliefs of the Church set forth in Article II of this Constitution or to an alleged conduct unfitting a Deacon, such grievance may be brought by any two (2) members in good standing to the Council of Elders. If the Council of Elders, after thorough investigation and consideration, believes the grievance to be true and substantial, then the Deacon may be removed from office at any Members' Meeting upon the recommendation of the Council. Any Deacon may be removed from office by two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present and voting at the said Members' Meeting. Any action related to the discipline of a Deacon shall be done in accordance with Scripture (see Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Timothy 5:17-21).

ARTICLE 3. MEETINGS

3.1 Worship Meetings

Worship meetings shall be held on the Lord's Day. Other worship services may be held at other times as the Council of Elders may determine.

3.2 Members' Meetings

- A. The Church shall have at least two (2) Members' Meetings (which shall include the Annual Meeting) for every one (1) calendar year of the Church. These meetings shall be called by the Council of Elders. A calendar year of this Church shall commence on the first day of July each year and ends on the 30th June of the following year.
- B. There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Church for every one (1) calendar year. The time and date of the Annual Meeting shall be determined by the Council of Elders, in consultation with the Board of Deacons. The annual reports and audited accounts of the Church shall be presented at this meeting.
- C. An annual budget for the next calendar year shall be approved at a Members' Meeting prior to the said calendar year. In the event that the budget is not approved when the said calendar year has commenced, expenditures may continue for not more than three (3) months at the discretion of the Council of Elders, in consultation with the Board of Deacons, based on the most recent approved annual budget.
- D. A Moderator designated by the Elders shall chair the Members' Meetings. Notice of all Members' Meetings together with the relevant agenda, shall be given from the pulpit or in such manner as the Council of Elders may deem appropriate at least two (2) Sundays prior to the meeting.
- E. At least one-fifth (1/5) of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum. With the exception of those expressly stated in this Constitution, all resolutions shall be passed by a simple majority (50% + one (1) vote) of the members present and voting. Abstentions will not be considered as votes cast.
- F. A Special Meeting may be called as required by the Council of Elders, or at the written request, submitted to the Council of Elders, of ten percent (10%) of the voting membership. Only the matter for which the Special Meeting is called shall be on the agenda. Notice of this shall be given from the pulpit at least one Sunday prior to the meeting or in such manner as the Council of Elders may deem appropriate.
- G. This Church shall not be dissolved except with the consent of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the voting membership expressed either, in person at a Members' Meeting convened for the purpose or by postal vote. In the event of dissolution, all debts and liabilities legally incurred on behalf of the Church shall be fully discharged and the remaining funds and properties shall be disposed of as decided in the said meeting.

ARTICLE 4. ELECTIONS

4.1 General Principles

The following principles should guide our Church elections. Substantial prayer, individually and corporately, should be integral to the election process. All nominations should proceed with the support of the Council of Elders. All candidates for office should be treated with grace, kindness and honesty. The election process shall express the spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4.2 Election of Officers

Officers shall be elected at a Members' Meeting of the Church.

The Council of Elders shall seek recommendations and involvement from the membership in the nomination process. All nominations shall be in writing with the consent of the nominee. The Council of Elders shall then recommend the candidate to the membership when satisfied that the person qualifies for office.

Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office shall express such concerns to the Council of Elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate shall express their objections to the Council of Elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant Members' Meeting.

Elders and Deacons are elected by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at the Members' Meeting. The person elected shall assume office upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated.

4.3 Calling of Pastors

The calling of a Pastor shall follow the same process as that of an Elder.

In addition, the Church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential pastor and before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the Council of Elders that, having examined the man concerned, they are in no doubt to his wholehearted assent to our Statement of Faith (Article II) and Church Covenant (Article III).

ARTICLE 5. TRUSTEES AND TRUST ASSETS

5.1 Appointment of Trustees

At the recommendation of the Council of Elders, the Church may by a vote of a simple majority pursuant to a Members' Meeting duly convened for such purpose, appoint a person or persons, whether individual or corporation ('Trustee'), to hold as trustee, land/immovable property, real estate related assets (including shares of a company that holds landed properties) and any other assets, whatsoever belonging to the Church or as may be acquired by the Church, from time to time ('Trust Assets'), in trust for the Church as the sole beneficiary and shall deal with the Trust Assets in such manner as may be set out in this Article 5 and in the relevant deeds of trust.

5.2 Dealing of the Trust Assets

- A. The Trustees will not sell, convey, assign, surrender and yield up, charge, mortgage, pledge, demise, reassign, transfer or otherwise dispose or deal with any of the Trust Assets until and unless recommended by the Council of Elders and approved by not less than two-thirds (2/3) votes of the members present and voting at a Members' Meeting, duly convened for that purpose.
- B. The Trust Assets shall not in any way or manner whatsoever be divided among the members and shall not be subject to any individual claim by any member or section of members.
- C. Save for the matters listed in Article 5.2.A above, the Council of Elders will instruct the Trustees and the Trustees will take instructions from the Council of Elders, on any matters relating and/or incidental to the Trust Assets.

5.3 Replacement of Trustees

A Trustee may be removed or replaced for any reason as the Council of Elders deems in the best interest of the Church (including but not limited to grounds, as such ill health, death, unsoundness of mind, absence from the country, inability to perform duties or unable to do so satisfactorily). Any removal of a Trustee shall be subject to a vote of a simple majority pursuant to a Members' Meeting, duly convened for such a purpose.

ARTICLE 6. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (see Matthew 18: 15-20, 1 Corinthians 6: 1-8), the Church shall require its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the Church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the Church, whether Christian or not and whether individuals or corporate entities.

ARTICLE 7. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution, with the exception of Articles II and III, may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at a Members' Meeting, provided the amendment shall be tabled in writing at the previous Members' Meeting.

The Statement of Faith (Article II) and Church Covenant (Article III) may be amended by a three-quarters (3/4) vote of the members present and voting at a Members' Meeting, provided the amendment be recommended by the Council of Elders to the Church, tabled in writing at the previous Members' Meeting.