

Church Constitution

Preamble

As a body of baptized believers, we place our faith wholly in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation. Having bound ourselves together in fellowship that things may be done in accordance with the Word of God. Therefore, we declare and establish this constitution for True Bible Baptist Church.

Article I – Name and Purpose

Section 1: Name

The name of this organization shall be the True Bible Baptist Church of Des Moines, Iowa.

Section 2: Purpose

Paragraph A: The church is to preach, teach, and promote evangelism, discipleship, Christian Education, fellowship, ministry, and worship for the building up of God's Kingdom and for the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ. (Eph. 4:11-12)

Paragraph B: the church is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal revenue or including, but not limited to such purposes for establishing, maintaining, and operating of the church, and other ministries that the church may be led of God and establish.

Paragraph C: The church shall also ordain and license men to the Gospel ministry; evangelize the unsaved, and teach believers consistent with the Word of God.

Paragraph D: The church shall regularly meet for the purpose of worshipping God the Father, Jesus our Lord, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit through the written Word of God. (Philippians 3:3; John 4:24)

Article II – Associations

Paragraph A: The church shall be an independent, Fundamental, Bible-preaching, teaching Baptist Church and shall not be controlled or governed by any convention or association.

Paragraph B: The church is in association with the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches (GARBC); Iowa Association of Regular Baptist Church (IRBC); and the Fundamental Baptist Fellowship Association (FBFA).

Paragraph C: To become a member of an association, the church must approve its doctrine and by-laws at a quarterly or annual business meeting by 2/3 votes of active members.

Article III – Membership

Section 1: Qualifications for Membership

Paragraph A: Anyone professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal savior, giving evidence of a changed heart, and declaring him/herself in accordance with the practices and doctrines of this church may become a candidate for membership.

Paragraph B: By watch-care: persons who are outside the Des Moines area from another state and community outside the Des Moines area allowing them to maintain membership at their home church, while granting them privileges and blessing afforded active members.

Paragraph C: Dual membership in other churches is not accepted (exception under watch care).

Paragraph D: Candidates for church membership must complete the church's orientation and new membership classes held each Sunday morning at 9:00a.m. or as arranged.

Section 2: Privileges of Members

Paragraph A: The church is not a pure democracy; however, members can initiate a church by contacting the Board of Deacons who will discuss any further action with the pastor.

Paragraph B: All names on the church roll are members; however only those on the active list (eighteen and over) shall have the right to vote.

Paragraph C: An active member shall be defined as one supporting the church through attendance in regular meeting at least once a week for a period of six months, unless they have an excuse such as: work leave, illness, and personal reasons.

Paragraph D: Members vote to confirm and Ratify the direction, philosophy, vision, purpose, and mission of the church under the leadership of the pastor.

Section 3: Dissolution of Membership

Paragraph A: The following are reasons for dissolution of membership;

1. Letter: a letter of commendation or transfer shall be sent to any church at the request of a member in good and regular standing.
2. Expulsion: No member shall be expelled until every effort has been made to reclaim him/herself in compliance with scripture. (Matthew 18:15-18; Galatians 6:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-14)
3. Request: No changes.
4. Inactive roll: A member who has shown a lack of interest in church matters, attendance and support of the church without an excuse, will be dropped from the church roll.
5. Death

Section 4: Inactive member

Paragraph A: A members who becomes delinquent for more than six months (except excused by Pastor/Board of Deacons), and all efforts to get a response are unavailing,

upon the recommendation of the Pastor, and Deacons the member name shall be placed on the inactive roll (See definition of active member).

Paragraph B: A member shall be notified in writing of such action as taken by the church.

Paragraph C: A member whose name is on the inactive roll shall lose privileges to vote, hold office, or participate in business meetings of the church.

Paragraph D: A member may be reinstated to the active roll when there is evidence of compliance with church attendance, financial support, and Christian life that reflects Christ-like characteristics.

Paragraph E: Members on the inactive roll shall not be counted when tabulating membership statistical reports.

Paragraph F: A member on the inactive roll who is not reinstated within six months shall, after further effort to reconcile, will be dropped from the church roll by recommendation of the pastor and deacons. They shall be notified in writing of such action.

Section 5: Discipline of Members

Paragraph A: The pastor(s) and deacons shall constitute the Discipline Committee of the Church.

Paragraph B: A member will face disciplinary action if their lifestyle and behavior is not consistent with the Church Covenant and of the Articles of Faith, and is found guilty of conduct unbecoming a follower of Christ.

Paragraph C: Any discipline problem must be presented to the Discipline Committee before going to the Church.

