

Constitution of Ambassador Baptist Church

PREAMBLE

We, being born-again and Bible-believing Christians by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, believe the Bible to be the divinely inspired and authoritative Word of God and final authority for all Christian faith and practice. We therefore band ourselves together as a body of immersed believers in Jesus Christ and hereby adopt the following constitution as the statement of our faith and principles of the government of our local church.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be: Ambassador Baptist Church of Minnesota.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this church shall be to accomplish the will of the Lord Jesus Christ through the uniting of Christians in fellowship faithful to the Word of God, through the preaching of the whole counsel of God, for spiritual edification of saints, the winning of lost sinners to Christ, the propagation of the Gospel both at home and abroad, and for the observance of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

ARTICLE III. DOCTRINAL POSITION

Section I. Statement of Faith

- A. The Holy Scriptures. We believe the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, to be the plerarily, verbally inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original manuscripts, authoritative, infallible and God-breathed; and that they are the only supreme and ultimate authority for faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; 1 Corinthians 2:10-13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21).
- B. The Godhead. We believe in one triune God, existing in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, eternal in being, identical in essence, equal in power and glory, and having the same divine attributes and perfections; yet exercising them in varied offices (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 14:7-12; 16:7; 2 Corinthians 13:14).
- C. The Person and Work of Jesus Christ.
 1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man (Matthew 1:18-20; John 1:1, 2, 14, 18; Luke 1:36).
 2. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, as a substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who receive Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood (Romans 3:24-26; 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

3. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ and that our redemption and salvation is guaranteed to us by his literal, physical resurrection from the dead; in His bodily ascension into heaven; and in His present life there for us as High Priest and Intercessor (Matthew 28:5-6; 1 Corinthians 15:12-19; Acts 1:9; Hebrews 4:15-16; 7:23-25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1-2).
- D. The Personality of the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, equal with the Father and the Son and of the same substance and nature; that He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment; bears witness to the truth; is the agent of the new birth; and that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies, and helps the believer; that He baptizes them into the Body of Christ, indwells them permanently, seals them unto the day of redemption, bestows spiritual gifts upon each one, and fills for service those yielded to Him. We believe that certain of the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Church such as apostleship, prophecy, tongues and their interpretation, and healing were temporary, were needed only in the infancy of the church and are not to be expected today. We believe that the Holy Spirit testifies concerning Jesus Christ and never leads any person, at any time, contrary to the teaching of the Bible (John 3:8; 14:16; 15:26-27; 16:7-15; Acts 5:1-4; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; 13:8-11; Ephesians 4:30; 5:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:7).
- E. The Depravity of Man. We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's voluntary sin the race fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God; and that all mankind have inherited a sinful nature, became willful sinners with the first expression of personal choice, are unable to regain their former position, and are without excuse before God (Genesis 1:26; 3:1-24; Romans 1:20; 3:23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-6, 12).
- F. Salvation and Regeneration.
1. We believe that salvation is a gift of God, not earned by any good works whatsoever, brought to men by grace and received by repentance and personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of sins. All those who receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are regenerated and become sons of God (Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-9; John 1:2; 3:5-7).
 2. We believe that the Scriptures teach that regeneration, or the new birth, is that change in the soul by the Holy Spirit, by which a new nature and spiritual life, not before possessed, are imparted, and the person becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus by repentance of sin and personal faith; and without it salvation is impossible (John 3:3-6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Peter 1:23; Titus 3:5).
- G. Eternal Security of the Believer. We believe that the salvation of every believer is secure for all eternity from the moment of regeneration. This security is guaranteed to each believer by the fact that the life received is eternal life, by the keeping power of God, by the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit, and by the interceding ministry of Christ (John 5:24; 10:27-30; Romans 8:1, 29-30, 38-39; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25).
- H. Sanctification.
1. We believe that immediate, positional sanctification is that act of God whereby believers are, at the time of regeneration, eternally set apart as belonging to Him

by redemption, thereby being placed in the family of God as children, joint heirs with Jesus Christ (1 John 3:1; Romans 8:14-17; 1 Cor. 1:2; Hebrews 10:10-14).

