



# EMMANUEL

## BAPTIST CHURCH

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CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS



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## CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

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### PREAMBLE

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The Bible admonishes us by saying, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Cor. 14:40). To this end we, members of Emmanuel Baptist Church of West Shore, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, solemnly and sincerely set forth the following constitution by which we willingly and cheerfully agree to be governed.

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### ARTICLE I - NAME

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This assembly of believers has been legally established as Emmanuel Baptist Church of West Shore. The assembly is hereafter referred to as "Emmanuel Baptist Church" in this constitution.

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### ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

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The purpose of the Church is the edification of Christians through the teaching of God's Word, the salvation of souls, the world-wide proclamation of God's saving grace expressed in the shed blood and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary, the promotion of Godly worship and the defense of the "Faith once delivered" (Jude 3) until He comes.

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### ARTICLE III - AUTONOMY

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Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be and will remain independent and autonomous. The New Testament churches were organized on this basis and although they had fellowship with other churches of like doctrine and precious faith for the promotion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, they maintained their autonomy. We may fellowship with other churches and Christian organizations as long as this relationship does not infringe upon the independence or autonomy of this church.

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### ARTICLE IV - CHURCH COVENANT

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Having been born again by the Word, Spirit and grace of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, being justified on the grounds of His shed blood and acknowledging our willingness to confess Him as our Savior before men, we do now, in the presence of Almighty God and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into this covenant with one another as the body of Christ.

We commit therefore, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this local assembly within the body of Christ in knowledge, holiness and comfort, to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully, scripturally and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the spread of the Gospel and relief of the poor through all nations by means of support to like-faith missionaries, mission organizations and para-church organizations.

We also commit to support one another in practicing spiritual devotions, bringing up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and seeking the salvation of our families, our acquaintances and all children and adults within our local area of ministry. We commit to seek to fulfill the Great Commission by reaching the lost and teaching those who accept Christ all things that we have been commanded and taught in God's word. (Matthew 28:19-20). We also commit to fulfilling our role as salt and light allowing Christ to shine through our lives so that our good works will draw others to Christ to the glory of the Father. (Matthew 5:13-16).

Through the provision that God has made for victorious Christian living, it shall be our desire to abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul, and to live a life of separation from sinful and worldly practices, with a desire to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Through the love of Christ, we will put away from us all bitterness and wrath, anger and clamor, evil speaking, and be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us.

We recognize that one of the outstanding evidences of Christianity is love, according to the words of our blessed Lord when He said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." (John 13:35)

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful to secure reconciliation without delay. (Matthew 5:23-24; Ephesians 4:26) And this we do depending entirely upon the aid of our Heavenly Father, Who so loved the world that He gave us His Only Begotten Son for our salvation, and of Jesus Christ our Savior, Who hath redeemed us with His Own Precious Blood, and the indwelling Holy Spirit, our Comforter, Teacher and Guide.

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## **ARTICLE V – CONFESSION OF FAITH/DOCTRINAL STATEMENT**

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### **1. The Holy Scriptures**

We believe the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to man. The Scriptures are inerrant and infallible in the original writings and have been providentially preserved and will continue to be preserved until all are fulfilled. The Bible is, therefore, the supreme and final authority in all matters of doctrine, faith, and life. (Psalm 12:6-7; Matthew 5:17-18; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21)

### **2. The Trinity**

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. All three persons are co-eternal, co-existent, and of one essence. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 14:10, 26; II Corinthians 13:14)

### **3. God the Father**

We believe God the Father is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, and is a spirit. (Psalms 139:1-12; John 4:24)

#### **4. God the Son**

We believe Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh and has forever existed with the Father and the Holy Spirit. In His incarnation, He was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary and yet is true God and true man. (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; John 1:1-3, 14, 18; 8:58; 10:30-33; Luke 1:30-37; Philippians 2:5-7)

#### **5. God the Holy Spirit**

We believe the Holy Spirit is a person: Who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; Who regenerates the sinner by the Word of God; Who permanently indwells each believer; Who seals, enlightens, instructs, and guides every born-again person; and Who is the efficient power for godly living, Christian service, and spiritual worship. (John 3:5-7; 14:16-17, 26; 16:7-15; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 12:12-14; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; I Peter 1:23; I John 2:20,27)

