

CONSTITUTION

of the

EMMANUEL CHURCH OF WINSTON-SALEM

Adopted by the membership on Saturday, August 5, 2017

Revised on July 29, 2018

PREAMBLE

Believing the church to be the house of God (I Cor. 3:16-17; I Tim. 3:15; Rev. 2:5) and the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 4:12; Eph. 5:25-32), and seeing as it pleased Almighty God, by His Holy Spirit, to form us into one of His churches, we, the members of the Emmanuel Church of Winston-Salem, do ordain and establish the following Articles, to which we voluntarily submit ourselves. We believe the Scriptures to be our only infallible guide in all matters of faith and practice and intend this constitution to be subservient to them. However, some rules of church order which are in this constitution are not specifically prescribed in the Scriptures. Therefore, we believe it to be wise to articulate the following standards and procedures for orderly conduct in the church which we voluntarily agree to observe.

ARTICLE 1 – Identification

Section 1. Our Essential Distinctives

Paragraph 1. Our Name

The name of this church is Emmanuel Church of Winston-Salem.

Paragraph 2. Our Purpose

The purpose of the Emmanuel Church of Winston-Salem is to be and do everything Christ, in the Scriptures, wills for a local church. Our purpose can be further understood as consisting of five main components:

- 1) the promotion of the public worship of God (John 4:23-24; Phil 3:3; 1 Pet. 2:5),
- 2) the proclamation of the gospel (Matt. 28:18-20; Phil. 1:12-21; Rom. 1:8; 1 Thess. 1:8),
- 3) the edification of the saints through preaching, teaching, discipleship, loving pastoral care, and the administration of the sacraments (I Pet. 5:2; II Tim. 3:15-4:2; Heb. 13:17; Acts 20:28-31; Eph. 4:7-16); 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Rom. 6:3-11),
- 4) the mutual fellowship and communion of believers (Rom. 12:10, 16; Gal. 6:2; Eph. 5:19; I Thess. 5:11; Heb. 3:12-14; Heb. 10:24),
- 5) the display of the character of God to the world through good works (Matt. 5:14-16; Eph. 2:10; Titus 2:14; 3:8, 14).

Paragraph 3. Our Doctrinal Commitment

The ultimate authority in all matters of faith, order, and morals is the Bible alone. However, in the face of doctrinal confusion, controversy, and human weakness, it is necessary for the church to set forth its understanding of the Bible on primary matters of faith and practice. Thus we adopt as our primary doctrinal statement a slightly revised version of the Abstract of Principles of 1858 (see appendix A) and require all members of Emmanuel Church to express substantial agreement with this confession (hereafter, all references to “the confession” or “our confession” will be a reference to the Abstract of Principles unless otherwise noted). This historic document, though a human document, and therefore not inerrant, is an excellent summary of “the things most surely believed among us” (Luke 1:1), and we find it to be an assistance in controversy, a confirmation in faith, a means of edification in righteousness, and a source of church unity.

We affirm the historic creeds of the early church, specifically the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and the Chalcedon Confession.

We also identify ourselves with the major Reformed confessions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, specifically the Second London Baptist Confession of 1689. Though it is not required for all members to affirm this confession, this document represents an additional doctrinal standard for all those aspiring to the offices of pastor or deacon in Emmanuel Church. All pastors and deacons of the church must express good faith agreement with this document, with minor exceptions listed in Appendix B.

We as a church have adopted additional statements on matters not contained in the above confessions and creeds. They are listed in Appendix C of this document and shall be made available on file from the church.

Paragraph 4. Our Civil Commitment

This church was incorporated under the laws of the state of North Carolina on July 25, 2017. While the Scriptures do not recognize a Board of Directors as a biblical church office, our Articles of Incorporation and By-laws require a Board of Directors to serve as legal representatives. Article 4, Section 6 identifies the members of this Board.