Paragraph D: Any discipline problem shall be settled in the manner laid down by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in; (Matthew 18:15-18; I Thessalonians 3:6-16; Galatians 6:1).

Paragraph E: When charges are made, the member will be asked to meet with the Discipline Committee. Failure to appear on the agreed upon date/time will constitute an admission of guilt; the Committee will carry out the necessary action in the spirit of love and restoration.

Paragraph F: If this concerns and officer of the church, the officer must relinquish the office until a decision is made.

Paragraph G: Procedures for filing action and Restoration

Article IV – Ordinances

Section 1: Baptism

Paragraph A: Upon a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, and completing orientation of new member classes, the pastor, or another authorized pastor may immerse a person in water to follow the Lord's commandment. (Matthew 3:16; John 3:23; Acts 8:38)

Section 2: Lord's Supper

Paragraph A: The Lord's Supper (Communion) shall normally be served to the assembled church by the pastor, assisted by assistant pastor, and deacons on the first Sunday morning of each moth or at the discretion of the pastor. In the absence the pastor, the chairman of the Board of Deacons will administer the Lord's Supper.

Article V – Pastor

Section 1: His Qualifications

Paragraph A: He must meet the following qualification: above reproach; husband of one living wife; temperate and self-controlled; respected; hospitable; able to teach; not given to strong drink; considerate; peaceable; not loving money; managing his family well, and respected by them; not overbearing; sound doctrine and able to refute unsound doctrine; devout and appreciating good people and good things. (1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9)

Paragraph B: He is given of God to the Church “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for edifying of the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:12)

Section 2: His Call

Paragraph A: The Board of Deacons shall constitute the Pulpit Committee.

Paragraph B: If it becomes necessary to call a pastor, the Pulpit Committee shall, immediately, begin searching for a man who meets the qualification listed above and after a thorough background check.

Paragraph C: Qualified Candidates and their family will be invited to meet with the Pulpit Committee, fill the pulpit for a Sunday and decide if he wants further consideration. If further considered, he will be asked to stay three more days in the community and preach at the mid-week Bible Study.

Paragraph D: To avoid confusion, only one candidate will be invited at a time.

Paragraph E: Upon recommendation of the Pulpit Committee a special call meeting (see special call meeting procedures) shall be held for church consideration. The Committee shall contact, in writing, all candidates not being considered.

Paragraph F: If the church approves, the candidate shall return and preach on another Sunday, after which the church will vote on calling him as pastor.

Paragraph G: Final selection will be made at a special call meeting, and will require no less than 2/3 votes of active members present.

Paragraph H: The Pulpit Committee shall make the result known to the prospective pastor, as soon as possible. Upon receiving the voting results, he will become the pastor. If married, he and his wife shall become members of the church.

Paragraph I: Details of the call and (pastoral) benefits shall be included in a written agreement.

Section 3: His Term

Paragraph A: The pastor is called for an immediate period of time and shall continue as long as the relationship is mutually agreeable to the Pastor and Board of Deacons.

Paragraph B: The pastor may resign at any time and his duties terminated sixty days (60) from the date of resignation, or at a time mutually agreeable to both the pastor and Board of Deacons.

Paragraph C: The Board of Deacons shall investigate any behaviors arising from immorality or departure from the fundamentals of the faith. The pastor will be placed on temporary leave with pay immediately.

Paragraph D: If their findings are valid the deacons will hold a special call meeting (section 2 paragraph D) of the church to consider the findings and recommendation. Dismissal of the pastor will require no less than 2/3 votes of active members present; his duties will be terminated immediately, all church property returned. He will receive sixty days (60) severance pay, in lieu of notice.

Section 4: His Duties

Paragraph A: The pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly and liberty to preach the whole counsels of the Word of God as the Lord leads him. He shall administer the two church ordinances, supervise the teaching ministries of the church, and tenderly watch over the spiritual growth of the membership.

Paragraph B: The pastor shall appoint deacons and ministry leaders. The pastor shall also appoint special committees when needed. He shall inform deacons and leaders of their ministry descriptions and responsibilities. He shall extend the right hand of fellowship to all new members, on behalf of the church; perform other duties generally appropriate to this ministry.

Paragraph C: The pastor shall moderate and oversee all church business.

Paragraph D: In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the Board of Deacon will moderate the business meeting.

Paragraph E: The pastor may call for a meeting of the church or any committee and/or board at such as he feels necessary.

Article VI – Deacons

Section: His Qualifications

Paragraph A: A deacon shall meet the New Testament teachings given 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Paragraph B: A deacon must be twenty-one (21) years of age.

