

Evanston Baptist Church

Constitution & Bylaws

with amendments approved by the members on November 11, 2012,
and with further revisions approved by the members on April 13, 2014.

CONSTITUTION

Article 1: NAME

The name of this non-profit corporation shall be Evanston Baptist Church, located in Evanston, Illinois. This corporation will further be referred to in the constitution and bylaws as the “church”. The church’s contact information is:

Evanston Baptist Church

Meets Sundays at 10:45am in Downtown Evanston

1601 Sherman Avenue, Lower Level

Mailing Address: P.O. Box. 5185, Evanston, IL 60204

Church Phone: 872-213-0822

www.evanstonbaptistchurch.org

<http://www.facebook.com/evanstonbaptistchurch>

twitter: @EvanstonBaptist

Article 2: PURPOSE

By the grace of God, this church exists to glorify God by fulfilling Jesus’ Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

Article 3: DOCTRINAL BELIEFS

The Baptist Faith and Message (2000) shall be the doctrinal statement of the Church, the text of which follows:

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. 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. 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 Saviour, 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

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's 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. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and 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. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, 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. 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 Saviour.

B. 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.

C. 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.

D. 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 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 pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of 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.

VII. 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 Saviour, 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. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

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.

VIII. 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 be 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; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. 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.

X. 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.

XI. 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. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God 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.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. 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. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means 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.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. 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 between the various

Christian denominations, 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.

XV. 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. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. 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; 1 Corinthians 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.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. 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 state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

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.

XVIII. 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. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

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. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

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. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

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.

Article 4: COVENANT

Acknowledging God's Son, Jesus Christ, as Savior and Lord, welcoming believer's baptism by immersion, recognizing that the integrity and vitality of the church are precious to our Lord, and trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit, I say to Evanston Baptist Church, you can count on me:

To be faithful in attendance and to unite with another church as soon as possible when I move from this place.
"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:25)

To help sustain the church through regular giving.

"On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made." (1 Corinthians 16:2)

To bear witness to the gospel in the world.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

To shun destructive chatter.

"I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder." (2 Corinthians 12:20) "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." Ephesians 4:29)

To join in the care and encouragement of members of the fellowship.

"If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." (1 Corinthians 12:26-27)

To seek service according to church needs and my spiritual gifts.

"Each one of you should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in it's various forms." (1 Peter 4:10)

To so conduct myself as to bring honor to the Lord.

"Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ." (Philippians 1:27a)

To be missions minded.

"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.'" (Matthew 28:18-20)

To biblically express and address grievances with restraint and proportionality, placing high value on unity in the church.

"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:2-3)

To study and train for growth in understanding, skill and spirit.

"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

To pray regularly and specifically for the concerns of the church.

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful." (Colossians 4:2)

To honor and defend biblical preaching, teaching and ministry.

"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage - with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry." (2 Timothy 4:2-5)

To make myself accountable to these standards.

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." (Ephesians 5:21)

To resign or to accept removal for chronic, striking and unrepentant indifference to these standards.

"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector." (Matthew 18:15-18)

Article 5: AFFILIATION

This church shall be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, Illinois Baptist State Association, and the Chicago Metropolitan Baptist Association.

Article 6: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 — Admission of Members

Any person presenting a written account of conversion to faith in Jesus Christ and signing the Church Covenant may request membership on the basis of one of the following:

1. By believer's baptism by immersion
2. By letter or promise of letter from another church of like faith and order
3. By statement regarding earlier baptistic baptism
4. By restoration on the basis of repentance

The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence, as the elders deem appropriate. All those requesting membership will be interviewed by the elders before being presented for vote of the church members. After having been recommended by the elders for admission and accepted by vote of the members at any regular or special meeting of the members, new members shall at that point relinquish their membership in other churches.

Section 2 – Duties and Privileges of Membership

Each church member contributes to the ministries and life of the church. This is a privilege and expectation, and it is consistent with the commitment outlined in the Church Covenant.

Participation is consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only members of this congregation may serve in the ministries of this church. However non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the elders. Non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation.

Under 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 other matters as may be submitted to a vote.

Section 3 – Church Discipline

The purpose of church discipline is to:

- reconcile an individual with the church as a whole,
- pursue purity in the church, and
- maintain our healthy witness as a church, by reflecting God's holiness.

A member may be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church if he or she:

- is consistently and intentionally neglectful of his or her duties as agreed upon in the church covenant, or
- is guilty of conduct which dishonors Jesus Christ or opposes the welfare of the church.

It is always guided by scripture (Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1-2). Church discipline is contemplated only after Biblical, diligent, individual, private admonition has failed. It can include: admonition by the elders or congregation, suspension from communion for a definite period, deposition from office, and in an extreme case, exclusion from fellowship and/or removal from the membership of the church.

Section 4 – Termination of Membership

The church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership:

- following a church member's death,
- after he or she has joined with another church,
- as an act of church discipline, upon the vote of at least two-thirds of the members present at any members meeting, or
- upon the request of a member.