ARTICLE 2 – Membership

Section 1. The Privileges and Responsibilities of Membership

All members are, by joining this particular church, entitled to the privileges of membership. Some of the major privileges and benefits of membership are:

- 1) Full participation in the life of the church through service and ministry opportunities (I Cor. 12:4-27; Eph. 4:7-16; I Pet. 4:10-11)
- 2) Participation in church business meetings; including the privilege of voting when appropriate
- 3) Participation in the election and recognition of church officers (Acts 6:3-6)
- 4) Pastoral oversight and care suited to individual needs (I Thes. 2:7, 10-12; 5:12; Heb. 13:17)

- 5) Full fellowship and communion with God's people so as to receive the helps of their love, spiritual gifts, and benevolence (I Cor. 12:18-27; Eph. 4:11-16; Gal. 6:10)
- 6) Protection against damning heresies and corrupting sins through church discipline (I Cor. 5:1-13; Acts 20:28-30; Rom. 16:17)
- 7) The biblical context for fulfilling the Great Commission to evangelize the world (Matt. 28:18-20)
- 8) Participation in the corporate celebration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26; Matt. 18:18-20)

The responsibilities of church membership are most fully treated in our church Covenant to which every member must voluntarily assent. Some of the main responsibilities include,

- 1) Regular attendance at and active participation in the services and meetings of the church as providence allows (Heb. 10:25; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:1-8).
- 2) Consistent and proportionate financial giving to the church (1 Cor. 9:13-14; Acts 2:44-45; Acts 4:32)
- 3) The general promotion of edification and peace (Eph. 4:1-3)
- 4) The support of and submission to church leadership (Heb. 13:17, 1 Tim. 5:17)
- 5) Engagement in serving the body of Christ in ways suited to individual gifts and personal ability (Gal. 5:13-14; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Cor. 12:1-26)

Section 2. Eligibility for Membership

Every believer joined to Christ by faith ought to be joined to a local assembly of God's people (Acts 2:41-42, 47; 5:14). Any person shall be eligible for membership in this church who professes repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, manifests a life transformed by the power of Christ, has been baptized, expresses substantial agreement with the Confession and Constitution of this church, and is willing to submit to the church's government and discipline.

Section 3. Types of Membership

Each member of the church is acknowledged to form a vital part of the body and to have a special function in the life of that body (I Cor. 12:4-27). However, practical considerations require that certain distinctions be recognized in the membership of this church.

Paragraph 1. Standard Membership

All who are received into the membership of the church according to the procedures set forth in Section 4 of this article, and whose membership has not been terminated in any of the ways specified in Section 5 of this article, shall be considered standard members in good standing and entitled to all rights and privileges of membership in the church.

Paragraph 2. Associate Membership

Associate membership is reserved for two categories of persons. The first category is individuals who come to live in our area for a limited period of time (e.g. students, military personnel, persons on special work assignments, etc.) and wish to join the church for a limited duration.

Such persons may be received into or removed from the membership of the church on the same basis and in the same manner as persons who have permanent residence in our geographical area.

The second category of persons is those who cannot in good conscience affirm the Confession and/or Constitution of the church yet still wish to join the membership of the church. Such persons may be allowed to join the church as associate members at the discretion of the pastors in accordance with the procedures spelled out in Section 4 of this Article. Such individuals must agree not to attempt to make their points of difference a matter of public discourse; but agree to hold these differences personally and quietly for the peace and unity of the church.

Associate members shall enjoy all the privileges and benefits of church membership and be subject to all the duties and discipline of church membership with two exceptions. 1) Associate members may not serve as officers in the church, and 2) they may not vote on the election of officers in the church.

Section 4. Reception of New Members

Paragraph 1. Pastoral Interview

A person who desires to become a member of the church will first be interviewed by the pastors. The purpose of this interview is for the pastors to determine whether that person has a credible profession of faith in Christ, has been baptized, is in substantial agreement with the Confession and Constitution of the church, and is capable of assuming the responsibilities of church membership as summarized in the church Covenant. Each applicant will be required to sign a copy of the church Covenant before being added to the membership.