Paragraph C: A deacon must be faithful member of the church and support the church financially.

Paragraph D: A public ordination and installation service will be held for a newly-appointed deacon after training and a one year interim period.

Paragraph E: A deacon from another church

Section 2: His Term

Paragraph A: The pastor shall recommend not less than two qualified men to serve on the Board of Deacons. Approval by the membership shall be made at the Third Quarterly Business Meeting.

Paragraph B: The term shall be two (2) years and one (1) year recess, unless the pastor makes other arrangements.

Paragraph C: In the event of a vacancy, the pastor will recommend to the congregation another qualified man for approval by a two-thirds (2/3) vote during a scheduled business meeting.

Section 3: His Duties

Paragraph A: The deacons shall assist the pastor, in matters such as, but not limited to: conducting worship services, visitations, evangelistic efforts, in caring for the church's administrative needs, and disciplinary actions.

Paragraph B: The deacon shall attend all Sunday services, mid-week services and special programs throughout the year.

Paragraph C: The deacon shall share with the pastor in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church.

Paragraph D: The deacons shall assist the pastor in serving the Lord's Supper. In absence of the pastor, the chairman of the deacons will serve communion.

Paragraph E: The deacons are responsible for the discipline of a member with the approval of the pastor.

Paragraph F: When disciplinary action involves pastor misconduct, he (deacon) shall investigate all charges, and call a special meeting of the church to present findings.

Paragraph G: The deacons shall constitute a standing Pulpit Committee.

Article VIII – Officers

Section: Appointed Ministry Leaders

Paragraph A: The appointed ministry leaders of the church shall be: Deacons; Trustees; Church Clerk and the Assistant; Church Treasurer and the Assistant; (other ministry leaders)

Section 2: General Qualifications of Officers

Paragraph A: An officer must be a member of the church for one year. Upon recommendation of the pastor, an officer may be considered for an office after being a member for six months.

Paragraph B: An officer shall be spiritually mature, faithful to the Word, devoted to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, display conduct consistent with the Church Covenant and Articles of Faith, support the leadership, church vision, mission, and support the church financially by tithes (10%) and offerings.

Paragraph C: An officer should have respect for the Pastor, deacons, other officers, church members, and ministry activities. Heads of auxiliaries are required to attend support team and quarterly business meetings.

Section 3: Resignation of Officers

Paragraph A: Elected and appointed officers unable or unwilling to fulfill his/her duties shall resign.

Paragraph B: The pastor and deacons shall remove an officer who refuses to subscribe to the Articles of Faith, Church Covenant/Constitution, and ministry description.

Section 4: Terms of Assistant, Associate, and Youth Pastors

Paragraph A: The pastor shall recommend him to the church for an indeterminate term of service.

Paragraph B: All questions, or problems involving him, should be referred to the pastor. At the discretion of the pastor the problem will be discussed with the Board of Deacons for consideration before final action.

Paragraph C: In the event of a vacancy the pastor will recommend to the deacons a qualified man, to be presented to the church at a special call meeting. Final selection will require no less than 2/3 vote of active members present.

Paragraph D: See church handbook for specific job qualifications and job duties.

Section 5: Terms of Trustees

Paragraph A: The pastor shall appoint qualified men to the Trustee Board, with the approval of the church at the Third Quarterly Business Meeting. The pastor shall appoint the chairman of the board.

Paragraph B: The term shall be two (2) years active and one (1) year recess, unless other arrangements are made with the pastor.

Paragraph C: See ministry description for specific qualifications and duties.

Section 6: Terms of Church officers, Ministry Leaders, and Auxiliary Heads

Paragraph A: The terms of office will be for (2) years on (January 1 to December 31) and one year off unless otherwise stated.

Paragraph B: See ministry description for specific qualifications and duties.

Article VIII – Committees and Ministries

Section 1: Approval

Paragraph A: As the need arises, the Pastor and deacons will establish and approve committees and ministries to carry out church business and mission.

Paragraph B: Committees or ministries will be presented to the church for approval at a regularly scheduled business meeting.

Paragraph C: Pastor and Deacons must approve dissolution of committees or ministries.

Section 2: Standing Committees

Paragraph A: Standing committees exist to carry out the church mission, constitution and ensure biblical principles are maintained.

Paragraph B: Membership on these committees is determined by appointment and election.

Paragraph C: Standing committees are: Pulpit, Pastoral, Discipline Committees, Ministry Leaders and Support Team.

Section 3: Ministries (Auxiliaries, Boards, Committees, Choirs, Fellowships)

Paragraph A: Ministries (Auxiliaries) exist to aid in carrying out our church philosophy of ministry, vision and purpose statement.