#### **6. The Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ**

We believe that Jesus Christ died for the sins of mankind, according to the Scriptures, both as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice; therefore, all who believe in Him are justified on the grounds of His shed blood. We believe He arose bodily from the dead on the third day in the same body in which He suffered and died. We also believe our Lord ascended into Heaven where He is seated at the right hand of the Father and is the High Priest and Divine Advocate to the Father for all who believe. We believe Jesus Christ has procured for every believer eternal redemption and everlasting life by His finished work on the cross and His unceasing ministry of intercession in glory. (Mark 16:19; John 3:16, 20, 27; Romans 5:9; I Corinthians 15:3-4; Hebrews 5:9; 7:25; 8:1; 9:12; I John 2:1)

#### **7. The Second Coming**

We believe in the blessed hope, the personal, premillennial, pretribulational and imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which is known as the rapture of the church. We also believe in the personal, visible and glorious return of Christ to the earth with His saints at the end of the Great Tribulation. When He returns to the earth with His saints, we believe that Jesus Christ will establish His Millennial Kingdom and will reign for one thousand years. (John 14:3; I Thessalonians 4:13-17; Titus 2:13; Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-6)

#### **8. The Creation and the Fall of Man**

We believe in the Biblical account of creation as accomplished in six successive, literal 24-hour days of creative activity, with God resting on the seventh. We believe that man was created by the direct act of God in the image of God. We believe that man sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death which is separation from God. As a result, all human beings are born with a sinful nature, are totally depraved and will all fall short of God's standard. To be accepted by God, each individual must be born-again. (Genesis 1:1-3:24; Exodus 20:8-11; 31:17; John 1:3,10; John 3:1-21; Romans 3:10, 23; 5:12; Colossians 1:16-17)

## **9. The Nature of the Church**

The Word of God says the universal church is the body of Christ. We believe that the universal church of Jesus Christ is composed solely of born-again people who have been called out from among the Jews and Gentiles to become the body and bride of our Lord. Christ is the Head of the church, and the Holy Spirit is the active agent of the Godhead Who ever seeks to bring about within its ranks obedience to the Word of God and the Will of God. The body of Christ unites believers to each other and all to Christ. The church's chief purpose of existence is to evangelize the world and disciple believers in God's Word.

The Word of God clearly teaches the establishment and continuance of local churches. The Holy Spirit provides the members of the local church with all the gifts necessary to evangelize its community and edify its members. Biblical local churches are fully autonomous and free of any external authority or control. The ordinances of water baptism and the Lord's Supper are administered by and through the local church. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; 2:41-42; 8:36-38; 13:1-4; 14:27; 15:14, 19-31; 20:17, 28-32; Romans 1:16; 16:1, 4; I Corinthians 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 11:23-26; 12: 12-14; II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23, 24; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11; I Peter 5:1-4)

## **10. Leadership of the Church**

We believe that the two church offices defined in the scriptures are pastor and deacon. The qualifications for these offices are clearly defined in scripture. The qualifications for the pastor are defined in I Timothy 3:1-7, I Peter 5:1-4 and Titus 1:5-9. The qualifications for deacons are defined in I Timothy 3:8-13. The reference to both pastors' and deacons' relationship to their wives clearly demonstrates that scripture reserves these roles to men. (Acts 6:1-7; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-4)

## **11. The Resurrection of the Dead**

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just (saved) at the Rapture, and of the unjust (unsaved) at the end of time (John 5:28-29; I Corinthians 15:51-57; I Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 20:11-15).

## **12. The Eternal State of the Saved and the Lost**

We believe in a literal Heaven and a literal Hell. Heaven is the place of eternal, conscious joy for all who receive Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Hell is the place of eternal, conscious punishment in the Lake of Fire for all who reject Jesus Christ and die in their sin. (Psalms 9:17; 16:11; John 14:1-6, 8:24; Philippians 1:21, 23; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 20:10-15)

## **13. The Personality of Satan**

We believe Satan is a personal being, a fallen angel, the prince of demons, the god of this age, the enticer and deceiver, the adversary of Christ and His people and the accuser of the brethren. His eternal destiny is the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6,7; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; John 8:44; II Corinthians 4:3,4; I Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:9,10, 20:30)

## **14. Separation and Sanctification**

We believe that God's Word teaches non-conformity to the world for every believer; that born-again people should maintain a lifestyle distinct from the ungodly philosophies of the current world system demonstrating love for Christ by keeping his commandments; that it is clearly commanded of God to all believers to shun all sinful, worldly practices and to be holy as He is Holy. We believe positional sanctification occurs at the moment of regeneration and practical sanctification is to be progressive throughout the earthly life span of a believer. God's provision for holy living is in the believer's identification with Christ in His death, resurrection and ascension; the indwelling person and power of the Holy Spirit and the believer's yieldedness to Him; and by the powerful Word of God. (John 14:15; 17:17; Romans 12:1-2; I Corinthians 6:19,20; II Corinthians 6:1-18; Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 1:15; 5:25-27; Colossians 1:13; 3:1-4; Hebrews 4:12; 10:1,14;)

## **15. Our Purpose in the World**

We believe that God has called us to be in the world but not of the world nor to love the world or the things in the world. However, Christ set an example for us by interacting closely with sinners yet remaining pure and sinless. We are sinful and yet forgiven. We have a responsibility to interact with those who do not know Christ in order to spread the gospel and let the light of Christ shine through us before men. Our faith can only be seen through our good works. Biblical teaching, fellowship, and accountability among believers is critical to balance grace, maintaining holiness while performing good works before and on behalf of all people. (Matthew 9:10-12; 15:5-9; John 15:19; 1 Corinthians 5:9-11; Ephesians 2:8-10; James 2:14-17; 1 John 1:8-9; 2:15-17)

## **16. Ordinances**

We believe the Lord Jesus instituted two ordinances the church is commanded to observe: water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper.

While recognizing water baptism has no saving merit, it is our conviction that after one is saved, baptism is the next step of obedience in order to portray to the world the believer's union with Christ's death, burial and resurrection. It is our conviction that the Biblical method of water baptism is immersion. We further believe that water baptism is observed but once as a sign of identification and a testimony to newness of life.

We believe Jesus Christ instituted the Lord's Supper to commemorate His death until He comes. The Lord's Supper is commemorative and is to be observed often as a memorial of the broken body and shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:9-10; John 3:23; Acts 8:38; Romans 6:4; I Corinthians 11:23-33; Colossians 2:9-13)

## **17. Family Relationships**

A. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God, but that God has established distinct and separate roles for men and woman in the home and in the church. The husband is to be the servant leader in the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for ordination by the church. This does not preclude women from serving as missionaries in appropriate roles. (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:18; I Timothy 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)

B. We believe that God has established the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the Church and submit to the headship of Christ. The wife is to submit herself to the scriptural leadership of her own husband as the church is to submit to the headship of Christ. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate admonition, correction, and discipline. (Genesis 1:26-28; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 127: 3-5; Proverbs 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mark 10:6-12; I Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; Hebrews 13:4; I Peter 3:1-7)

## **18. Divorce**

We believe God's original plan was for marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. It was only because of the hardness of mankind's hearts due to sin that any provision for divorce was given in scripture. As with any past sin, divorce is forgivable. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God, they may not be considered for the offices of deacon or pastor. (Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 7:1-3; I Timothy 3:2,12; Titus 1:6)

## **19. Abortion**

We believe human life begins at conception and the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion is the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. (Job 3:16; Psalm 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5)

## **20. Human Sexuality**

We believe God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that the only scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. We believe any acts of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgenderism, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery or pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of human sexuality. We believe God created the two genders and disapproves of any attempt to alter one's gender or to portray a gender different from one's anatomical gender. (Genesis 1:27; 2:24; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Deuteronomy 22:5; Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 1:26-29; 7:2; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; 7:10; Ephesians 5:22-23)

## **21. Love**

We believe we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose Christ and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose Christ graciously, gently, patiently and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or threatening the use of force as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:9-10, 17-21; 13:8-10; Philippians 2:2-4; II Timothy 2:24-26; Titus 3:2, I John 3:17-18)

## **Authority of Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement**

The Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe and is the authority for the faith and conduct of believers. We do believe, however, that the foregoing confession of faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. A dispute regarding interpretation of the Confession of

Faith/Doctrinal Statement or the Bible within Emmanuel Baptist Church may be referred to the Board of Deacons for resolution by majority vote.