BYLAWS

Article 1: MEETINGS

Section 1 - Worship Services

One of the elders shall preside at all of the church's worship services, and in their absence this duty shall be performed by another one of the members of the church.

Section 2 - Worship Services on the Lord's Day

Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day (Sunday), and may be held throughout the week as the church determines.

Section 3 - Ordinances

The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once each month.

Baptism shall be administered by the elders, by some other person designated by the elders, or in the case of no elders serving at the time by another member authorized by the church.

Section 4 - Members' Meetings

1. In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. There shall be a regular members' meeting at least every other month, at a time agreed upon by the members that is separate from a public worship service. These regular meetings shall be announced for at least two weeks preceding the meeting, including at least two Lord's Day services.
3. The elders shall designate an elder to preside as moderator at each members' meeting. The elders shall see that the meetings are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the officers.
4. A quorum shall be understood to be 60% of the membership. A quorum shall be required for matters presented to the members for a vote at members meetings. Without a quorum, the members' meeting may continue, but no votes may be taken. All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present.
5. An annual budget with monthly goals for both contributions and spending shall be approved by the membership at a members' meeting not more than three months after the start of the fiscal year. Prior to this approval and subject to the elders' discretion, expenditures may not exceed 105% of the prior year's level of approved spending per budget category.
6. At any members' meeting, officers may be elected and positions filled as needed.
7. Special members' meetings may be called as required by the elders. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at all public services of the church for at least two weeks preceding the meeting, including at least two Lord's Day worship services prior to the meeting.
8. Items may be added to the agenda of a members' meeting at the written request of twenty percent of the members. The elders shall honor those members' written request at the next members' meeting.

A vote of three-fourths of the church members present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be required for the following actions:

1. Lease, purchase, sale or mortgage of any real property
2. Approval of any borrowing of money by anyone on behalf of the church
3. Approval of all spending greater than 5% over the amounts which have been already approved in the annual church budget.
4. Amendments of the Constitution and Bylaws
5. Election or termination of any officers of the church.

Article 2: LEADERSHIP

Section 1 – Summary

The Biblical offices in the church are pastors (also called elders and overseers) and deacons. In addition, the church recognizes the administrative offices of clerk and treasurer under this constitution. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

Section 2 – Elders (also called pastors and overseers)

The elders shall be comprised of not less than three men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in I Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9. A majority of the active eldership shall be composed of church members not in the regular pay of the church, and no elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure.

Upon their election by the congregation, the elders shall oversee the church's ministry to people and the use of church's financial and ministry resources. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6 and I 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 church shall recognize men who are members of the church gifted and willing to serve in this calling in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. Those men who are elected to the office of elder shall be received by the congregation as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders. The newly elected elder's term begins immediately upon election. This recognition of elders elected to serve shall be reaffirmed by the church triennially in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. After an elder, other than the senior or associate pastor(s), has served two consecutive three-year terms, he may only be elected to the office of elder after at least one year of not serving in any office of the church, in order to give them a "sabbatical" type rest from their ministry and to encourage other men who are members of the church to also serve as elected elders.

An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and I Timothy 5:17–21. Any of the elders may be dismissed by a three-fourths vote of the members at any members' meeting of the church.

The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The elders are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions.

The elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders may also hire individuals to serve in paid staff positions that have been included in the annual budget goals approved by the congregation at the annual members' meeting. However, all candidates for all paid staff positions shall be announced at a members

meeting before a final hiring decision is made by the elders, in order to give the members an opportunity to share with the elders any reasons why a candidate may not be fit for service in that particular position. Furthermore, all candidates to fill the positions of senior and associate pastor shall be elected by a vote of the membership in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall be determined by the elders or by those to whom the elders have delegated hiring authority for that position. The elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member.

Each year the elders, after consultation with the deacons and the membership, shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for discussion at a specially-called budget meeting and called up for a vote at the following members' meeting. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.

The elders shall elect a chairman of elders' meetings and shall also elect one of their number to serve as moderator of members' meetings. For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Illinois the elders shall elect one of their number to serve as the president of the corporation.

Section 3 – Senior Pastor

The senior pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in Article 2, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 3, Section 3.

He shall preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office or as set forth in the constitution.

In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties and any of his duties may also be delegated.

Section 4 – Associate Pastors

The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the senior pastor is that of associate.

An associate pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in Article 2, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 3, Section 4. He shall assist the senior pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor or as set forth in the constitution.

In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness) the associate pastor(s) shall assume the primary responsibility for his duties under the oversight of the elders.

Section 5 – Ministry Interns

The elders may also choose to offer internships to those who desire to gain ministry experience and explore various aspects of Christian ministry in order to discern their giftedness. The goal of these ministry internships shall be to train Christian men and women for future ministry. These persons shall be designated as ministry interns and shall not be considered pastors or elders or deacons. They shall serve under the oversight and authority of the elders. Whether or not a particular intern candidate will be paid or unpaid shall be determined by the elders on a case-by-case basis. The length of each internship shall be determined by the elders on a case-by-case basis. The elders shall have the authority to hire persons to serve in paid intern positions that have been included in the annual budget goals approved by the congregation at the annual members' meeting. However, all candidates for all intern positions (paid or unpaid) shall be announced at a members meeting before a final hiring decision is made by the elders, in order to give the members an opportunity to share with the elders any reasons why a candidate may not be fit for service in that particular internship position.