Paragraph 2. Congregational Affirmation

If the pastors are satisfied that the applicant meets the requirements for membership, they will recommend the applicant to the congregation for acceptance into membership. Following this, a time period of no less than one month will be allowed for objections or questions to be raised privately with the pastors by any member concerning the applicant's manner of life or doctrine. The pastors may postpone the reception of a person into membership until any objections are investigated and resolved to their satisfaction. Barring any unresolved issues, approximately one month following the public recommendation, the applicant will be accepted into the membership at a special service of the church.

Section 5. Termination of Membership

Paragraph 1. Means of Termination

An individual's membership may be terminated by voluntary resignation, by excommunication (spelled out in Article 3 of this Constitution), or by formal dismissal, which may take place when a member ceases to attend regular church meetings or to maintain the other requirements for church membership. Formal dismissal will take place at the discretion of the pastors. Any decision to dismiss a member must be communicated to the church at a specially called congregational meeting.

Paragraph 2. Implications of Termination

- 1) Emmanuel Church of Winston-Salem does not exist in isolation from, but is part of, the universal church of Christ, composed of all true churches. Accordingly, open and forthright communication among churches is vital for the purity, peace, edification, and unity of the church universal. Therefore the pastors may choose to disclose to the members of Emmanuel Church and to other churches the circumstances under which a person's membership was terminated (Acts 15:4; I Tim. 1:20; II Tim. 2:17; 4:10).
- 2) In addition, this church does not exist in isolation from society at large. Accordingly, this church has a moral obligation to society both to act with integrity and to maintain its testimony (II Cor. 8:20-21). Therefore, the pastors may choose to disclose to other persons outside the ecclesiastical circles mentioned above the circumstances under which a person's membership was terminated (Lev. 5:1; Prov. 29:24; I Pet. 4:15).

ARTICLE 3 – Church Discipline

Paragraph 1. General Statement

Church discipline becomes necessary when heretical doctrine or disorderly, immoral, or scandalous conduct appears in a member of the church. As a general rule, and whenever feasible, private efforts must be made to resolve difficulty, correct error, and remove offense through counsel and admonition before more serious steps are taken (Gal. 6:1; James 5:19-20). The principles given to us in Matt. 18:15-16, Rom. 16:17-20, I Cor. 5:1-13, II Thes. 3:6-15, I Tim. 5:19-20, and Titus 3:10 must be carefully followed and applied to each case of church discipline as appropriate. The goals of church discipline are always the glory of God, the welfare and purity of the church, (I Cor. 5:6-7) and the repentance, restoration, and spiritual growth of the offender (I Cor. 5:5; II Cor. 2:5-8; II Thes. 3:14; I Tim. 5:20).

Paragraph 2. Public Reproof or Censure

Public reproof consists of a pastoral effort, before the gathered church, to call an impenitent church member to repentance for sin too blatant to be dealt with in an exclusively private manner; or to deal with serious sin even where there may have been repentance. The pastors may administer public censure whenever, in their judgment, either public misconduct (I Tim. 5:20), patterns of sin (Titus 1:12-13), or serious doctrinal error (Titus 1:10-13) pose a significant threat to the godliness, unity, or testimony of the congregation. Those who humbly receive the word of public reproof, own and confess their sin, and manifest a transformed life (Prov. 28:13) will afterward be publicly commended for their godly repentance (II Cor. 7:7-11). If the reproof is not heeded, further discipline may be imposed.

Paragraph 3. Suspension

Some misconduct on the part of a member is so detrimental to the unity, holiness, and testimony of the church that the Lord requires the suspension of some of the privileges of membership (Rom. 16:17-20; II Thes. 3:6-15). In all cases of suspension the offending person is still to be regarded as a brother or sister in Christ and as a member of the church. Therefore, in accordance

with the procedures outlined below for each of the five major categories of offenses, the pastors shall at a business meeting of the church recommend that the offending member be suspended, specifying the grounds for their recommendation. In the interest of maintaining a climate of holiness and peace, the pastors shall have the right, at their discretion, to impose a temporary suspension upon a member which will bar him or her from the Lord's Supper while they deliberate the most prudent course of action. The major categories of sin which require suspension are as follows:

- 1) **An Unrepentant Private Offender** (Matt. 18:15-17) – When a private offense or pattern of sin remains unresolved even after the method prescribed in Matt. 18:15-16 has been followed, and if the pastors determine the matter to be serious and cannot persuade the member to repent, the member may be suspended.
- 2) **Divisive Teaching or Behavior** (Rom. 16:17-20; Titus 3:10) – When a member persists in the propagation of serious doctrinal error contrary to the Scripture and our Confession of Faith, or attempts to sow discord among the membership of the church, that person may be suspended as factious.
- 3) **Disorderly Behavior** (II Thes. 3:6-15) – When a member deliberately persists in conduct which displays a flagrant or public disregard for God, His Word, or His Church, that member may be suspended as a disorderly person (II Thes. 3:6).
- 4) **A Scandalous Sin** – If a member has sinned scandalously but shows hopeful signs of repentance, including submission to the pastors, it may still be prudent to suspend him or her for a time so that he or she may clearly manifest repentance (Matt. 3:8), so that reproach might not be brought upon the Name of Christ and the church (Rom. 2:24), and so that others may not be emboldened to sin (I Tim. 5:20).
- 5) **Contempt of Church Discipline** – If a person is suspected or accused of a sin requiring church discipline, yet absents himself or herself from the meetings of the church, or refuses to meet with the pastors so that the matter may be investigated, such a person may be suspended (Matt. 18:17).

If, after repeated admonition, the offending party does not repent and the issue is unresolved, the matter shall be reported to the church and the unrepentant individual shall be suspended. If, even after a period of suspension, the person remains adamant in sin, excommunication shall be enacted according to the procedure outlined in Paragraph 4 of this Article (Matt. 18:17b).

Paragraph 4. Excommunication

In addition to the excommunication of those who have been previously suspended, some expressions of sin are so serious and heinous in nature that preliminary actions like public reproof and suspension are inappropriate. In such cases, the guilty member may be excommunicated by the church directly, foregoing the prior steps of censure and suspension (I Cor. 5:1-5). This measure is to be employed when aggravated sin is discovered, and there are no hopeful signs of repentance. The pastors, therefore, having made earnest but unsuccessful efforts to bring the offender to true repentance and reformation, shall report the same to the church and recommend that the offender be excommunicated. All acts of excommunication must be

executed by the gathered church (Matt. 18:17; I Cor. 5:4). To be valid, an act of excommunication must have the approval of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting.

ARTICLE 4 – Church Officers

Section 1. General Polity Statement

Jesus Christ alone is Head of the church (Col. 1:18), and He governs His church through officers whom He gives (Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11) and who are endowed by His Spirit with the graces and gifts needed to accomplish their work (I Cor. 15:9-10). Because Christ is the one who gives the requisite gifts and grace to church officers, they have authority (II Cor. 13:10) and their authority is limited by Him in the Scriptures (I Cor. 14:36-38; III John 9). There are two kinds of church officers, pastors and deacons (Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:1-13). In general, we understand the New Testament to use the terms “pastor,” “elder,” “bishop,” and “overseer” interchangeably to describe the same office, which we describe solely under the term “pastor” in this Constitution.

It is the duty of the church body to identify among its members those qualified for office in the church (Acts 6:3), and, after formally recognizing them by common suffrage (Acts 6:5-6), to set them apart by united prayer (Acts 6:6), and then to follow their leadership (Luke 10:16; John. 13:20; Heb. 13:17; I Pet. 5:5).

While we acknowledge the valuable gifts which God has given women and the valuable service they may render to the church (Rom. 16:1-6; Phil. 4:3; I Tim. 3:11), the Bible prohibits women from holding the office of pastor in the church (I Cor. 14:33b-35; I Tim. 2:8-15; 3:1-7). Women, therefore, shall not be nominated, elected, or ordained to this office.

We also understand ordination to the office of deacon to be limited to men only (Acts 6:3; 1 Tim. 3:8-13). However, in light of the Bible’s teaching on the office of deacon, the roles of women in the church, and the example of several prominent women in the New Testament, we believe that deacons should consult with and include certain godly and faithful women of the church in their diaconal work as appropriate. We believe the involvement of women as aids to deacons in the church is warranted by Scripture and is practically wise and helpful.

Section 2. Pastors

Paragraph 1. The Authority and Responsibilities of the Pastorate

The pastorate as a body is authorized and responsible to give leadership and oversight to the church (Acts 20:17-35; I Pet. 5:1-2), including the preaching and teaching of the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:20-21, 27; Titus 1:9); the shepherding of the souls of the members of the church (Eph. 4:11-16; Col. 1:28; I Thes. 2:11; Heb. 13:17); and the directing of the church in all its tasks by setting general policy and by making specific decisions (I Tim. 3:4-5; Heb. 13:17; I Pet. 5:1-2). Nonetheless, the pastors must exercise this authority with sensitivity to the consensus of the congregation (I Tim. 3:4-5; I Pet. 3:7) in the posture of servants and examples to the congregation (Matt. 20:25-28; I Pet. 5:3). Therefore, the pastors should seek the advice and support of the congregation respecting any major endeavor or large expenditure.

Furthermore, the church body is primarily responsible to identify and call individual members to church office through congregational suffrage (Acts 6:1f; 14:23). Congregational approval is defined for the recognition of officers in this article, Section 4, Paragraph 2.

Paragraph 2. Plurality of Pastors

- 1) The Scriptures teach that ordinarily there should be a plurality of pastors in each local church (Acts 14:23; Acts 20:17; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:5). Therefore, the church should endeavor to discover and then to formally recognize a plurality of men whom the Holy Spirit has endowed with the requisite graces and gifts.
- 2) If at any period in the life of the church, there no longer exists a plurality of pastors in office; and this lack cannot in a timely way be supplied, the remaining pastor (or the deacons, if there are no pastors) shall seek the temporary aid of the pastors of a trusted sister church. These pastors are to serve as an advisory board to the church until a plurality of pastors is established. The purposes of such an arrangement are to provide assistance in pastoral care and leadership in the absence of a plurality of pastors. Under such circumstances, it is to be understood that the advisory board possess no pastoral authority in the church, but exists primarily for aid, support, and advice.

When the pastors of a sister church meeting this requirement are located they will be recommended for approval to the Emmanuel Church body as an advisory board to the church. Approval shall be taken by a written ballot at a properly called meeting of the church. A three-quarters majority of those present and voting is necessary for such an action. Upon an affirmative ballot, the pastorate of the sister church shall immediately begin functioning as an advisory board to the church. The recognition of the advisory board shall be confirmed (or failing a three-quarters majority withdrawn) in the same way at the annual meeting of the church in succeeding years. When a plurality of pastors is raised up, the advisory arrangement here described, which is admittedly abnormal, shall immediately cease.

Paragraph 3. The Qualifications of Pastors

Anyone considered for the office of pastor must evidence to God's people the personal, domestic, and ministerial qualifications that are set forth in the Scriptures (I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). He also must affirm good faith agreement with the Abstract of Principles, the Second London Baptist Confession of 1689 (with noted exceptions listed in Appendix B), the additional doctrinal statements listed in Appendix C, and the church Constitution.

Section 3. Deacons

Paragraph 1. The Duties of Deacons

Deacons are servants of the church. They are primarily responsible to organize the benevolence ministry of the church, but may also administer the ordinary business and secular affairs of the church, and any other responsibilities the pastors ask them to perform so that the pastors may devote themselves without distraction to prayer and the ministry of the word (Acts 6:3-4). The

deacons must always fulfill the duties of their office in cooperation with and submission to the pastors.

Paragraph 2. The Qualifications of Deacons

The qualifications for one chosen to fulfill the office of deacon are particularly set forth in Acts 6:3-4 and I Tim. 3:8-13. Anyone called to this office must be able to affirm good faith agreement with the Abstract of Principles, the Second London Baptist Confession of 1689 (with noted exceptions listed in Appendix B), the additional doctrinal statements listed in Appendix C, and the church Constitution.

Section 4. The Recognition and Installation of Church Officers

Paragraph 1. The Task of Recognition

Each local church is given the task and responsibility to recognize those whom Christ has given to be pastors and deacons to that particular church. The Lord's appointment of an individual to either of these offices is recognized primarily through the church's formal discernment of the graces and gifts requisite for the respective office, and the individual's own willingness to serve Christ and His church in that capacity.

Paragraph 2. The Process of Recognition

- 1) **Formal Evaluation** – The pastors of the church shall supervise a process of formal evaluation for any candidate considered for church office. This process shall take place prior to formal nomination. The purpose of this process will be to evaluate the candidate's manner of life and doctrine as well as the candidate's overall aptitude for the office.
- 2) **Formal Nomination** – Nominations to the office of pastor or deacon shall ordinarily be made by the pastors, but members of the church are also free at any time to suggest to the pastors the names of those whom they consider to be potential officers. All nominations for church office must be made at a duly convened congregational meeting.
- 3) **Congregational Approval** – Any church meeting for the election of officers will be announced at least one month in advance. During this period, members will be encouraged to acquaint themselves with any candidates under consideration for church office. If any members have any objections or concerns regarding a candidate's qualifications for office, they are to make such concerns known to the pastors and to the candidate under consideration during this one month period prior to the meeting for the election of officers. If such concerns are deemed serious enough by the pastors, they may suspend a congregational vote. However, should the issues be resolved to the satisfaction of all, or the issues are deemed illegitimate, the vote will proceed as planned. The names of all nominees shall be separately voted upon at this meeting. No fewer than three-fourths of those ballots cast shall be required for election. This vote shall take place by written ballot.

Paragraph 3. Installation

Following the election of an officer there shall be a special service set aside at which time the officer shall be installed by the laying on of the hands of the pastors. The laying on of the pastors' hands shall signify their approval, and that of the church as a whole, of the officer elected.

Section 5. Termination of Office

Paragraph 1. Reasons for Termination

- 1) **By Voluntary Resignation** – An officer may at any point resign his office according to his own judgment without prejudice. He is to do so in an orderly fashion.
- 2) **By Removal Through a Failure to Continue to Meet the Biblical Qualifications** – In cases where the pastors determine that an officer no longer meets the biblical qualifications of his office, they shall in the absence of formal resignation first encourage the officer to resign. If resignation is not forthcoming, the pastors shall recommend to the congregation that the officer be removed from office. In order to retain the office in such circumstances the officer must receive a vote of confidence by no less than a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting. Any meeting for such a purpose must be announced two weeks in advance.
- 3) **By Removal Through Disciplinary Action of the Church** – An officer may be removed from office by congregational vote pursuant to Article 3, Paragraph 4. Any officer brought under any type of church discipline will immediately be removed from office.

Section 6. Board of Directors

The Board of Directors referred to in Article 1, Section 1, Paragraph 4, shall be appointed by the pastors and shall be subject to the pastors. They are Ben Allen and Brad Kinnison.

ARTICLE 5. The Ordinances of Worship

Section 1. General Statement

Christ has given two ordinances to His church, namely, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Neither of them has saving merit, nor is receiving them absolutely necessary for salvation, nor is any saving grace imparted to the recipient through the water of baptism or the bread and cup of the Supper. Nevertheless they are means of grace and powerful aids to the faith of the believers who properly participate in them. Accordingly, our Lord is concerned that the ordinances be observed unto edification, in a decent and orderly manner. Therefore, our polity regarding their observance is specified in the following sections.

Section 2. Baptism

God has ordained baptism to be a means of declaring personal union with Christ, the cleansing of sin, and the receiving of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:3-5; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). Therefore true disciples of Christ are proper candidates for baptism. We believe the proper mode of baptism is by immersion in water and “into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19). Under normal circumstances, those being baptized will be joined to the church.

We recognize that some may wish to join the church who have not been baptized in a manner consistent with our Confession and Constitution. Such persons would include those who have been baptized as infants or at some time prior to conversion. In such circumstances, the pastors may, at their discretion, allow such an individual to join the church as an associate member. This may only be done after due instruction and teaching from the pastors to the individual on the subject of baptism.

Should one seek to join the church who has been baptized as a believer but by a mode other than immersion, he or she may join the church as a standard member and will not be required to be “re-baptized.”

Section 3. The Lord’s Supper

Whereas baptism is the one-time declarative ordinance for confessing faith in Christ, the Lord's Supper should be celebrated frequently (no less than once a month) by the assembled church until He comes (I Cor. 11:26). We welcome all those who are believers in Jesus Christ and have been baptized to partake of the Lord's Supper.

ARTICLE 6 – Congregational Meetings

Section 1. General Statement

There shall be an annual business meeting of the church for such things as the hearing of reports, the election of officers, approval of the church budget, and the transaction of other business. Special business meetings may be called at other times at the discretion of the pastors.

Section 2. Notice of Meetings

Notice of all congregational meetings shall be given at regular worship services. A minimum of seven days notice shall be given for any meeting at which official church business is to be conducted. A minimum of two weeks notice shall be given for any church business meeting which requires a congregational vote. However, in the case of an emergency, a meeting may be called on shorter notice by notifying each regular member of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting.

Section 3. Quorum

The regular members present at any properly convened congregational meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 4. Chairmanship

As a general rule, the chairman presiding over any business meeting shall be a member of the board of pastors. Upon occasion, the pastors may appoint a member of the board of deacons to preside in their stead.

Section 5. Voting

All regular members who have reached the age of eighteen years and are in good standing in the church may vote on any question properly brought before the congregation. Unanimity of heart and mind and voice under God shall at all times be sought and prayed for, but when unanimity is not realized, not less than a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting shall be required to constitute approval of any resolution. In some cases, as specified in the Constitution, a three-quarters majority shall be required.

ARTICLE 7 – Inter-Church Relations

Section 1. Autonomy

We acknowledge no ecclesiastical authority other than our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of the Church (Eph. 5:23) and who directs the affairs of the church through pastors chosen and ordained according to the precepts of Holy Scripture (Acts 14:21-23; I Tim. 3:1f; Titus 1:5f). The pastors themselves at all times and in all their activities stand under the authority of Holy Scripture (Acts 16:4; I Cor. 7:17) and serve in this capacity through the recognition and call of the congregation.

Section 2. Cooperation

The church should cooperate with other like-minded churches in matters of mutual interest and concern (II Cor. 8:18-24). We may seek the assistance (I Cor. 16:1-2; Phil. 4:15) and counsel (I Thes. 1:7; 2:14) of other churches in matters of special importance and concern to us, but the decision of no other church or group of churches shall ever be binding on this church (Acts 14:21-23, with Heb. 13:17).

Section 3. Mediation

From time to time a member of the church may take serious issue with the leadership of one or all of the pastors of the church. In such a situation, the member of the church is not left without recourse. He is to pursue private channels of communication with the pastor(s) to seek a resolution. If he finds after private communication that the problem is unresolved, he is to take sufficient time to pray and wait on Christ to bring about a resolution. Finally, if the situation remains unresolved to the satisfaction of the member even after a period of waiting on the Lord, he may seek council from the eldership of a sister church. If the offended member wishes to pursue such council he is required to make the pastors of Emmanuel Church aware that he is doing so. The sister church whose eldership is to be consulted in such situations must be mutually agreed upon by the pastors of Emmanuel Church and the offended member. Once agreement is reached, the offended member may then seek council from the outside eldership.

Should the outside eldership deem it necessary after consulting with the offended member, they may make efforts to mediate between the member and the pastor(s) of Emmanuel Church. Efforts at resolution and reconciliation will be made. If it is found that one or all of the pastors of

Emmanuel Church are in sin, or blameworthy to a substantial degree, the advisory eldership may choose to make non-biding recommendations to the Emmanuel Church body about how to proceed at a specially called congregational meeting. They are not required to do so, but may do so at their own discretion. Such recommendations can be made by representatives from the advisory eldership only after repeated attempts have been made to resolve the issue privately. These recommendations are not to be voted on by the congregation, or to be understood as an official proposal to the congregation as such. Rather such recommendations should be understood as simply advisory in nature. The hope is that such advice will be an aid to the members and leadership of the church in pursuing a path forward that is pleasing to Christ and that stewards the peace and unity of the church.