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## **ARTICLE VI – ORDINATION**

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### **A. Council of Ordination**

When a man in the membership of this church is called to serve as a pastor, missionary or evangelist, it shall be within the power of the Pastor and Board of Deacons to recommend to the church to approve a candidate for ordination and call and conduct a Council of Ordination. This Council may consist of members of the Board of Deacons and other representatives of the church, or ordained ministers as invited by the Pastor or the Board of Deacons if the pastorate is vacant. The Ordination Council shall examine all applicants for the ordination as to Christian experience, reputation, their call to the Christian ministry, their preparation, character, doctrinal belief and demonstrated ability in Christian service.

### **B. Requirements for Ordination**

1. A man who conveys reasonable evidence of his calling by God as determined by the Ordination Council.
2. A man who meets the qualifications of overseer as set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and I Peter 5:1-4 and who fully endorses the doctrines that are set forth in our Constitution
3. Only men will be ordained. (I Timothy 3:1-7)
4. A man who is a member or affiliated with a modernistic or an apostate denomination, federation or association shall not be ordained by this church.

### **C. Procedures for Ordination**

1. The Pastor shall submit the potential candidate to the Board of Deacons. The Deacons may recommend by a three-fourths majority that the church approve the candidate to appear before a Council of Ordination.
2. If the Deacons recommend the candidate to the church, the church will conduct a secret ballot at a business meeting. The church may approve the candidate to appear before the Ordination council by a three-fourths majority.
3. If the candidate is found worthy of ordination by the Council, the Ordination Council will approve ordination of the candidate by a three-fourths majority and the Pastor shall arrange for the ordination service so that the church can participate in the ordination.

### **D. Procedures for Revoking Ordination**

1. The Pastor shall call a meeting of the Board of Deacons to examine the ordained individual.
2. If the Pastor and the Board of Deacons determines, by a three-fourths majority vote, that the ordained individual no longer meets the criteria to be ordained in accordance with this Article or that the ordained individual has departed from the Doctrinal Statement of Faith in this Constitution, they will revoke the ordination.

3. The Pastor may notify the church after exercising Biblical discretion in accordance with Matthew 18.
4. A reconsideration may be ordered via the same procedure identified in D2 if exculpatory evidence is later presented. The ordination would be restored via the same three-fourths majority vote.

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## ARTICLE VII – FEDERATION

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This Church Assembly will never become denominational in character: it will be independent, autonomous and governed by the Scriptures in all matters, and will not be under the control of any denomination, federation, or association. This assembly will never be unequally yoked together with those who deny the doctrines contained in our Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement. (Ephesians 5:11; II Corinthians 6:14-18) All matters will be made a matter of prayer that the Holy Spirit may give wisdom, and that the church might have the mind of Christ in all things. (I Corinthians 2:9-13; James 3:17, 18; I Corinthians 2:15, 16)

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## ARTICLE VIII – MEMBERSHIP

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### A. Reception of Members

1. This church will receive as members only those who profess faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior, have been scripturally baptized by immersion, have lives that manifest the fruits of true faith in God and are willing, according to their ability to support the Church by their prayers and contributions. Members shall be received by Confession of Faith, Baptism, transfer, or by restoration. Individuals who are under the age of 18 may be accepted as non-voting members if they have made a profession of faith and subsequently been baptized by immersion. This will provide the non-voting member with privileges of service and ministry normally reserved for members until they reach the age of 18. Upon reaching the age of 18 and having met the requirement to review the Church Constitution and sign a document signifying that he/she fully subscribes to it, a person shall become eligible to vote.
2. The mode of procedure – all applicants for admission or membership shall be examined by a committee, consisting of at least two members of the Board of Deacons, and no application shall be considered without the unanimous recommendation of the said committee. The committee process will include the following at a minimum:
  - i. All applicants who are 18 years of age or older must review the Church Constitution to include the Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement and sign a document signifying that they fully subscribe to it.
  - ii. Applicants who profess faith in Christ but have not been scripturally baptized subsequent to a profession of faith must be baptized by immersion in order to be eligible for church membership.
  - iii. Applicants who are currently members of another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice may join by transfer of membership upon receipt of confirmation of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith.

- iv. Applicants who profess faith in Christ and that they have been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith may also join by confession of faith.
  - v. Applicants who have been removed from the membership roll of the church may become members by restoration upon approval of the examining committee after confession of the sin or sins involved and evidencing true repentance to the examining committee. In addition, the applicant will be asked to review the Constitution and sign a document signifying that they fully subscribe to it as part of the application process despite having done so previously.
3. The Pastor or the Chairman of the Board of Deacons in the Pastor's absence will present the individuals recommended to the church at a regular worship service for acceptance into membership by acclamation.

## **B. Membership Regulations**

1. Automatic Removal from Membership Rolls – the membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church in the preceding six months. No member of this church may hold membership in another church. The membership of any individual shall automatically terminate without notice if the member unites in membership with another church. Upon good cause being shown to the pastor or board of deacons, these provisions for termination may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the pastor or a majority vote of the board. A member may resign at any time but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation except at the discretion of the pastor.
2. Termination of Membership through Church Discipline – when a member is accused of clear Biblical sin and appears to be unrepentant, the Board of Deacons will appoint two members of the Board to act as a committee with the Pastor to question the member in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18. The goal of the meeting will be to determine the truth or falsehood of the allegations. If the allegations are true, the goal will be to bring the member to confession, repentance and restoration of fellowship. If this is not possible, the committee will refer the matter to the Board of Deacons. If the Board of Deacons determines by a majority vote that the church member is guilty of clear Biblical sin in keeping with the statement of faith and the constitution and is clearly unrepentant, the individual will be dropped from the membership rolls. The Pastor will notify the church so that the body can fulfil their responsibilities in keeping with Matthew 18:17 and I Corinthians 5:11.

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## **ARTICLE IX – OFFICERS**

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### **A. The officers of the church**

The officers of the Church shall consist of the Pastor, Associate Pastor(s) (as recommended by the Pastor and called by the Church), Board of Deacons, Church Secretary, Church Treasurer, and other such officers,

as the church shall consider it necessary to elect or appoint. Other corporate Officers may be appointed from the church membership as needed but all officers will be subordinate to the Pastor and the Board of Deacons who constitute the scriptural leadership of the church.

## **B. Board of Deacons.**

The term “deacon” means “servant” to the church, for the Lord. It also means “helper” to the Pastor in the church doing the work of the Lord. Therefore, the Deacons shall serve the church by helping the Pastor in the general supervision of the work of the church. The deacons shall be watchful guardians of the purity and good order of the church, striving to maintain a healthful tone of piety and Christian activity in the body. But they are not to constitute a co-ordinate branch for the administration of its government, and in the exercise of their functions must act only in conjunction with the Pastor and not independently of him, and at no time shall they usurp the final authority vested in the congregation of this church.

### **1. Qualifications for a Deacon**

Candidates for the office of Deacon must complete the questionnaire(s) stating qualifications. He must be a man of 21 years of age or over, one who has been saved at least two years and who has been a member of the church in good standing for at least one year and who attends two-thirds of the services each month. He must meet the qualifications of a deacon or overseer as set forth in I Timothy 3:8-13 and I Peter 5:1-4. To avoid potential or perceived conflicts of interest, no full-time or part-time paid employees of the church, school or pre-school may serve as a deacon.

### **2. Election of the Board of Deacons**

The Board of Deacons elected by the church will serve as the official board of the church. There shall be a minimum of six deacons at all times except as noted in paragraph B.4 of this article. The term of service will be three years, followed by one year of ineligibility. The Board of Deacons will yearly elect the Secretary, the Treasurer, Chairman and Vice-Chairman from the Board of Deacons.

### **3. Service of the Deacons**

The deacons shall:

- a. Assist the pastor in visitation work.
- b. Assist the pastor with the ordinances of the Lord’s Supper and Baptism.
- c. Assist the pastor with the examination of all prospective members.
- d. Assist the pastor as the discipline committee.
- e. Serve as the Property Committee which shall represent the church legally whenever necessary and be responsible for the insurance, maintenance, cleanliness, safety and comfort of all church properties.
- f. Present their thoughts, guidance and recommendations in all vital congregational matters to the church for the church’s decision and action.

g. Serve on church committees as selected/assigned.

#### 4. Vacancy in the Board of Deacons

a. If the church lacks a sufficient number of qualified or willing men to fill the necessary offices of deacon, the church may operate with less than six deacons until the vacancy can be filled by a qualified and willing man.

b. If a deacon is unable to complete his three year term, the man who had the most votes at the last deacon election without being elected will be offered the position for the remainder of the term. If he declines, the position is offered to the man with the next highest vote total at the most recent election continuing until the position is filled or no more alternates exist. If the new deacon serves less than one year of the term, he will be eligible to be elected to and serve a full three year term of his own without a year of ineligibility until his own term is completed. If he served more than one year of the term, he will be ineligible for one year as if he had served a full term.

#### 5. Release of Deacons

Any duly elected deacon who no longer meets the qualifications of a deacon as defined in the Church Constitution may be relieved of his duties as deacon by a majority vote of the Board of Deacons.

6. The Pastor shall be considered a regular member of the Board of Deacons with the right to vote on all matters of business not pertaining to him.

### **C. The Appointment and Authority of Committees**

1. The Pastor shall have the authority to appoint all committees concerning Board and Congregational business. The Board of Deacons must approve each committee member.
2. The Pastor shall be a member ex-officio of all committees.

### **D. Business Meetings**

1. Regular business meetings shall be held no less than quarterly to review deacon recommendations, financial statements, and other church business. The adoption of the new budget and elections of deacons shall occur at one of these regular business meetings.
2. The Pastor or the Board of Deacons may call special business meetings, provided that notice of such meetings shall be announced at least one service prior to the business meeting, except for the sole purpose of voting on new members which may be done without advance notice.
3. Quorum - a quorum at any church business meeting shall constitute the eligible voting members present at a meeting called in accordance with this article. Only voting members who are present at church meetings may vote – proxy voting is not allowed. The Pastor and Board of Deacons will determine whether the meeting will be open or closed to attendance by voting members only. A majority vote of the voting members present shall decide all matters, except as noted elsewhere in this constitution to include the calling or dismissing of a Pastor, or amending the Constitution, or purchase, sale or mortgaging of church property which cases shall require a three-fourths majority vote of those voting members present.

4. The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure and his decision is final and controlling. The pastor will generally serve as the moderator for church business meetings or will appoint a moderator. If the pastor is unavailable, the pastorate is vacant or the business before the church regards the pastor, the board of deacons will appoint a moderator.

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## **ARTICLE X – FINANCES**

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### **A. Budget Committee**

1. The pastor and budget committee shall correlate estimates of expenditures from various ministries of the church. The committee shall present a proposed budget to the Deacons for approval then recommendation to the church annually at a major administration meeting.
2. The budget committee shall be appointed by the Pastor and Board of Deacons.

### **B. Offerings**

1. All contributions will be free-will offerings. Envelopes will be provided so that a record can be kept and a statement issued for income tax purposes. The church strongly teaches Biblical Principles of finance for personal life, church business, and church giving.
2. The church will normally use designated funds for the purpose for which they were designated. However, in certain situations this may not be possible. As a result, gift designations will be advisory only – in those situations where funds must be spent for something other than the designated purpose, the issue will first be approved by the church membership at a business meeting.

### **C. Audit**

An external audit shall be conducted periodically as determined by the Pastor and Board of Deacons but at a minimum once every five years. Additional internal audits may be conducted as needed or desired.

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## **ARTICLE XI – THE PASTOR**

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### **A. Qualifications of the Pastor**

1. The candidate for the office of Pastor must be a man who meets the qualifications of overseer as set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and I Peter 5:1-4.
2. No Pastor shall be called to the Pastorate of the Emmanuel Baptist Church who does not fully endorse the doctrines that are set forth in our Constitution as described in the Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement.

### **B. Calling a Pastor**

When a vacancy in the pastorate occurs, the Board of Deacons will establish a Pulpit Committee. The Pulpit Committee will consist of both current deacons and other faithful lay members as selected by the Board of Deacons.

The Pulpit Committee shall thoroughly investigate and prayerfully consider candidates and make a report to the congregation at least once a month. As the Holy Spirit leads, they shall present the name of one candidate at a time for approval, given to the church at a special meeting called for that purpose. Before the candidate is presented to be voted upon, the Pulpit Committee must secure his permission and present to the church, at the time of voting, a signed statement by the proposed candidate signifying his unreserved acceptance of the Church's constitution and doctrinal statement. A three-fourths majority of the voting members present shall be required to call a Pastor. The vote to call a Pastor must be announced at least two weeks in advance.

The church shall extend the call through the Pulpit Committee. Should the candidate fail to receive the three-fourths majority, or refuse the call, the Pulpit Committee shall seek out another acceptable candidate.

Should the call be accepted, the Board of Deacons shall present a contract, approved by the church with a three-fourths majority, to the new Pastor, including salary, benefits and other expenses incumbent upon the office of the Pastor.

### **C. Terms of Office**

The Pastor shall be free to resign as he feels led of the Holy Spirit but he must give a written notice to the Board of Deacons.

### **D. Dismissal of the Pastor**

Whenever dismissal proceedings may be in order against a Pastor of the grounds of proven immorality, heresy in doctrine, spiritual declension, apostasy, or failure to properly attend to his duties as Pastor of the church – the Pastor shall be given the opportunity to appear before the Board of Deacons in his own defense. After a full hearing has been granted, the Board of Deacons shall then place the matter before the congregation and if a three-fourths majority vote from the congregation favors the dismissal proceedings instigated by the Board, the Pastor shall immediately be removed from office. The Board of Deacons by a majority vote may continue the support of the one dismissed for a period not to extend thirty (30) days.

### **E. Calling of Assistants/Associate Pastors**

The procedure for calling assistants to the Pastor/Associate Pastors requires a recommendation by the Pastor, approval by the Board of Deacons and approval of the church at a business meeting. In no case shall anyone be considered without the recommendation of the Pastor. These individuals shall be responsible to and under the direction of the Pastor. Relations may be terminated in accordance with the following:

1. Mutual agreement with the Board of Deacons for any date.
2. May be dismissed with 30-day notice by a three-fourths vote of the Board of Deacons.
3. May be dismissed with 30-day notice by agreement between the Pastor and one-half or more of the Board of Deacons.

4. If found guilty of heresy or immorality, he may be dismissed immediately with two weeks salary and, at the discretion of the Pastor or the Board of Deacons, the use of housing provided for thirty (30) days.

Regardless of the manner in which relations are terminated, use of housing may be extended beyond thirty (30) days at the discretion of the Pastor or the Board of Deacons.

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## **ARTICLE XII – HERITAGE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**

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### **A. Purpose**

We believe that Christian parents have the primary responsibility to provide their children with an education which is consistent with Biblical teachings. We also believe that the church is responsible for aiding parents who wish to provide their children with a Christian education. In order to assist the church's families fulfill their obligation to Biblically train their children, the church chooses to operate the ministry currently known as Heritage Christian Academy as a Christian day school. While Heritage Christian Academy is established primarily for the benefit of members of the church, the pastor and board of deacons may permit non-church members to participate and enroll their children and set reasonable standards to determine who may attend and enforce those standards. Heritage Christian Academy plays a key role in advancing our beliefs by developing young men and women with a solid foundation of Christian character and faith to reach future generations with the gospel.

### **B. Statement of Faith Accord**

While it is not a requirement for all school employees to be members of the church, all educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement contained in this constitution. Neither the church nor the day school shall hire, appoint or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational program who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement.

### **C. Teaching**

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted consistent with the teaching of the inerrant Word of God. Any assertion or belief which conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every teacher to present the inerrant Word of God as the only infallible source of wisdom.

### **D. Christian Walk**

All administrators, instructors, teachers and other staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall continue in and maintain a lifestyle consistent with the precepts laid out in the Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement and taught by the church both in and out of the classroom. Failure to do so will be grounds for dismissal.

### **E. School Board**

The School Board will consist of members of the Board of Deacons and any additional church members the Board of Deacons may choose to appoint. In order to be appointed to the School Board, an individual must be a member of the church.

## **F. Bylaws and Policies**

The Heritage Christian Academy School Board has the authority to develop policies and bylaws for the Academy. However, these policies and bylaws are subject to review and revision by the Board of Deacons.

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## **ARTICLE XIII – HERITAGE CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL**

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### **A. Purpose**

We believe that Heritage Christian Preschool is a ministry which can reach young families with the gospel and potentially bring them into fellowship with our church family. It is established both for Christian parents and as an outreach to non-Christian families. There will still be reasonable standards set so that this church can maintain its beliefs and principles in conducting this ministry. The Preschool plays a key role in advancing our beliefs by providing an avenue for evangelistic outreach to members of the community and by aiding Christian parents in starting early to build a solid Christian foundation for their young children.

### **B. Statement of Faith Accord**

While it is not a requirement for all preschool employees to be members of the church, all activities or courses of instruction shall be conducted and presented in full accord with the Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement contained in this constitution. Neither the church nor the preschool shall hire, appoint or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational program who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement.

### **C. Teaching**

All curriculum shall be conducted consistent with the teaching of the inerrant Word of God. Any assertion or belief which conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every worker to present the inerrant Word of God as the only infallible source of wisdom.

### **D. Christian Walk**

All employees and volunteers shall continue in and maintain a lifestyle consistent with the precepts laid out in the Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement. Failure to do so will be grounds for dismissal.

### **E. Bylaws and Policies**

The Heritage Christian Academy School Board has the authority to develop policies and bylaws for Heritage Christian Preschool. However, these policies and bylaws are subject to review and revision by the Board of Deacons.

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## ARTICLE XIV – INDEMNIFICATION

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### **A. Actions Subject to Indemnification**

The church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgements, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding; and if that person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgement, order, settlement, conviction or on a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

### **B. Expenses Subject to Indemnification**

To the extent that a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in this article, or in defense of any claim, issue or matter in that action, suit or proceeding, he or she may be indemnified against expenses, including attorneys' fees, actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding.

### **C. Limitations of Indemnification**

Any indemnification made under this article may be made by the church only as authorized in the specific case on a determination that indemnification of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Paragraph A of this article. The determination shall be made (a) by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the Pastor and Deacons who were not and are not parties or threatened with action, suit, or proceeding; (b) if the described quorum is not obtainable or if a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested Deacons so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by a majority vote of the members of the church.

### **D. Timing of Indemnification**

Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article, may be paid by the church as they are incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, as authorized by the Board of Deacons in the specific case, on receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee or agent to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the church.

## **E. Extent of Indemnification**

The indemnification provided by this article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise required as a matter of law or under any binding written agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the church, both as to action of each person seeking indemnification under this article in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding that office, and may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent and may inure to the benefit of heirs, executors, and administrators of the person.

## **F. Insurance**

The church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this article.

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## **ARTICLE XV – DISSOLUTION**

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In the event that the ministry of the Emmanuel Baptist Church is terminated and dissolution becomes necessary for any reason, the Board of Deacons shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all liabilities of the church, dispose of all of the assets of the church to such like faith ministries or missionaries as they may determine. Assets may only be distributed to missionaries or ministries which are substantially in agreement with the church's Confession of Faith/Doctrinal Statement, as determined by the Board of Deacons.

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## **ARTICLE XVI – AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

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- A. The Proposed amendment or change to the Constitution must be brought before the Board of Deacons and passed by a two-thirds majority.
- B. The proposed amendment or change to the Constitution must be presented in writing to the congregation at least two weeks prior to the congregational vote and a three-fourths majority will be necessary to approve the amendment or change to the Constitution.
- C. The Board of Deacons will review or appoint a committee to review this constitution at least once every five years to determine if any changes/amendments are needed. If it is determined that a re-write is needed, the Constitution may be changed by replacing it with a re-written version through the same process described in this Article.

END OF CONSTITUTION

CONSTITUTION APPROVED AND ADOPTED JULY 11, 1971 AS AMENDED/CHANGED ON 11 DECEMBER 2016