Section 6 – Deacons

The office of deacon is described in I Timothy 3:8–13 and Acts 6:1–7. The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men and women who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of service. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons. They shall be elected to a term no longer than a maximum of three years. After a deacon has served two consecutive three-year terms, he or she, may only be elected to the office of deacon after at least one year of not serving in any office of the church, in order to give them a “sabbatical” type rest from their ministry and to encourage other members of the church to also serve as elected deacons.

Deacons shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help others and those with gifts of administration. At least one of the deacons shall be particularly responsible to receive, hold, and disburse a fund for benevolence. The deacon(s) responsible for this benevolence fund shall report

on its use to the elders at the request of the elders. The deacon(s) responsible for this fund shall also report to the church only the total receipts and total disbursements of this fund at the request of any of the members.

The deacons, with the agreement of the elders, may establish unpaid administrative positions or committees of members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the church.

Section 7 – Clerk

It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and render reports as requested by the pastor, the elders, the deacons, or the church. The clerk shall also issue letters of transfer or dismissal as directed by a vote of the membership.

The clerk shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year.

In the absence or incapacity of the clerk the elders shall appoint a member to perform the duties of the church clerk.

For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Illinois, the clerk shall serve as the secretary of the corporation as well as the registered agent of the corporation.

The church clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this constitution are made available to all church members.

Section 8 – Treasurer

The treasurer, who shall not be an active elder or paid church staff member, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting reports of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the church at each members' meeting. The treasurer's responsibilities may be delegated with the approval of the elders. The treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The treasurer shall render to the elders monthly, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial condition of the church.

The treasurer shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year.

Article 3 – ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS

Section 1 – Principles

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles:

- Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process;
- Nominations should proceed with the support of the elders;
- All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members;
- The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 2 – Selection of Officers

The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church.

Names of nominees to serve as elders, deacons, clerk, or treasurer shall be presented by the elders and the election shall proceed as directed by the moderator.

The elders should seek recommendations and involvement from the membership in the nomination process. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting.

The moderator shall declare elected all candidates receiving a 75% majority of all votes cast. Abstentions will not be considered as votes cast.

The persons elected shall assume the responsibilities of their respective offices upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated.

Section 3 – Calling of the Senior Pastor

In the calling of any man to this position, the same basic process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential senior pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in

no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as senior pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

Section 4 – Calling of Associate Pastor

In the calling of any man to the position of associate pastor, the same basic process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential associate pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be called as associate pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of him and his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

Section 5 – Responsibilities of Clerk, Treasurer, and Pastor during any time that less than 3 elders have been elected by the membership

If the minimum of 3 elders (the majority of whom are not receiving pay from the church) have not been elected by the congregation, then the members currently serving the church as Clerk, Treasurer and Senior Pastor (and Associate Pastor and/or Elder, if any) shall carry out the following responsibilities:

- The business affairs, property and upkeep of the church shall be managed and controlled (subject to the directions of the membership) by the Clerk, Treasurer, Senior Pastor, (and Associate Pastor and/or Elder, if any) which shall serve in the role of directors of the corporation.
- Clerk, Treasurer, Senior Pastor, (and Associate Pastor and/or Elder, if any) shall hold an annual meeting during the first quarter of each calendar year, at the time and place determined by the Senior Pastor or, in his absence, by a vote of the membership. At any meeting of the Clerk, Treasurer, Senior Pastor, (and Associate Pastor and/or Elder, if any), at least two of them shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum.
- In the event of the resignation of either the Clerk, Treasurer, Senior Pastor, (and Associate Pastor and/or Elder, if any) before the election of the minimum of 3 Elders (the majority of whom are not receiving pay from the church), the members of the church shall elect another member of the church to replace the person that resigned and to carry out the responsibilities listed in this section so that the church continues to be served by a minimum of 3 persons.

Article 4 — AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

The Statement of Faith and Church Covenant may be amended by a three-quarters vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced at church services for two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

This constitution and by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

The revised version of this constitution shall be made available to all church members by the church clerk.

Article 5 — FISCAL YEAR

A fiscal year is a year as reckoned for taxing or accounting purposes. The fiscal year of the church shall commence on January 1 of each year and end on December 31.

Article 6 — DISSOLUTION OF ASSETS

Upon the dissolution of the church, the officers shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the church, transfer all assets to the Chicago Metro Baptist Association to be used exclusively for religious purposes.

Article 7 – INDEMNIFICATION

Section 1 – Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

Section 2 – Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.

Section 3 – Procedure

If a quorum of the elders is not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of elders seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may be made by the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership. This appointment shall be determined by nomination and vote of the membership in a members meeting.

Article 8 – 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, e.g., Matthew 18: 15–20, I 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 pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities.