

Alleghan Bible Church



Church Constitution

Revised 2015

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Constitution of The Allegan Bible Church

Article 1.

This organization shall be known as The Allegan Bible Church (undenominational), of Allegan Michigan.

Article 2.

This church believes, teaches, and confesses the Old and New Testaments as the verbally inspired Word of God, and accepts it as the only rule of faith, doctrine, and guidance.

Our Statement of faith is taken from the Independent Fundamental Churches of America (I.F.C.A.) doctrinal statement and is stated as follows.

Section 1. Articles of Biblical Faith

1. The Holy Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the verbally inspired Word of God, the final authority for faith and life, inerrant in the original writings, infallible and God-breathed (2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21; Matthew 5:18; John 16:12,13).

2. The Godhead

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – coeternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

3. The Person and Work of Christ

- a. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men (John 1:1,2,14; Luke 1:35).
- b. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for all mankind as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice, and that the sufficiency of this atoning sacrifice to accomplish the redemption and justification of all who trust in Him is assured by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Romans 3:24, 25; 4:25; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Timothy 4:10; Hebrews 2:9; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 2:24; and 2 Peter 2:1).
- c. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our high priest, He fulfills the ministry of representative, intercessor, and advocate (Acts 1:9,10; Hebrews 9:24; 7:25; Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1,2).

4. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

- a. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and, that He is the supernatural agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption (John 16:8-11; 2 Corinthians 3:6; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13,14).

- b. We believe that He is the divine teacher who guides believers into all truth; and, that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit (John 16:13; 1 John 2:20,27; Ephesians 5:18).

5. The Total Depravity of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; and, that man is totally depraved, and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (Genesis 1:26,27; Romans 3:22,23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3, 12).

6. Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins (Ephesians 2:8-10; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18,19).

7. The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers

- a. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 8:1,38,39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; 1 Peter 1:5).
- b. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word; which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh (Romans 13:13,14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).

8. The Two Natures of the Believer

We believe that every saved person possesses two natures, with provision made for victory of the new nature over the old nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit; and, that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural (Romans 6:13; 8:12,13; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

9. Separation

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and, that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded of God (2 Timothy 3:1-5; Romans 12:1-2; 14:13; John 2:15-17; 2 John 1:9-11; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1).

10. Missions

We believe that it is the obligation of the saved to witness by life and by word to the truths of Holy Scripture and to seek to proclaim the Gospel to all mankind (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8, 2 Corinthians 5:19,20).

11. The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts

- a. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts; and, that the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today; and, that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased as the New

Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12).

- b. We believe that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, in accord with His own will, for the sick and afflicted (John 15:7; 1 John 5:14-15).

12. The Church

- a. We believe that the Church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons of this present age (Ephesians 1:22,23; 5:25-27; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 11:2).
- b. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:27; 20:17; 28-32; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11).
- c. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Romans 16:1-4; 1 Corinthians 3:9,16; 5:4-7,13; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- d. We believe in the ordinances of believer's water baptism and the Lord's supper as scriptural means of testimony for the church age (Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 2:41,42; 18:8; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

13. Dispensationalism

We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these -- the age of law, the age of the Church, and the age of the millennial kingdom -- are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture (John 1:17; 1 Corinthians 9:17; 2 Corinthians 3:9-18; Galatians 3:13-25; Ephesians 1:10; 3:2-10; Colossians 1:24,25; Hebrews 7:19; Revelation 20:2-6).

14. The Personality of Satan

We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the fall; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and, that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (Job 1:6,7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

15. The Second Advent of Christ

We believe in that "Blessed Hope," the personal, imminent, pre-tribulation and premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones; and in His subsequent return to earth, with His saints, to establish His millennial kingdom (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Zechariah 14:4-11; Revelation 19:11-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:9; Revelation 3:10).

16. The Eternal State

- a. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28,29; 11:25,26; Revelation 20:5,6,12,13).
- b. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; Revelation 20:4-6; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17).
- c. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious misery until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment (Luke 16:19-26; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 1:6,7; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 20:11-15).

