

# MENTOR BAPTIST CHURCH CONSTITUTION

## ARTICLE I

### Organization

- A. The name of this church shall be "Mentor Baptist Church".
- B. The organization of this Church took place April 9, 1949, at the home of Mrs. Rollin Logan, Mentor, Ohio, climaxing more than five years of gospel labor on the part of some ten Mentor area believers.
- C. This organization was incorporated in the State of Ohio on September 22, 1949, as a non-profit organization and was issued Corporation Certificate Number 214694.
- D. This Church is affiliated with the Converge MidAtlantic district of Converge Worldwide (Baptist General Conference).

## ARTICLE II

### Purpose

#### **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

*"Making disciples of Jesus Christ, teaching them to love Him and obey all His commands."*

#### **OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT**

*Mentor Baptist Church exists to:*

- *Celebrate God's Presence (Worship)*
- *Demonstrate God's Love (Ministry)*
- *Communicate God's Word (Evangelism)*
- *Educate God's People (Discipleship)*

## ARTICLE III

### Affirmation of Our Faith

#### **THE WORD OF GOD**

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. (2 Peter 1:19-21; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; John 10:35)

#### **THE TRINITY**

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons (the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit); that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption. (Gal. 4:4-6; Gen. 1:2; John 1:14; Gen. 1:26; Matt. 3:16-17; Matt. 28:19)

#### **GOD THE FATHER**

We believe in God, the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. (Gen 1:1-2; Ps. 145:17-19; Rom. 3:21-28)

## **JESUS CHRIST**

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth. (Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 24:5-7; John 14:3; Acts 1:9; Rom. 8:34; 1 Thess. 4:15-17; Rev 19:11-16; Rev. 20:4)

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is our abiding helper, teacher and guide. (John 14:26; John 16:7-11; Rom. 8:9-11; 2 Cor. 1:21-22)

## **REGENERATION**

We believe that all men are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. (Gen. 1:27-31; Gen. 3; Rom. 3:8-19; Gal. 3:22; John 3:16-17; Eph. 2:8-9)

## **THE CHURCH**

We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a body of "born again" believers in Jesus Christ, having, upon profession of faith, been baptized by immersion in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, united for the purpose of worship, ministry, evangelism, discipleship and fellowship. (Matt 28:19-20; 1 Cor. 12:25-28; Acts 1:8)

## **CHRISTIAN CONDUCT**

We believe that a Christian should seek to live for the glory of God and the well being of his fellowman; that his conduct should be blameless before the world; that he should be a faithful steward of his possessions; and that he should seek to realize for himself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ. (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 16:2; Eph 4:11-13; 2 Cor. 6:17)

## **THE ORDINANCES**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: Baptism and The Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 6:1-7; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Matt. 28:19-20; Matt. 3:16)

## **RELIGIOUS LIBERTY**

We believe that every human being has direct relations with God and is responsible to God alone in matters of faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by an ecclesiastical or political authority; that therefore, Church and State must be kept as separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronages of the other. (Rom. 13:1-10; 1 Tim. 2:1-3; Acts 5:29; Matt. 22:21)

## **CHURCH COOPERATION**

We believe that local churches can best promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with one another in a denominational organization. Such an organization, whether a regional or district conference, exists and functions by the will of the churches. Cooperation in a conference is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. Churches may likewise cooperate with interdenominational fellowships on a voluntary basis. (1 Cor. 1:2-3; 2 Cor. 8:18-19)

## **MARRIAGE AND FAMILY**

We believe that marriage was ordained by God at creation as the sacred union of one man and one woman. All sexual relations must therefore be reserved for that union. Christian marriage is a representation of Christ's relationship to His church. We also believe that children are a blessing from the Lord, thus all human life is sacred and worthy of protection from the moment of conception. (Gen. 1:26-28; Gen 2:18-25; Ps. 127; Ps 128; Ps. 139:13-16; Matt. 19:1-10; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Eph 5:22-33; Heb. 13:4)

## **THE LAST THINGS**

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal joy of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the lost. (1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20; Rev 21:1-4)

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Government**

*This church's government is based on Elder Board rule. Unless otherwise delegated in this Constitution or By-Laws, all power is vested in the Elder Board.*

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Membership**

#### **A. Qualifications**

Any person confessing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who accepts the view of faith and practices set forth in the doctrinal statements of this Constitution, has completed the membership class, has signed the membership covenant, has received believer's baptism by immersion, has been approved by the Elders and affirmed by the congregation shall become a member.

#### **B. Termination**

Membership in this Church may be terminated by a majority vote of the Elder Board for any of the following reasons:

1. Failing to make favorable contact with the Church within the past year or habitually neglecting Church obligations
2. Gross moral/ethical failure.
3. *Resignation*
4. Joining another church (*automatic*)
5. *Death (automatic)*

#### **C. Voting Privileges**

All members who have reached their eighteenth birthday are eligible to vote at business meetings.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Officers**

- A. Elders
- B. Senior Pastor, who is a member of the Elder Board
- C. Deacons
- D. Deaconesses
- E. Church Clerk and Assistant Church Clerk
- F. Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer
- G. Financial Secretary and Assistant Financial Secretary
- H. Legal Trustees, who shall be Elders selected by the Elder Board

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Meetings**

- A. Worship. This Church shall meet every Sunday for worship and instruction and may schedule other meetings. The Ordinances of The Lord's Supper and Baptism shall be observed on a regular basis.
- B. Business Meetings.
  - 1. Regular Ministry Update meetings shall be held quarterly.
  - 2. Special business meetings shall be held when called for by the Elder Board.
  - 3. The Annual meeting shall be held the first month of the fiscal year.
- C. Absentee Ballots. The Elder Board may, at its discretion, authorize the use and procedure of absentee ballots for the affirmation of officers and other matters.
- D. Quorums. A quorum necessary for regular and special business meetings shall be 20% of the church's members, who have voting privileges, while 30% is necessary for the business meetings where voting will be done concerning the affirmation of officers and the annual budget.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Amendments**

Amendments to the Constitution may be *voted on* at any business meeting provided the following requirements are met:

- A. For three consecutive weeks immediately prior to the business meeting the proposed amendment(s) shall be posted in the Church, printed in the Bulletin and announced from the pulpit. Copies shall be made available.
- B. Total participation of not less than 60% of all members eligible to vote and an affirmative super majority vote of 75% of members voting is necessary for passage.

## By – Laws

### ARTICLE I. (Church Officers)

All Church Officers must be members of the Church and shall serve at the call of God and confirmation of the congregation. The Officers of this Church shall be as follows.

#### A. Senior Pastor

1. The qualifications are set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, I Peter 5:1-3. He shall be cooperative with the Converge Worldwide and Converge MidAtlantic.
2. As our shepherd, he will:
  - a) Preach and teach the Word of God
  - b) Administer the Ordinances
  - c) Be active in equipping the membership to be “ministers” in the name of Jesus Christ
  - d) Visit the sick and counsel members and friends when needed
  - e) Serve, without reaffirmation, as a voting member of the Elders, but he shall not hold Office with the Elders or any other Church Office
3. To establish a Senior Pastor relationship
  - a) A Pastoral Search Committee must be established by the Elders. This committee shall seek a suitable man for the Sr. Pastor position and shall arrange for the Church to become acquainted with him. The committee, in consultation with the Elders, shall formulate the terms of the call.
  - b) To extend a call the Pastoral Search Committee shall present the call at a business meeting. Notice of such meeting and its purpose shall be read from the pulpit on the Sunday prior to the meeting. A pastoral call requires both a participation of not less than 60% of all members eligible to vote and an affirmative super majority vote of 75% of members voting. Only one candidate shall be presented to the Church at one time. The vote shall be by written ballot.
  - c) When the call has been approved, it shall be put into writing, along with all contractual terms and sent to the candidate. The candidate’s written acceptance of the call shall establish the Senior Pastor relationship.
4. To dissolve the Senior Pastor relationship
  - a) It may be terminated upon thirty days notification in writing on the part of the Sr. Pastor or the Church. The Senior Pastor shall give his resignation to the Elders. After due consideration, the elders will present the resignation to the Church at a business meeting. The relationship may be discontinued immediately, but the salary shall be continued for thirty days.
  - b) Any proposal to dismiss the Senior Pastor shall be put into writing and shall be referred to the Elders. Upon an affirmative vote of the Elders this issue will be decided at a business meeting. A majority vote of two-thirds of the members with voting privileges shall be needed to approve dismissal. The vote will be by written ballot.

#### B. Church Staff

The Board of Elders and the Senior Pastor will be responsible for the recruiting, the selection, retention and/or termination of any full or part-time staff members. Their job descriptions will be determined at such time.

### C. Elders

1. The elder board shall consist of any pastors employed by the church, and lay elders who have been affirmed by the congregation. The board shall have at least one more lay elder than staff elders.
2. The Elders shall determine the number of positions needed. Additional Elders can be affirmed at any time.
3. The qualifications for our Elders are set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1: 6-9, I Peter 5:1-3 and Acts 20:17-28. The responsibilities, unless otherwise delegated herein, include, but are not limited to:
  - a) To oversee the Senior Pastor, the staff, and the functioning of the Church and to assist the Senior Pastor in his duties.
  - b) To be leaders in the areas of Prayer, Teaching, Accountability, Shepherding, Spiritual Direction and Spiritual Discipline.
  - c) To oversee the ministry areas which God has called them to be responsible for in the Church.
  - d) To oversee the legal responsibilities of the Church.
  - e) To interview and to present to the congregation potential members in conjunction with the Deacons and Deaconesses.
  - f) To work with the Deacons and Deaconesses in caring for the people and work of the Church.
  - g) To administer and share in the responsibilities of Communion and Believer's Baptism.
  - h) To exercise Church discipline when necessary in accordance with Biblical principles with restoration in mind.
  - i) To rule on all matters of faith and doctrine.
  - j) To fill the pulpit when the Sr. Pastor is unavailable.
  - k) To oversee the establishment of an annual budget. This shall be administrated through the Deacons and presented to the congregation at the third quarterly business meeting and must be approved by a simple majority vote of over 50% of the members with voting privileges.
  - l) To consider and bring a recommendation to the Church, for a vote, concerning the purchase or sale of any Church real estate.
  - m) To form a Pastoral Search Committee when there is a vacancy in the Sr. Pastor position.
  - n) To bring recommendations to the congregation of non-budgeted items of over \$5,000 to the congregation for approval.
4. Elder Candidacy  
To be a potential candidate as an elder one must be a male member of at least 18 years of age. He must meet the Biblical qualifications of an elder as listed above. He must also sense the call to fill the role of an elder.
5. Other considerations:
  - a) Each year the Elder Board shall choose one of its members as chairman, who will also serve as chairman of the Church and chairman of the Combined Board (Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses), and a vice chairman. In the absence of the chairman the vice chairman will serve in his place..
  - b) Elders may be removed from office at any time by a unanimous censure of the remaining elders.

#### D. Deacons and Deaconesses

1. The Elders shall determine the number of Deacons and Deaconesses needed.
2. The qualifications for our Deacons and Deaconesses are set forth in I Timothy 3:8-13, Acts 6:-16, Romans 16:1 and Philipians 1:1. The responsibilities, unless otherwise delegated herein, include, but are not limited to:
  - a) To assist the Elders in the shepherding of the membership.
  - b) To assist the Elders in the Ordinances of Communion and Believer's Baptism
  - c) To be responsible in the administration and policy making of and assistance in the benevolent needs of the church
  - d) Deacons: To assist the Elders in managing the areas of Finance (including an Auditing Process) and Facilities.
  - e) Deaconesses: To assist the Elders in managing various "helps" ministries.
3. Deacon Candidacy  
To be a potential candidate as a deacon one must be a male member of at least 18 years of age. He must meet the Biblical qualifications of a deacon as listed above. He must also sense the call to fill the role of a deacon.
4. Deaconess Candidacy  
To be a potential candidate as a deaconess one must be a female member of at least 18 years of age. She must meet the Biblical qualifications of a deaconess as listed above. She must also sense the call to fill the role of a deaconess.

#### E. Church Clerk Position

1. The Church Clerk shall keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the Church.
  - a) He or she shall keep a register of the members of the Church with the date of their reception and removal, record baptism, infant dedications, marriages, and deaths, and make a full report to the Church at the annual meeting.
  - b) He or she shall take care of any correspondence as instructed by the Elders; give legal notice of all meetings when such notice is required and post that notice according to constitutional requirements.
  - c) He or she will also keep a historical file of special events and milestones in the life of the Church.
  - d) The Assistant Church Clerk shall serve the above duties in the absence of the Church Clerk.

#### F. Financial Secretary Position

1. The Financial Secretary is responsible for counting and recording all monies contributed to Mentor Baptist Church. Counting of the monies will be handled by the Financial Secretary and the Assistant Financial Secretary. If either one is absent, then members of the Deacons or Elders may assist in the counting, or other individuals as specifically designated by the Deacons or Elders. The funds shall be counted and recorded prior to leaving the church and deposited in a timely manner.
2. The Financial Secretary shall keep an accurate account of all monies received and deposit the same in a church bank account as directed by the Deacons and Elders.
3. He or she shall provide statements of account to each contributor annually and provide the Church with a written quarterly report.
4. He or she shall report to the Deacons or Elders as requested.

5. This office is confidential and no other persons shall have access to the giving records of individuals.

G. Treasurer Position

1. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all church deposits.
2. He or she shall make payments of all approved Church obligations.
3. He or she shall also provide the Church with a written quarterly report.
4. He or she shall provide written reports as requested by the Boards and/or Committees.
5. He or she shall report personally to the Deacons or Elders as requested.

H. Resignation of any officer shall be in writing to the Elders, and if accepted, will be effective on the date specified, and the Elders shall appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of the term.

**ARTICLE II. (Terms and Affirmation of Officers)**

- A. Each Elder, Deacon, Deaconess, and Church Officer shall be asked to make a two-year commitment, subject to review by the Elders and re-affirmation by the church membership. During the review, the Elders shall evaluate each officer's continued service, considering: willingness to serve, Biblical qualifications, ministry effectiveness, and personal factors that might affect his or her service.
- B. To provide continuity and stability to the boards, within each board individual terms shall be staggered so that roughly half the board is up for review and reaffirmation each year.
- C. New candidates for Elder, Deacon, Deaconess and Church Officers shall be recommended to the Elders for review by the Combined Board.
- D. Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses, and Church Officers shall be individually affirmed by the congregation at its third quarterly meeting. Those failing to receive affirmation by the majority shall not serve. In this event, the Elders will provide an alternative candidate for affirmation at a subsequent business meeting.

**ARTICLE III. (Standing Ministry Teams)**

A. The Standing Ministry Teams of the church are as follows:

Discipleship - Overseeing the educational ministries of the church....

Children's Ministry - Overseeing the ministries of newborn through fifth graders. (i.e. Sunday school, Kingdom Kids, VBS, Special Events, Nursery, and Children's Church)

Youth Ministry - Overseeing the ministries of sixth through twelfth graders. (i.e. Jr. and Sr. High Sunday school, Jr/Sr High Youth Group, Youth Summer Missions, and Youth Activities)

Adult Ministry - Overseeing, as generally defined as, Adult Sunday School, Small Groups, Women's Ministry, Men's Ministry, Sr. Adult's Ministry, Assimilation Ministry.

Missions - Overseeing the mission ministries of the church. (i.e. Mission Education, Mission Trips, Mission Support, Missions Emphasis, Local Evangelism and Church Planting, and International Evangelism and Church Planting.



Worship - Overseeing the worship ministries of the church. (i.e. Planning and Scheduling Worship Services, Prayer, Planning Special Services/Worship Opportunities, Worship Education, and Worship/Praise Teams).

- B. Ministry Team Leaders shall be appointed by the Elders and shall serve a one-year term concurrent with the fiscal year, and shall develop their own ministry team as needed.

**ARTICLE IV. (AMENDMENTS)**

Amendments to the By-Laws may be voted on at any business meeting provided the following requirements are met:

1. For three consecutive weeks immediately prior to the business meeting the proposed amendment(s) shall be posted in the Church, printed in the Bulletin and announced from the pulpit. Copies shall be made available.
2. A simple majority vote of over 50% of the members with voting privileges is necessary for passage.

***LEADERSHIP FLOW CHART***