2. We believe that progressive sanctification is the process by which, according to God's will we are made partakers of His holiness; that it is begun in regeneration; that it progresses if the believer is yielded to the Holy Spirit's control; that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, self-examination, watchfulness and prayer (1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:23; Proverbs 4:18; 1 John 2:29; Philippians 2:12-13; Ephesians 6:18; John 17:17).
 3. We believe that ultimate sanctification will be the portion of every believer when finally in the presence of the Lord, complete and entire, with soul and spirit united in the resurrected body free from every trace or effect of sin and rebellion (1 John 3:2; 1 Corinthians 5:52-54; Ephesians 4:30; 5:27; Philippians 4:20-21).
- I. Separation. We believe in the Biblical doctrine of separation which encompasses three things: (1) the separation of the local church from all affiliation and fellowship with those who deny the verities of the "faith once delivered unto the saints;" (2) the separation of the individual believer from all worldly practices that may dishonor the Savior; and (3) the separation of church and state (2 Timothy 3:1-5; Romans 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11; 2 Corinthians 6:11-7:1).
- J. Holy Matrimony.
1. We believe that the Creator designed and defined Holy Matrimony from the beginning to be the marvelous knitting of two lives, one man and one woman (birth genders). Holy Matrimony is a sacred covenant pledged in the presence of Almighty God and human witnesses, with the commitment until "death do us part". This exclusive covenantal union depicts the beauty and permanence of Christ's spiritual union with His bride, the Church (Genesis 1:27-28; 2:20-24; Ephesians 5:3; 21-33).
 2. We believe that human society possesses no authority to pervert God's perfect design for Holy Matrimony (Genesis 19:1-7; Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 1:18-32; Hebrews 13:4; Jude 7).
 3. We believe that God designed Holy Matrimony to be the only legitimate environment for sexual intimacy. All sexual activity in any other context, including the scourge of pornography, is strictly forbidden by God, and actually wars against the soul (Matthew 15:19,20; 1 Corinthians 6:9,10; 7:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5; 2 Timothy 2:22; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 2:11).
 4. We believe that God, in wisdom and love, wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person (Genesis 1:27-28; Deuteronomy 22:5; 1 Corinthians 7:17,20,24; 1 Corinthians 12:18, 25-26).
 5. Yet we believe that God longs to redeem and restore everyone who confesses and forsakes sin, claiming His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. This

offer pulses through us as we seek to position ourselves with Jesus, who was known as a friend of sinners (Luke 7:34; 1 Corinthians 6:9-20).

6. Because God has ordained Holy Matrimony and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Ambassador Baptist Church will only recognize Holy Matrimony between a biological man and a biological woman.

- K. Sanctity of Life. We believe that children are a blessing from the Lord and bear the image of God, even while in the womb. Physical life is God's sovereign gift; this makes all human life sacred and we are morally bound to protect it from the moment of conception until natural death. Deliberate killing of the unborn, the sick, the disabled or the elderly is forbidden by the Giver of life (Genesis 1:27; Genesis 9:6; Psalm 139:13-18; Proverbs 31:8-9; Jeremiah 1:5).

- L. The Eternal State. We believe that the souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation do at death immediately pass into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming when soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory; but, that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in constant conscious misery in hell until the final judgment of the Great White Throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power (Luke 16:19-26; 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 20:11-15; 14:9-14).

- M. The Church. We believe in the church – a living, spiritual body of which Christ is the Head (Matthew 16:16-18; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25-27).

We believe that each Bible-centered local church is a visible expression of the Body of Christ and is a congregation of believers in Jesus Christ, immersed upon a credible confession of faith, and associated together by covenant for worship, evangelism, observance of the ordinances, fellowship, service, teaching, and prayer. We believe that the local church is the center of God's program for this age, and that every Christian is bound by Scripture to give it his or her unhindered cooperation (Acts 2:41-47; 14:27; 20:17; 1 Timothy 3:1-16; Titus 1:5-11; 1 Corinthians 3:10-17; 5:1-5; 11:2).

- N. The Church's Ordinances. We believe that the Lord Jesus instituted two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, to be observed by all believers until His return.
 1. We believe that baptism is the immersion in water of a believer in Christ into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to show forth by solemn and beautiful symbolism, the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection, and that it is a Scriptural prerequisite to church membership (Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:36; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Peter 3:21; Acts 2:38-41).
 2. We believe that the Lord's Supper is partaking of bread and the fruit of the vine, symbols of Christ's body and blood, commemorating His suffering and death for us and our continual benefit therefrom; that participation should be limited to those professing a saving faith in Jesus Christ, and that participation should be

preceded by careful self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:23-32; 5:1-5; Matthew 18:15-17).

- O. The Great Commission. We believe that Jesus Christ has commissioned the church to take the Gospel to the world, which includes evangelism, baptism, Bible teaching and the establishment of local churches at home and abroad (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).
- P. The Responsibility of Believers. We believe that it is the responsibility of all believers to witness by life and by word to the truths of the Holy Scriptures and to assume responsibility for propagation of the Gospel to all the world (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).
- We believe that all believers should seek to walk by the Spirit, not bringing reproach upon their Lord and Savior, exercising Christian liberty regulated by love, separated from worldly pleasures and practices, and separated from organizational association with apostate groups (Romans 12:1,2; Galatians 6:16; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17).
- We believe that it is the responsibility of all believers to remember the work of the local church and its extension ministries in prayer, to support it with their tithes and offerings as the Lord prospers them, to participate in all the regular services of the church as the Lord enables, and to voluntarily submit to the watch-care and discipline of the local church (1 Corinthians 16:2; Hebrews 10:19-25; 13:17-18).
- Q. Satan. We believe in the personality of Satan and that he is the originator of sin in the universe. We believe that he is the god of this age and is the head of all powers of darkness and sin. We further believe that his eternal destination is the lake of eternal fire (Isaiah 14:12-15; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 20:10).
- R. Creation. We believe that God created the heavens and the earth, including all life, "Each after its own kind" directly, and not by any process of evolution, and that the days of creation in Genesis chapter 1 were solar, that is, twenty-four hour days (Genesis 1 and 2; Colossians 1:16-17; John 1:3; Exodus 20:9,11; 31:17).
- S. Future Events. We believe the Scriptures teach that at death the spirit and soul of the believer pass instantly into the presence of Christ and remain in conscious joy until the resurrection of the body when Christ comes for His own; the blessed hope of the believer is the imminent, personal, pretribulational, premillennial appearance of Christ to rapture the church, His bride.
- His righteous judgments will then be poured out on an unbelieving world during the Tribulation (the seventieth week of Daniel), the last half of which is the Great Tribulation, the climax of this fearful era will be the physical return of Jesus Christ to the earth in great glory to introduce the Millennial kingdom.
- Israel will be saved and restored as a nation; Satan will be bound and the curse will be lifted from the physical creation; following the Millennium, the Great White Throne judgment will occur, at which time the bodies and souls of the wicked shall be reunited and cast into the lake of fire (2 Corinthians 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:51-57; Titus 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:14-17; 5:9; Matthew 24:21; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:2-3, 11-15; Romans 11:26-27).

Section II. Doctrinal Agreement

- A. The Pastor(s), paid employees, and all elected or appointed church officers shall abide by, conduct themselves in accordance with, and sign a statement indicating full agreement with the Statement of Faith of the church without mental reservation.
- B. Should an individual included in Section II-A above, change his or her doctrinal position and become or act in disagreement with the Statement of Faith, that individual shall be obligated to resign from the place of responsibility. Should it come to the attention of the Pastor and Deacons that such an individual has changed in the doctrinal position but has not resigned, it shall be the responsibility of the Pastor and the Deacons to recommend to the congregation the immediate removal of the individual from the place of responsibility and leadership.
- C. Any individual not listed in Section II-A above, serving in a volunteer capacity, should agree with and abide by and conduct themselves in accordance with ABC's Statement of Faith. Any personal commitment to a doctrinal belief which foments disunity may initiate church disciplinary action. We make available a Statement of Faith informing all who serve in any capacity of what we believe.

ARTICLE IV. ASSOCIATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

This church is an autonomous Baptist Church under the headship of Christ and the leadership of God-given pastors. Affiliation shall be only with such organizations and associations which manifest both by statement and practice their agreement with the faith and practices set forth in this constitution. In the event that it does affiliate with an association of churches, such affiliation shall be understood to affect in no way the rights, powers, and privileges of the church, either as it relates to its property or the operation of its affairs. Withdrawal from any and all affiliations shall in no wise jeopardize its property.

ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

Section I. Admission of Members

- A. Qualifications for Membership. Persons desiring membership in this church must give oral testimony of their faith in Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. They must be or have been baptized by immersion following their conversion.
- B. Methods of Admission. Candidates for church membership may become members of this church in one of four ways:
 - 1. By immersion.*
 - 2. By letter from another church of like faith and practice.
 - 3. By Christian experience or statement, which may include any person who does not have a letter, but who has been baptized by immersion as a believer.
 - 4. By restoration, which will include any person whose name has been dropped from the roll, and who has made satisfactory explanation to the church. Former members who have been excluded from the fellowship of this church may be restored to membership on confession of their error and giving evidence of their repentance.

*Individuals who have been members of the church, but by their own testimony acknowledge that their former baptism preceded their salvation experience, shall be

instructed that their church membership shall be terminated unless they again present themselves for scriptural baptism at the first opportunity.

- C. Procedure for Admission. Candidates for church membership shall notify the Pastor or Deacons of their desire to join the church. Persons interested shall attend all of the Pastor's membership classes and be given a copy of, and subscribe to the church constitution. Upon completion of said classes, they shall appear before the Pastor and Deacons to give testimony of their salvation, to indicate their willingness to abide by the Constitution and agreement with the Covenant of the church, and to answer any questions concerning their experiences and faith that the Deacons might desire to ask. Upon recommendation of the Deacons, and after the candidate has related his or her Christian testimony to the church, the candidate's name shall be submitted to the church for acceptance or rejection.

Candidates shall be received into the membership by a majority affirmative voice vote at any regular church service. At the request of any member, the church shall vote on the admission of each candidate separately.

Any member voicing a dissenting vote shall appear immediately before the Pastor and Deacons and give spiritual reasons supporting such dissent, upon which the Pastor and Deacons shall rule valid or invalid and so report back to the service. If the dissent is ruled invalid, a re-vote shall be taken. If the dissent is ruled valid, the application shall be held in abeyance pending further investigation and attempted correction by the Deacons.

- D. Membership of Pastor. Membership of the Pastor or Assistant Pastor and his wife shall be automatic when they are voted upon and called to the church as Pastor or Assistant Pastor. Their children shall be voted into the membership according to the constitution.

Section II. Discipline of Members

- A. General. The purpose of this church's discipline of its members shall be to maintain its spiritual and doctrinal purity.

If a member err in conduct or doctrine, all disciplinary action shall be conducted in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17; Titus 3:10; and 1 Timothy 5:19.

- B. Procedure for Discipline:

1. If a member err in conduct or doctrine, the member who has knowledge shall, in brotherly love, attempt to admonish and correct him. If he does not heed this advice, the Pastor and Deacons shall be notified, who shall admonish him. If this fails, the Pastor and Deacons shall report the case to a business meeting of the church. The accused shall be notified of the time and place of the church business meeting at which these charges shall be presented, and shall be invited to answer these charges.
2. If a member fails to respond to the invitation to answer the charges against him or her, the church may, upon presentation of the charges, withdraw from him or her the hand of church fellowship.
3. The exclusion of a disciplined member must be acted upon by the church which alone has the authority. Any erring member, when admonition and reconciliation have failed, who is recommended for dismissal by the Pastor and the Deacons can only be dismissed by a majority vote by secret ballot of the active members present. Such a vote shall only be taken after written notification to the charged

member and at a business meeting of the church whose purpose and time have been announced at least one week prior to it.

4. If a member who has erred in conduct or doctrine shall voluntarily confess it to the church, and manifest repentance, no further proceedings, except in cases of public scandal, shall be entertained.
5. No member coming under disciplinary action of the church may be released from membership at his or her own request since such action would remove the member from the authority of the church.

Section III. Termination of Membership

- A. By Letter. A member in good standing may, at his or her request, have a letter of recommendation sent to another Baptist church of like faith and practice, releasing him from the membership to unite with the other church.
- B. By Notice. Except as described in Section II, Part B, Item 5, any member shall be removed from the church rolls by written notice to the church clerk.
- C. By Discipline. If an erring member fails to respond to the invitation to answer charges (see Section II, Part B, Item 2 of this article), the church upon recommendation of the Pastor and Deacons, may withdraw from such member the hand of church fellowship by the procedures in Section II, Part B, Item 3.
- D. By Joining Another Church. Any member upon joining another church, of whatever faith, shall be removed from the church rolls.
- E. By Inactivity. When a member who has been placed on the inactive list and has been repeatedly encouraged to activity by the Pastor, Deacons, and other interested members, refuses to become active, the Pastor and Deacons shall review the matter and, if deemed appropriate, recommend removal from membership. At the annual business meeting the Pastor and Deacons shall recommend to the congregation that the member be removed from the membership roll. A majority vote of active members present shall be required to enact removal of membership.
- F. By Failure to Present One's Self for Baptism. (See footnote, Section I, Part B, Item 1, this article.)
- G. By Death. The name of any member called by death shall be removed from the church rolls.

Section IV. Classification of Members

- A. Active. Those members living within the geographical bounds of the church, showing their interest in the welfare of the church by regular attendance.
- B. Inactive Members. Any member who absents himself from the church for three months shall automatically become an inactive member. The member's name shall be kept on an inactive list, and if he or she contacts the church asking for a transfer of membership, it shall be granted stating the current membership status to the church. An inactive member cannot hold any elected or appointed leadership positions, or take part in, or vote at any church business meeting. The member can

be restored to active membership status by regular attendance and presentation of himself for restoration.

- C. Watch-Care Membership. This status is available to non-permanent residents or students who wish to retain full membership in their "home" churches. The same Qualifications and Admission methods and procedure shall apply. They have the same privileges and responsibilities as active members, except they may not vote, speak in church business meetings, or hold the office of pastor or deacon.

ARTICLE VI. CHURCH COVENANT

The members of Ambassador Baptist Church, giving testimony to our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ through baptism by immersion, covenant together under His headship. Our commitment exceeds that of mere attendance; our agreement is what melds us together into a local church, and distinguishes us from other gatherings of believers.

- We desire to be guided by the Holy Scriptures as our supreme authority for what we believe, what we treasure, and how we live (2 Timothy 3:16,17).
- We desire to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).
- We desire to "walk by the Spirit of God," enabled by His power to manifest the fruit of His work in us (Galatians 5:16, 22-23).

The following specific goals will guide these desires:

1. SEPARATION UNTO GOD

We purpose to "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11), and "yield our members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Romans 6:13), as we "set [our] affections on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:2). As the redeemed unto God by the precious blood of Christ, it is our desire to live in a manner which displays that divine transformation (Romans 12:1,2).

2. LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER

We purpose to love one another "without hypocrisy" (Romans 12:9), in humility, esteem others better than ourselves (Philippians 2:3), help one another as we have opportunity, be quick to forgive one another (Colossians 3:13), and "pray for all saints" (Ephesians 6:18). We shall endeavor by all means to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3), refraining from "all bitterness and wrath and clamor and evil speaking" (Ephesians 4:31).

3. COMMITMENT TO OUR MINISTRY

We purpose to regularly attend the services of this church, support its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine (Matthew 18:15-17), and to contribute generously and cheerfully of our time, our talents, and our treasure "as the Lord hath prospered" (1 Corinthians 16:2) to its financial and spiritual vitality.

4. TEACHING OF SOUND DOCTRINE

We purpose to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), while "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15). Our Statement of Faith delineates what we believe the Holy Scriptures to teach, and we shall strive to defend and propagate these truths, both vigorously and graciously.

5. REACHING THE WORLD FOR CHRIST

We purpose to engage as ambassadors for Christ, witnessing to those who "believe not" (John 3:18) in both word and deed, seeking to win them to saving faith in Christ. We purpose to invest our resources to proclaim the Gospel to all: locally, regionally, and globally.

ARTICLE VII. PASTOR

Section I. Scriptural Qualifications

- A. His qualifications shall reflect the requirements as stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-6 and Titus 1:5-9 (cf. also Acts 20:17-35; 1 Timothy 6:10-12; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; 1 Peter 5:1-3).

No person shall be considered a candidate for the office of Pastor who has been divorced, regardless of circumstances.

Section II. Call of a Pastor

- A. When a vacancy occurs in the pastorate, the Board of Deacons shall elect a pulpit committee of five individuals, consisting of three Deacons and two members at large from the church. The Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall be the chairman of this committee, the duty of which shall be to seek a suitable Pastor. They shall interview each candidate and endeavor to hear him speak before recommending him as a candidate.
- B. Each candidate shall preach in one or more public services of the church.
- C. Each candidate shall be voted upon before considering another. No vote shall be taken on the same day of the candidate's appearance at church.
- D. The Pastor shall be called by a majority vote of the members present. Notice of the meeting shall be given by letter two weeks prior to the business meeting. The meeting shall also be announced from the pulpit. The vote shall be by written ballot.
- E. The Pulpit committee shall be responsible to notify the Pastor-elect, to report his acceptance to the congregation, and to make arrangements for his moving.
- F. Parsonage requirements for the Pastor's occupancy shall be the responsibility of the Board of Deacons.
- G. The Pulpit committee shall see that all candidates are reimbursed for reasonable expenses and shall present to the church a detailed report of all monies spent.
- H. The Pulpit committee shall immediately be dissolved upon call and acceptance of the Pastor.

Section III. Duties of the Pastor

- A. Upon assuming his duties as Pastor, he shall become a member of this church and shall be the moderator of this church and ex-officio member of all boards and committees except the pulpit committee when considering a new pastor. The Pastor

has the right and privilege to vote on any board or committee, especially in the case of a tie vote.

- B. The Pastor shall have spiritual oversight of all the work of the church.
- C. It shall be the duty of the Pastor to devote himself and his time to the service of the church, preaching the Word of God and administering the ordinances. He shall watch over himself and his flock, visiting, as far as time permits, all the members of the church, especially the sick and shut-ins. He shall lead the church in the work of evangelism and shall make himself available for pastoral counseling when needed.
- D. It shall be the privilege of the Pastor to serve other pulpits, without a loss of salary for as many as two (2) weeks but not more than two (2) Sundays out of any calendar year. In his absence, he shall arrange for a pulpit supply.

Section IV. Pastoral Benefits

- A. Parsonage. The church shall supply a parsonage or housing allowance adequate for the Pastor and his family, incurring, in mutual agreement with the Pastor, expenses for repair, improvement, maintenance, and insurance of the property, if approved by the Board of Trustees. The parsonage shall be considered the Pastor's home without being subject to use for church activities, except by invitation.
- B. Salary. The Pastor shall receive a salary for meeting the financial needs of his family, a sum agreed to by mutual agreement between Pastor and church.
- C. Vacation. The Pastor shall be granted an annual vacation with full pay, the length of which shall be determined by the church.
- D. Benefits. Car expense, insurance policies, hospitalization, social security, retirement, and expenses in connection with spiritual and pastoral development shall be considered and reviewed each fiscal year by the trustees and brought to the church for final vote.

Section V. Pastor's Term of Office

- A. He shall serve for an indefinite period of time with the reciprocal rights to terminate his services upon thirty days of notice.
- B. Accusations against the Pastor shall be submitted to the Deacons, and shall not be considered unless supported by the testimony of two or more witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19). If he err in doctrine or conduct, the Deacons shall, in brotherly love, attempt to correct him (Galatians 6:1). If this is not effective, the matter shall be referred to the church which alone has authority to act. At this time, the Pastor may be dismissed by majority vote of the active voting members present and voting after written notice has been mailed to all active members and after it has been announced at no less than two regular meetings and no less than one week prior to this meeting. The vote shall be by written ballot. The tellers are to be elected by the church body.
- C. If the Pastor is dismissed, he shall vacate the pulpit immediately, but shall receive thirty days pay. He shall vacate the parsonage within thirty days of his dismissal unless extended at the discretion of the church.

ARTICLE VIII. LICENSING AND ORDAINING

Section I. Licensing

- A. Any male member who, by his life and testimony before this church has given evidence of his piety, zeal, aptness to teach and call of God to the work of the ministry, may be licensed to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
A majority of the active members present may vote to grant the license at any regular church meeting.
- B. The license shall be terminated by similar action of the church for conduct adjudged unbecoming a licensed preacher of the Gospel, or upon request by the individual.

Section II. Ordaining

- A. Requirements for Ordination. This church recognizes the fact that only God can call a man to the ministry of the Gospel but believes that it is both scriptural and wise to have such a man commended to the ministry of the Gospel by a local church. The following are some of the normal qualifications to be met by those seeking ordination by this church.
 - 1. A personal knowledge of Christ as Savior.
 - 2. A high moral character with an evidence of spirituality in daily life.
 - 3. His academic preparation shall normally consist of three years of seminary work. This requirement may be waived if, in the judgment of the council and church, the candidate merits exception.
 - 4. A complete agreement with the Statement of Faith and covenant of this church, and a willingness to abide by its constitution.
 - 5. A written statement of belief and practice regarding the doctrines of the Bible to be presented to all members of the examining council.
 - 6. An oral examination before the examining council in which questions shall be asked relative to the candidate's Christian experience, his call to the ministry, his knowledge of the Bible, and his doctrinal position.
- B. Procedure for Ordination.
 - 1. If this church, by a majority vote of its active members present at any regular church service, decides that one of its members possesses the scriptural qualifications for ordination, the church shall elect an ordination committee for the single purpose of calling and assisting, but not participating with an examining council.
 - 2. After receiving the advice of the examining council, the church may vote to ordain the candidate. Upon favorable majority vote of the church members present and voting, the candidate may be ordained, inviting other churches to assist in the service also.
 - 3. Such ordination may be revoked by majority vote of the active church members present, for doctrinal defection and/or immorality.

Article IX. CHURCH OFFICERS

Section I. Their Qualifications.

A. Their Character.

The character of the Pastor and Deacons shall reflect the qualifications as stated in 1 Timothy (3:2-13) and Titus (1:5-9). All officers of this church shall abide by the requirements as stated in the church covenant, and should seek to minimize participation in outside secular organizations.

B. Their Membership.

They shall be members of this church and shall subscribe wholeheartedly to its Statement of Faith and constitution.

C. Their Standards.

The Pastor sets the standards of punctuality, job description, and dress for the officers and workers of the church. He shall be guided by the Bible, the constitution of this church, and his own conscience. He shall have the best spiritual interest of all members and visitors as basis for his standard.

D. Their Limitation.

The pastors, ministers and staff of Ambassador Baptist Church shall only actively participate in weddings and solemnize Holy Matrimony between one man and one woman.

Section II. The Nature of Officers.

A. Elected Officers Nominated by the Nominating Committee.

1. Deacons
2. Deaconesses
3. Trustees
4. Treasurer
5. Church Clerk
6. Head Usher

B. Appointed Individuals

1. Special committees as deemed necessary, which can be dissolved when it seems advisable.
2. Upfront personnel, musicians, teachers and ushers.

Section III. The Organization of the Church Officers.

- A. Deacons and Deaconesses. There shall be three (3) male members of the church serving as Deacons, if there are this many who possess the qualifications. Additional Deacons and Deaconesses shall be added as needed.
- B. Trustees. There shall be a minimum of three (3) male members of the church serving as Trustees. Additional Trustees may be added [as needed].

Section IV. Duties of Officers.

A. Duties of Elected Officers.

1. Deacons.

- a. The Deacons shall be ready to assist the Pastor in spiritual matters. They shall be responsible for obtaining pulpit supplies if the Pastor is not able to do so.
- b. The Deacons shall elect a chairman from among themselves and shall be responsible for the leadership of church services in the Pastor's absence. They shall also elect an assistant chairman who shall act as secretary and preside in the absence of the chairman.
- c. The Pastor and Deacons shall interview and examine each applicant for church membership.
- d. The Deacons shall assist the Pastor in administering the ordinances, visitation, caring for the sick and needy and such other duties as the church may delegate to them.
- e. The Pastor and Deacons shall be in charge of all disciplinary measures and shall carry out such in accordance with provisions of this constitution.
- f. The Deacons shall be responsible for reviewing annually the church membership.

2. Deaconesses.

- a. The deaconesses shall serve in conjunction with the Deacons in caring for spiritual interests of the membership and assisting with the ordinances.
- b. The deaconesses shall arrange for and serve refreshments at all funerals of church members or others for whom such services are held at the church. These refreshments shall be waived if requested by the family.

3. Trustees.

- a. The trustees shall direct the financial needs of the church, exercise proper supervision over church property, arrange for payment of church salaries and perform all other responsibilities pertaining to the temporal needs of the church. The trustees shall not make disposition of, or purchase any real property for the church except as directed by the church at a business meeting.
- b. The trustees shall appoint a financial secretary to serve the church and Sunday School. All offerings shall be counted by a minimum of two (2) designated persons on the church premises or another designated location before the money is deposited.
- c. The trustees shall elect a chairman from among themselves and an assistant chairman to preside in the absence of the chairman and to act as secretary.
- d. The trustees shall annually appoint a budget committee to review the church budget and finances and present a proposed budget for the coming year. The

proposed budget shall be presented to the trustees first, who shall in turn recommend it to the church for adoption at the annual meeting.

4. Church Treasurer.
 - a. The church treasurer shall maintain an accurate and auditable record of the finances of the church.
 - b. The church treasurer shall receive from the financial secretary a record of all funds of the church and make disbursements as authorized by the church or trustees.
 - c. The church treasurer shall present a written report of receipts and disbursements to the church each quarter.
 - d. The financial records shall be audited annually following the close of the fiscal year and an auditor's report presented to the church at the next scheduled business meeting. The trustees shall see that the auditor's report is presented.
5. Financial Secretary.
 - a. The financial secretary shall receive, record, and deposit all funds contributed to the church and Sunday School.
 - b. The church financial secretary shall distribute envelopes among the members of the church, and shall keep a complete and confidential record of all individual contributions.
 - c. The financial secretary shall provide a written statement of gifts to each contributor upon request.
6. Church Clerk.
 - a. The clerk shall keep full minutes of all transactions of the church at its business meetings and provide copies to the Pastor and Chairman of the Deacons.
 - b. The clerk shall keep an accurate record of the membership of the church.
 - c. The clerk shall keep a record of the names of all who are baptized with the date of baptism.
 - d. The clerk shall keep a record of the admission, removal, dismissal and death of the members, showing the date of event and note the same briefly on the register.
 - e. The clerk shall present annually a written report of the state of the church, giving an account of the members received, removed, dismissed and deceased.
 - f. The clerk shall be responsible for writing letters of transfer or dismissal upon recommendation of the church.
 - g. The clerk shall conduct the correspondence of the church when so instructed.

7. Head Usher.
 - a. The head usher and his assistants shall promote order, comfort, reverence, and unity in the public services of the church.
 - b. He shall constrain latecomers from disturbing the services, collect the offerings, seat the worshippers, keep an accurate record of attendance at all services and help maintain the dignity of the house of worship.
 - c. He shall appoint a substitute in his absence and designate ushers for each service.

C. Duties of Appointed Individuals.

- a. All appointed officers and committees shall execute the functions normally expected of them under the supervision of the Pastor.
- b. The Pastor shall define for the appointed officers and committees their responsibilities.
- c. [The Pastor(s), staff, and all employees of Ambassador Baptist Church represent its ministry and mission by virtue of their employment.]

Article X. ELECTIONS

Section I. Elected Officers and Their Tenure

- A. All offices of elective status shall be filled at the annual election of the church. This election shall be held the first Wednesday in December each year.
- B. Tenure of office shall be one year, except for deacons, deaconesses, and trustees, who shall be elected for a period of three years, and whose terms shall expire in such a way that one-third of the offices shall be eligible for election or re-election each year. They shall hold office until a successor is elected and installed. They may immediately succeed themselves.
- C. Assumption of office date and beginning of the fiscal year shall be January 1, each year.

Section II. Nominating Committee

- A. Membership. The nominating committee shall consist of the Pastor (as chairman), deacons, and two adult church members, elected prior to the nominations each year.
- B. Responsibility.
 1. The nominating committee shall work with the Pastor and church clerk to prepare a list of nominees for each church office that will be vacated at the end of the church year.
 2. They shall select from the church membership candidates they believe are best qualified for each elective office. These candidates shall be interviewed as to their agreement and ability to accept the office, should they be elected.

3. The nominating committee shall prepare a proposed election ballot and post this in a conspicuous place in the church and publish an insert for the church bulletin at least three weeks before the election.
4. Any member wishing to make additional nominations shall do so in writing to the chairman of the nominating committee at least two (2) weeks prior to the election. No further nominations will be allowed.
5. The nominating committee shall notify and interview each additional nominee as to their agreement and ability to accept the office, should they be elected.
6. The names of additional nominees, if any, shall be added to the new finalized ballot, which shall be posted in a conspicuous place in the church and printed in the church bulletin at least one week before the election.
7. Candidates for office shall conform to Article IX, Section I.

Section III. Vacancies

Upon the vacancies of office, the Pastor, with the Deacons, shall appoint a qualified member to serve the balance of the fiscal year, at which time the church will elect a qualified member to fill the vacant office. The appointment to fill an unexpired term of less than one year shall not be counted as part of a three-year term.

Section IV. Requirement for Election.

Candidates receiving a majority of votes from the active members present and voting shall be declared elected.

Section V. Vote by Ballot.

Elections shall be by written ballot. The chairman of the meeting shall appoint tellers who shall collect, count the ballots and report to the meeting the results of the election.

Section VI. Right to Vote.

The government of this church shall be vested in its membership. Voting privileges shall be extended to active members in good and regular standing, [present at any given business meeting], eighteen (18) years of age and older, with each member having one vote.

Article XI. BUSINESS MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH

- A. The annual business meeting shall be held soon after the ending of the fiscal year, which runs January 1 through December 31. All special committees shall present their reports. The church treasurer shall also present a full statement of the church's financial position.
- B. Three (3) quarterly business meetings shall be held.

C. All special business meetings, with the exception of those specified in D. 1. (below) shall be announced seven (7) days in advance.

D. Other Business Meetings.

1. Deacons, trustees, and subsidiary organizations shall hold business meetings as needed to carry out their responsibilities.
2. Any business meeting may be called by the Pastor when he deems necessary.
3. Necessary church business may be conducted at any regular church service as required.

E. Rules of Order.

The most recent edition of Roberts's Rules of Order shall govern the parliamentary procedure.

Section III. Quorum

Twenty-five percent (25%) of the active voting members of the church, including two officers, shall constitute quorum.

Article XII. SUBSIDIARY CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

It is recognized that this church may have within it various subsidiary organizations such as the Sunday School, men's and women's fellowships, youth groups, choirs, and other organizations.

Section I. Relation of These Groups to the Church.

- A. All such groups shall be considered arms of the church and shall exist for the purpose of extending the ministry and outreach of the church.
- B. All such groups shall be governed by the constitution of the church, and any procedures shall in no wise conflict with that of the church.
- C. All such groups shall be under the supervision of the Pastor and shall be responsible to the church as a whole.
- D. All officers of church organizations shall be members in good and regular standing in this church. Any person ceasing to be a member in good standing shall automatically forfeit any office he holds in any church organization and shall return within one week any monies, book, minutes, or other property of the organization.

Section II. Finances of Subsidiary Organizations

- A. No organization shall have a separate bank account. All monies received in such organizations shall be turned over to the financial secretary and church treasurer and properly recorded.
- B. No organization shall financially support missionary projects separately from the church.

Article XIII. CHURCH BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

Section I. Use of Buildings.

The church buildings and facilities shall be used only for such meetings and activities as shall promote the Gospel and honor of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Section II. Authority for Use of Building.

The Pastor and the Deacons shall exercise the authority to permit the use of the buildings and shall refuse the use of the buildings for any meeting or activity contrary to church policy and belief.

Section III. Weddings and Funerals.

The church buildings may be used by members for weddings and funerals. Others desiring the use of church and buildings for weddings and funerals must have the consent of the Pastor and the Deacons.

Section IV. Profit Making

The building and facilities of this church shall not be used for profit making.

Section V. Property Rights.

Persons dismissed or who have withdrawn from the membership of the church have no right to make claim upon any of the church property and any such property in their possession shall be returned immediately.

Article XIV. FINANCIAL POLICY

This church shall be supported by voluntary giving of tithes and offerings by God's people. We believe that every Christian should seek to give systematically, regularly, proportionately, sacrificially, and cheerfully of his substance to the Lord's work through the local church (1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8-9). No means such as raffles, suppers, rummage sales and other similar methods shall be used by the church to raise money for its support.

Articles XV. MEMORIALS

- A. The Church may accept any designated contribution, bequest or device consistent with its general tax-exempt purposes, as set forth in its Articles of Incorporation and this Constitution. As so limited, donor-designated contributions will be accepted for special funds, purposes or uses and such designations generally will be honored. However, the church shall reserve all right, title, and interest in and to and control of such contributions, as well as full discretion in the ultimate expenditure or distributions thereof in connection with any special fund, purpose, or use.

Further, the church shall retain complete control over all donated funds (including designated contributions) and shall exercise unlimited discretion as to their use so as to ensure that such funds will be used to carry out its tax-exempt purposes.

- B. The Pastor and Deacons shall supervise the details regarding donated funds, and shall appoint a committee consisting of one deacon and one trustee together with the donor or donors and this committee shall consult together regarding details. All memorials involving real or personal property shall be acceptable to the Pastor and trustees before being received.

Article XVI. MISSIONS

This church shall support missionary causes and educational institutions consistent with its own belief and practices. A representative from each educational institution and all missionaries supported by this church shall indicate full agreement with the doctrinal position of this church by signing its statement of faith without mental reservations. Designated gifts will be honored if in harmony with the doctrines and practices of this church.

Article XVII. CONVENING OF A COUNCIL

In cases of difficulty, for the decisions of which the church desires the advice and wisdom of disinterested brethren, letters may be sent to neighboring Baptist churches of like faith and practice by the church clerk at the request of the Pastor and Deacons, asking them to appoint messengers to meet with messengers from this church on a specified day. To this council, when organized, the case shall be referred and their advice shall be laid before the church by the Pastor and Deacons at the following business meeting for further action.

Article XVIII. DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH

- A. Prior to the dissolution of this church all of its debts shall be fully satisfied.
- B. Prior to dissolution, by corporate vote of a majority of its eligible membership, all assets and/or holdings shall be irrevocably designated to such other non-profit religious corporations as are in agreement with the letter and spirit of its constitution and in conformity with:
 - 1. Requirements of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (Section 501c-3).
 - 2. Provisions of Chapter 317 Minnesota Statutes.
- C. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among or accrue to the personal benefit of members or other individuals.

Article XIX. AMENDMENTS

- A. Suggested amendments or topics concerning possible amendments shall be moved and seconded by majority vote of eligible members and given to the Pastor and Deacons for prayerful consideration. Such a motion may be made during any business meeting of the church.
- B. After consideration, within a reasonable time period, and with advance notice, posted in the church and printed in the church bulletin calling a business meeting, the Pastor and Deacons shall report to the membership their opinions and recommendation. Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by a majority of eligible members, the proposed amendment shall be posted in a conspicuous place in the church for

fourteen (14) days prior to the business meeting set for possible ratification by a three-fourths majority vote of eligible members present.

- C. Ratified amendments shall be provisional for one year.

Article XX. ADOPTION

The original constitution and Statement of Faith were adopted April 1, 1984. This current constitution and Statement of Faith were revised on November 1, 2015, and supersede and cancel all other resolutions, understandings and agreements, with the exception of the Articles of Incorporation.