Section 2. Movements Contrary to Faith

1. Ecumenism

Ecumenism is that movement which seeks the organizational unity of all Christianity and ultimately of all religions. Its principal advocates are the World Council of Churches and the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

2. Ecumenical Evangelism

Ecumenical Evangelism is that effort to promote the Gospel by bringing fundamentalists into an unequal yoke with theological liberals and/or Roman Catholics and other divergent groups.

3. Neo-Orthodoxy

Neo-Orthodoxy is that theological movement which affirms: the transcendence of God, the finiteness and sinfulness of man, and the necessity of supernatural divine revelation of truth; but, while using evangelical terminology, seriously departs from orthodoxy: in accepting the views of destructive higher criticism, in denying the inerrancy of the Bible as historic revelation, in accepting religious experience as the criterion of truth, and in abandoning important fundamentals of the Christian faith.

4. New Evangelicalism (Neo-Evangelicalism, New Conservatism)

These terms refer to that movement within evangelicalism characterized by a toleration of and a dialogue with theological liberalism. Its essence is seen in an emphasis upon the social application of the Gospel and weak or unclear doctrines of: the inspiration of Scripture, Biblical creationism, eschatology, dispensationalism, and separation. It is further characterized by an attempt to accommodate biblical Christianity and make it acceptable to the modern mind. We believe that these movements are out of harmony with the Word of God and the official doctrine and position of IFCA International and are inimical to the work of God.

Section 3. Covenant of Faith

In subscribing to these articles of faith, we by no means set aside, or undervalue, any of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; but we deem the knowledge, belief and acceptance of the Truth as set forth in our Doctrinal Statement, to be essential to sound faith and fruitful practice, and therefore requisite for Christian fellowship in IFCA International.

Article 3.

The Purpose of the Church

The purpose of the church shall be to maintain divine worship and to promote fellowship and justification of the saints by the teaching of the Word of God; to propagate the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ at home and abroad by every means possible, and to license and ordain men to the gospel ministry who have given evidence that they are chosen of God for His special service.

Article 4.

The Emphasis of the Church

Whereas it is increasingly manifest that some local bodies of believers desire to stress sectarian spirit, it is the purpose of this assembly to place our stress on Jesus Christ and major issues. It is our conviction that as we walk in fellowship with the Holy Spirit it is possible to have different doctrinal viewpoints on some of the minor issues and yet work together in harmony as far as the great major issues of the church are concerned.

We are insistent that all who join this church be saved having come to a personal acceptance of Christ. This means, of course, that the doctrines making the difference between Heaven and Hell must be believed. Examples of these doctrines; would be the inspiration of the Scripture, the virgin birth, the efficacy of the blood of Christ, etc. It is to be understood that the teaching and preaching in this church must be in keeping with the entire doctrinal statement of this church.

It is the conviction of this church that God's purpose for this age is "to call out a people for His name", forming the body of Christ, and that the local church is a means to this end. Acts 15. It is our purpose to develop an appreciation for God's people everywhere and not to emphasize our differences or peculiarities but to emphasize our oneness in Christ wherever possible. It is to be recognized that a spirit of doctrinal bigotry or unwarranted dogmatism, or sectarianism, or party spirit would not feel at home in an atmosphere where such an emphasis is sought. (Rom. 14:1, 1 Cor. 10:16,17).

Article 5.

The Membership of the Church

Anyone can become a member of this church who recognizes his lost condition and his need of divine forgiveness, believes that Jesus is God's Son, believes that Christ died for his sins and depends upon Christ for salvation, is willing to forsake ungodliness, and is willing to associate himself with God's people for purpose of edification of the believers and the reaching of a lost world with the Gospel. It is to be understood that he will uphold this constitution and conduct himself in accordance with the spirit and framework of its message.

Member Standing

1. Associate Membership

Associate members shall be those who do not have permanent and active part in the activities of the church, such as missionaries and students who are present who hold regular membership elsewhere. Associate members shall not have the right to vote in congregational meetings but shall have the right to attend congregational meetings and have a voice in the proceedings. In the case of students or others of similar circumstances, they will be eligible to teach a Sunday school class or participate in a similar ministry. It will not be necessary for an associate member to sever his membership with his home church if he is only temporarily located in our community.

2. Members

- a. Persons desiring to unite with this church, upon confession of their faith shall be examined by the board as to their Christian experience, and the basis of their salvation. Likewise those with letters of recommendation from sister churches, shall present them in person to the board. Applicants whose examination is satisfactory will be notified by the clerk when to appear to be publicly received as members.
- b. All public and private means of grace such as regular attendance at the services of God's house, the Lord's Supper, the daily systematic reading of the Bible, private and family prayer, personal and public testimony, and the winning of others to Christ, shall be urged upon our members.
- c. We also assert our conviction that proportionate giving is a distinct and positive command in the Scriptures, and pledge ourselves to a systematic contribution for the support of the church, of such a portion of our income as we believe God requires of us, according to the principle laid down in 1 Cor. 16:2
- d. We shall urge upon each other in our daily walk and conversation, loyal obedience to all those moral precepts laid down in the Word of God so plainly as not to need definition.
- e. Prospective members are to follow the procedure of contacting either an elder or the pastor of the church. The prospect will then be first interviewed by the pastor and elders before examination by the board and recommendation to the congregation of the church preceding the congregational meeting. A two thirds vote of the congregation is necessary

to make him a member. This same procedure must be followed in the case of an associate member.

- f. The age of members shall be left to the discretion of the pastor and the elders. Voting shall be the privilege of any member who has reached the age of 18 years.

Care of Members

I. Attendance Requirements

Any member who for a period of (3) months willingly refrains from attendance of all regular services of this church without valid reason (and after every attempt to restore such a one) shall be placed upon an inactive membership role, and shall lose the right to vote. The church board will notify the individual immediately that his name has been placed upon inactive membership. The individual will remain on inactive status until an interest is shown by attendance to any regular scheduled worship service over a period of six months. If interest is not shown by attendance within six months, after being placed on the inactive roll, their name will be dropped from the membership roll. This also must be printed in the bulletin, or placed on the bulletin board.

- a. The right of voting is a privilege for those who actively participate in regular attendance of worship services and have knowledge of the activities of the church.
- b. Therefore, voting shall be restricted to those who have actively attended a minimum of 6 Sunday Services with-in a 3 month period prior to any congregational meeting.
- c. Any member who has not actively attended the required amount of services, regardless of the reason of non-attendance, will forfeit any voting privilege prior to any congregational meeting.

2. Discipline of members

Although it is the conviction of this church that converts should be welcomed, edified, and built up in the faith (Rom. 14:1), it is likewise our conviction that discipline should be administered in accordance with the word of God. Every attempt should be made to bring the erring back into fellowship with God and with fellow Christians. But when all of these efforts fail, discipline should be kindly and prayerfully administered. Some occasions for discipline are:

- a. Propagation of doctrines not in accord with the doctrinal statement of this church, whether in the church or out of it.
- b. Any action or conversation that would harm the testimony of the church as a whole, such as an ungodly life.
- c. Any action or conversation that would cause division or party spirit in the church.

3. Responsibility of Discipline

Discipline shall be handled entirely by the pastor and the church board. Any name dropped from membership must be printed in the church bulletin or put on the bulletin board. In the event the individual being disciplined is not satisfied with the decision of the church board, that individual may

appeal to the congregation as a whole and will have the privilege of being tried before the congregation. A simple majority vote of all the members of the congregation present at the final hearing will decide the case.

4. Restoration

Restoration will be granted upon due repentance.

5. Letters of Recommendation

The customary procedure of giving and receiving letters to and from fundamental churches will be observed.

Article 6.

The Government of the Church

We believe that the government of the local church should be autonomous, democratic, and simple; sufficient to allow things to be done decently and in order. Final authority in this church shall be vested in the members of the assembly but all business and government must be conducted in accordance with the stipulations of this constitution. Although this local church is independent, we reflect that independence of attitude that has no respect for God given leadership, discipline, or the welfare of others. Although the final voice of authority is the congregation, nevertheless, we choose our leaders under the guidance of God expecting most items of business and procedure to be carried on by those in position of authority. The board shall arrange the details of all church meetings, and see that all possible preparations for their successful conduct are made.

Pastor

1. The spirit of this constitution seeks to recognize the Pastor as the shepherd of the flock, the God appointed leader of this congregation. With this in mind it is our purpose to give him liberty of action in his office and not tie his hands in any way.

2. On the other hand, it is likewise the purpose of this constitution to give the congregation the opportunity to dismiss him as a pastor without causing a major disturbance, whenever the congregation loses confidence in his leadership or feels that his ministry has ended.

3. Duties

- a. The Pastor, by virtue of his office as spiritual leader and shepherd of the flock, becomes a member of this church, and his duties shall be those generally associated with his office, including preaching at the stated services of the church, and caring for the spiritual welfare of the members.
- b. He shall have power to arrange for all evangelistic services and special board meetings of the church. He may consult with the board if he so desires but shall have power to act in arranging any special services that he feels will contribute to the spiritual life and welfare of the church. In this connection, he will have authority to take special offerings on special

occasions for services that are held in the church in order to fulfill the church's obligation financially toward groups or people or missionaries who are invited in. The Pastor, being closest to the work, it is reasonable that he should have power to initiate a program and have power to carry it forward with the cooperation of the people. He is to understand that, in the event the people lose confidence in his leadership or his program, they will be at liberty to terminate his position as Pastor of this church.

4. Calling a Pastor

- a. A pulpit committee composed of three men (if the church membership is under 50) or (five men if the membership is over 100) shall be appointed by the board and this appointment approved by the congregation of the church to seek out a suitable Pastor.
- b. The pulpit committee will recommend a man to the board and the board by a simple majority will vote to present his name to the congregation if it is their pleasure. The congregation will vote on each man presented and a three-fourths majority vote of members present is required to extend a call to a man.
- c. The following procedure is to be followed:
 - i. Only one name is to be presented at a time.
 - ii. No man is to be presented to the board or the congregation as a candidate unless he has read the constitution and doctrinal statement of this church and has expressed in writing his agreement with both.
 - iii. The pulpit committee has the obligation of securing and presenting a history of the candidate's work and service in all the churches he has pastored thus far in his ministry. This should include duration of ministry in each church, and its affiliation. If the candidate has changed church affiliations, the reason should be given.
 - iv. It is to be recommended that some member or members of the committee visit the man under consideration in his own church at a regular service to observe before any contact has been made with the man whenever this is possible.

5. Term of Service and Termination

- a. The length of term of a Pastor that has been called is indefinite.
- b. The relationship between the pastor and church may be dissolved any time at the option of either by the giving of a resignation letter from the Pastor or dismissal letter from the board with a six week notice or otherwise by mutual consent. A dismissal letter from the board must be preceded by the following actions:
 - i. A two-thirds majority vote by the full board less the Pastor in question.

- ii. Hold an informational meeting for the congregation explaining the actions to be taken. This meeting is to be announced two weeks in advance.
- c. All salary and benefits (including use of the parsonage) will cease at the end of the six week period. Any severance package is at the discretion of the board and limited to funds available in the treasury.

Note 1: *The six week notice will not be binding if dismissal is due to gross negligence, moral failing, or false teaching and is documented by an action of the board.*

Note 2: *Any assistant Pastors are "at will" employees and may be terminated by the board at any time with a simple majority vote.*

Board

1. Composition

The official Board of Allegan Bible Church shall consist of: The senior Pastor; any and all assistant Pastors, elders, and deacons.

2. Qualifications

Board members are to have the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9. They must be able to answer in the affirmative the following questions:

- a. Have you read the scriptures listed above?
- b. Is it your purpose, God enabling you, to meet the Scriptural qualifications listed in these passages?
- c. Are you in accord with the constitution and doctrinal statement?
- d. Is your wife in accord with the constitution and doctrinal statement?

3. Election of officers

- a. Nominating Committee
 - i. A nominating committee shall be composed of the Pastor and two board members.
 - ii. This committee shall meet to consider the qualifications for office of all active members of the church. It shall present to the church a slate of candidates for the various offices to be filled. It shall recommend the numbers of elders and deacons to be elected, and shall nominate, if possible more than one candidate for each vacancy in all offices to be filled.
 - iii. The report of the nominating committee shall be announced from the pulpit and posted on the bulletin board one month prior to the Annual Meeting. Members of

the church who object to any part of the report shall notify the committee within two weeks of the day the report appears with reasons for their objections.

b. Election procedure

Officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the church. When there is more than one nominee for any given office, voting shall be by ballot. A simple majority is required to elect all church officers except the Pastor.

c. Vacancies

In the event of an office being vacated after the Annual Meeting, the remaining members of the board may appoint a man to fill this office until the next Annual Meeting of the church.

d. Term of Office

i. The term of office for the elders and deacons shall be three years, and so arranged that a majority of either body will not go out of office at the same time.

ii. The elders and deacons, upon completion of one full term in office, must be reelected for the next term.

iii. It is not necessary, however, to have any more men in office if suitable men cannot be found. It is better to have a limited number of men in office than to place men in office who do not meet spiritual qualifications.

e. It will be in violation of the spirit of this constitution for any party spirit of prejudice to be exercised in the election. Each individual is to pray and to be led individually by the Lord as they vote and to vote only for those who meet the scriptural qualifications.

f. Voting may not take place until the scriptures cited above, stating their qualifications, have been read aloud before the congregation.

4. Officers and Duties of the Board Members

a. The Chairman of the Board

i. Shall be selected from the Elders at the first board meeting after the Annual Meeting.

ii. It shall also be the duty of the board members to select and appoint a Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Sunday School Superintendent, Assistant Sunday School Superintendent, Financial Secretary, and Missions Treasurer for a three year term.

iii. These individuals are to be members in good standing, faithful, good testimony, and are in agreement with ABC's Constitution.

- iv. These individuals may serve in consecutive terms. These are not board positions.
 - v. The Pastor shall perform the Duties of the Chairman in the Chairman's absence.
- b. Sunday School Superintendent
- i. Shall care for the Sunday School.
 - ii. Shall select individuals for teaching positions and give their names to the Church Board for approval.
 - iii. Shall oversee the teachers.
 - iv. Shall insure teachers have materials for their classes.
 - v. Shall oversee how the classes are running and report to the church board of any need or concerns.
 - vi. Shall care for all money received, disbursements and record keeping of money and attendance.
 - vii. Shall give a written report at the Annual Meeting each year to the congregation.
 - viii. Sunday School Teachers will be selected from the Membership List and who are faithful, good testimony and in agreement with ABC'S Constitution.
- c. The Clerk
- i. Shall keep a record of all business transacted at all business meetings of the board and congregation.
 - ii. Shall handle the correspondence of the church, and be custodian of all records pertaining to the church.
 - iii. They are responsible in cooperation with the board and congregation, to keep the membership roll up to date and to be prepared to declare which members are to be considered qualified members in good standing according to the conditions laid down in this constitution.
- d. The Treasurer
- i. Shall receive, safeguard disburse, and be responsible for the funds of the church, and keep an accurate account of the same.

- ii. Shall deposit all monies in a bank as soon as possible and shall submit a monthly report to the board in such a manner that the clerk will also have a record for the permanent files.
 - iii. Shall also submit a yearly report at the Annual meeting.
 - Submit the books for an audit each year previous to the Annual Meeting.
 - The Board shall arrange for this audit.
- e. The Financial Secretary
- i. Chosen either from the board or congregation.
 - ii. Shall assist the Treasurer in keeping a record of individual contributors for income tax purposes.
 - iii. Shall assist the Treasurer in counting all offerings on a separate set of books.
 - These books will be available to the individuals who make the Annual audit
 - They will be available to the church board anytime.
- f. Mission Treasurer
- i. Chosen either from the board or congregation.
 - ii. Shall have custody of all missionary monies.
 - iii. Shall keep accurate record of all receipts and expenditures.
 - iv. Shall present a written statement to the church board each month.
 - v. Shall be assisted in counting all offerings by the Financial Secretary
 - vi. The Financial Secretary will keep a separate record of such offerings.

5. Property and Finance Committee

- a. Shall consist of the deacons of the church who shall elect their own chairman.
- b. It shall be the purpose of the property committee to investigate such property necessary and upon a report to the church and approval by the church to purchase it.
- c. Repair Property: Have responsibility to keep property in repair. Extensive repairs on the property must be met with the approval of the church membership.
- d. Title of Property:

- i. The title in relation to all property whether real or personal or mixed, shall be provided by law in section 183, act #327, public acts of 1931 of the state of Michigan.
- ii. Priority: The right to any property that may be acquired by this church shall be and remain vested in that body of believers who shall remain faithful to the standards of faith and doctrine contained in this constitution as adopted this 15th day of June, 1962.
- iii. They shall secure an auditing committee to go over all church finances at the end of each year. It shall be prior to the Annual Meeting and their approval announced at the Annual meeting.