Should the advisory eldership conclude that the congregation ought to consider the removal of an officer, they may call for a vote of no-confidence against an officer, only after specifying to the congregation the grounds upon which they make such a recommendation. The prerogative of initiating and overseeing this vote of no-confidence is placed upon the advisory eldership. They must make a formal recommendation to the congregation two weeks in advance of a congregational vote. In order for the officer in question to retain his office he must receive approval of a three-fourths majority vote from the congregation. This vote shall be taken by a written ballot.

ARTICLE 8 – Our Dissolution as a Church

Paragraph 1. General Statement

Our hope and prayer is that Emmanuel Church of Winston-Salem will continue alive and faithful as a true church of Jesus Christ with our distinctive identity and heritage intact until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet, if in God's providence this church must dissolve and disband prior to Christ's return, this section is intended to provide for that dissolution in a decent and orderly manner.

Paragraph 2. The Ground of Dissolution

The grounds for the dissolution of this church are physical inability to continue either through a lack of members, insufficient funds to perpetuate the work of the church, a lack of mutual desire and commitment, or such similar circumstances as would make the perpetuation of our life together impossible.

Paragraph 3. The Procedures for Dissolution

Should such grounds as named above exist, the pastors, or other remaining leadership shall propose to the congregation the pursuit of dissolution. Congregational approval of such a proposal by a two-thirds majority, at a duly called congregational meeting for that purpose, is necessary for the dissolution process to begin. Upon congregational approval of the leadership's recommendation to pursue dissolution, the congregation shall decide on the receiver(s) of its assets, make arrangements for, and actually dispose of the same within the following guidelines. All assets are to be disposed, and all just debts paid. No member is to take possession of any assets or profit from their liquidation. The disposition of all assets, or the proceeds from their liquidation, shall be donated to the work of church planting and/or the building up of healthy

churches in Winston Salem, NC. If it is at all possible to avoid liquidation, and to donate the church properties and the facilities along with all other assets to another like-minded evangelical church, the same will be executed.

AMENDMENTS

Section 1. General Statement

Since this Constitution is the product of fallible men and women, living in a changing world, we may desire from time to time to revise or amend it. Any proposed revision or amendment must be distributed to the congregation at least one month prior to its public consideration and adoption. The Constitution may only be amended by a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting at a duly convened congregational meeting. Any future amendments to this Constitution shall be listed in writing in this section of the Constitution, and subsequently published along with it.

Amendment 1.

The following amendment to the language of Article 8, Paragraph 3: The Procedures of our Dissolution was approved on July 29, 2018 by a congregational vote.

“The disposition of all assets, or the proceeds from their liquidation, shall be donated to the work of church planting and/or the building up of healthy churches in Winston Salem, NC. If it is at all possible to avoid liquidation, and to donate the church properties and the facilities along with all other assets to another like-minded evangelical church, the same will be executed.”

APPENDIX

Appendix A

We as a church have opted to adopt a slightly revised version of the Abstract of Principles (1858). The slight revision appears in Article XVII on The Lord's Day. The version we have chosen to adopt reads as follows:

The Lord's Day is a Christian institution for regular observance, and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, resting from worldly employments.

Appendix B

Pastors and deacons of Emmanuel Church are required to substantially affirm, in addition to the Abstract of Principles, the Second London Baptist Confession of 1689. Affirmation of this confession is required with the following exceptions:

Chapter 22. Of Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day – We expect officers to embrace Paragraphs 1-6 of this Chapter with only a slight alteration in Paragraph 1—changing the word “prescribed” to “warranted.” Additionally, we do not adopt Paragraphs 7 and 8 of this Chapter. Rather, we require officers to affirm the statement on Lord's Day observance found in the revised version of the Abstract of Principles Article XVII (Appendix A)

Chapter 26. Of the Church – We do not adopt the assertion in Paragraph 4 of this Chapter that the Pope of Rome “is that Antichrist, and man of sin” described in II Thes. 2:4f.

Appendix C

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

The Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

The Emmanuel Church Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Human Sexuality