Paragraph B: All ministries are considered part of the church.

Paragraph C: All governing constitutions must be consistent with Church's covenant and church constitution.

Paragraph D: Annual activity plans approved by the pastor or his designate, must be submitted at the last Support team meeting of the year.

Paragraph E: Membership in ministries consist of members led by the Holy Spirit and who are in good standing with the church.

Paragraph F: Ministries are: Usher & Mission Boards; Hospitality, Music & Sound, Men and Women's Fellowship, Sunday School, Nursery, and Children's Church.

Section 4: Interim Committees

Paragraph A: These committees are organized for specific purpose and time period.

Paragraph B: Membership is by pastor appointment or volunteering.

Paragraph C: Written plans and financial needs must be submitted for approval.

Paragraph D: Examples of Interim Committee are: church and pastoral anniversary committees; planning, organizing and implementing special events.

Article IX: Business of the Church

Section 1: Paid Personnel

Paragraph A: The paid staff shall consist of the pastor, assistant, youth pastors, secretaries, minister of music, church custodian, business manger, and other positions as needed.

Paragraph B: See job descriptions for employee job qualifications and duties, and employee handbook for employees' benefits.

Section 2: Finances

Paragraph A: The church shall be supported by tithes, free-will offering, special offering and gifts.

Paragraph B: The fiscal year shall begin on January 1, and end December 31.

Paragraph C: Each year the business manager and the pastor will draw up an annual church budget. It will be presented to the church for approval at the annual business meeting.

Paragraph D: Any two persons appointed to the following offices shall have the authority to sign checks on behalf of True Bible Baptist Church; business manager, chairmen of trustee and deacon boards, church treasurer and assistant church treasurer.

Paragraph E: Any two person appointed to the following offices shall have the authority to make contractual agreements or business transactions on behalf of True Bible Baptist Church, with church approval: Senior Pastor, business manager, and chairman of the trustee board.

Paragraph F: Any two persons appointed to the following offices shall have the authority to spend up to \$2,000 approved by the senior pastor, for the enhancement of the church ministry: business manager, deacons, and chairman of the trustee board. The church will be made aware of such expenditures at the next scheduled quarterly business meeting.

Section 3: Missions

Paragraph A: It shall be the policy of this church to support only boards, Christian schools, colleges, organizations and missionaries who are hearty agreement with our Articles of Faith, both in doctrine and practice, and Baptist in distinctive.

Section 4: Church Property

Paragraph A: The church building has been erected and set apart for God's glory, and in this sense should be used only for such activities.

Paragraph B: The church will offer its services for such events as weddings and funerals at the discretion of the deacons and trustees for non-members.

Paragraph C: No secret societies, or any person who is involved in same sex relationships (couples), or group who endorse political views contrary to the Word of God, will be permitted to hold services or perform rituals in the building.

Article XI: Licensing and Ordination

Section 1: Licensing

Paragraph A: When a man in this membership is called to be a pastor, and desires to be licensed he shall make his desires known to the pastor. After considering the candidate's qualification, according to 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, the pastor will make a recommendation to the Board of Deacons. At any business meeting of the church a recommendation will be made to grant the license.

Paragraph B: The duration of this license shall be for an undetermined term of service.

Paragraph C: A license can be annulled or withdrawn at any time, should the church, in its judgment, have sufficient reason for such action.

Section 2: Ordination

Paragraph A: A man must be ordained subsequent to licensing. After completing licensing and receiving training or education he can be ordained.

Paragraph B: The pastor, after a thorough review of the candidates' qualification, and discussions with the board of deacons, will assemble a council of pastors from churches of like faith and practice to examine the candidate.

Paragraph C: The council shall thoroughly examine the candidate as to his call to the Christian ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation, character, doctrinal belief, and demonstrated efficiency in Christian service. They will recommend to the church to ordain the candidate.

Paragraph D: Hearing the recommendation, the church will proceed with the ordination at a future date agreeable to the church and the candidate.

Section 3: Qualification for Ordination

Paragraph A: He must have served six months as pastor, assistant pastor, or in definite Christian work in such manner as to convey reasonable evidence of God's call to the ministry.

Paragraph B: He must be the husband or one loving wife

Paragraph C: He must meet the qualifications of a pastor as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

Section 4: Discipline

Paragraph A: It shall within the power of the church to discipline and/or revoke the ordination credentials, according to this constitution.

Paragraph B: The pastor and/or deacons, in keeping with the spirit of the Scriptures, will conduct an impartial trial.

Paragraph C: The minister shall have the opportunity to appeal to the church within sixty days after the decision.