6. Elders and Deacons (Board Members):

a. The Elders

- i. Shall see that all public devotional services are conducted in an orderly and acceptable manner;
- ii. Shall arrange for their continuance in the case of the Pastor's absence;
- iii. Shall observe that the members live in accord with the scriptural principles,
- iv. And shall do together with the pastor, any other thing which they deem will aid the spiritual development of the church.

b. The Deacons

- i. Will be responsible for the needy of the assembly.
- ii. Will administer the benevolent funds of the church.
- iii. Will be trustees of the church in all legal affairs.

Church Business Procedure

I. Business Meetings

- a. The Annual Business Meeting of the congregation shall be held on a date in October of each year such as the official board shall determine. The agenda shall include the presentation of reports by the officers of the church, the annual election and such other matters as are deemed necessary.

- b. Quarterly Business meetings of the congregation shall be held on a date in January, April and July each year such as the official board shall determine.
- c. A monthly meeting of the board shall be held.

2. **Voting Regulations**

- a. Voting privileges are extended to all members of the church who are 18 years of age or over.
- b. Unless otherwise specified in the constitution, a simple majority vote of members present shall be required to adopt any motion or approve any action with the following exceptions:
 - i. Buying or selling any real estate – three fourths vote of active membership.
 - ii. Assuming debts on church property or borrowing money with or without security – three fourths vote of active membership. Absentee ballots will be accepted when received, by the Chairman of the Board, before congregational meeting time.
 - iii. Changing any part of the doctrinal statement requires nine tenths majority vote of active membership.
 - iv. Changing any part of the constitutional by-laws requires two-thirds majority vote of active membership. A quorum of the congregation shall be twenty five percent (25%) of all active members. However when less than fifty percent (50%) are present, a two-thirds majority vote shall be required to pass any measure excluding above exceptions.
 - v. In voting on a change in the doctrinal statement it shall be necessary to have ninety percent (90%) of the active voting membership present. If ninety percent are not present it is in violation of this constitution to even take a vote.
- c. When there is a vote on the Pastor or a change in the constitution of the church it is necessary that the Clerk keep in permanent records the names of all active members present.
- d. A roll call of all active members shall be made at every Annual meeting and every quarterly meeting. They shall be marked clearly as present or absent.
- e. Whenever any member shall request it, a secret ballot shall be taken on matter under consideration.
- f. All congregational meetings shall be announced either in the bulletin or from the pulpit for two weeks prior to the meeting. This applies to special meetings of the congregation as well to transact business.

- g. Special congregational meetings may be called by the Pastor, or by the board, or by written request of ten percent of the voting members of the congregation.
- h. A quorum of the board will be fifty percent (50%) of the members of the board not including the pastor. A simple majority vote will decide all matters pertaining to board business unless otherwise specified in this constitution.
- i. The pastor of the church will have no voting power except in cases of a tie vote by the board or congregation.
- j. The Chairman of the Board shall preside at all congregational meetings; the pastor shall preside in the Chairman's absence.
- k. Special meetings of the board may be called upon the request of the pastor or any two board members. If possible, all members should be notified and special meetings cannot be held unless three-quarters of the members are present not including the pastor.
- l. All business meetings shall be held with decency and order.
- m. In the case of any vacancy of any church office, the vacancies shall be filled according to the rules for the election and appointment of officers as set forth in this constitution. If an election is required, a special meeting may be called.
- n. Amendments may be added to the constitution provided the rules of the constitution are followed. The changes or amendments must be submitted to the membership in written form at least two weeks previous to the congregational meeting.

Arbitration Board

In the event the internal affairs of the church should reach a state of controversy that it seems impossible to achieve peaceful negotiations between the pastor and membership, and/or between factions in the membership, a mediator shall be called into aid in reaching a point of agreement.

This mediator shall be composed of one or more pastors from another independent Bible church or from the I.F.C.A.

The mediator shall be called by simple majority vote at a congregational meeting, or by a majority vote of the church board.

The decisions of the mediator shall be binding upon the congregation, and its conclusions must be accepted by all, with the following exceptions:

- a. It has no power to change the Constitution or Doctrinal statement, nor even pass judgment on it. It must uphold the constitution.
- b. It has no power to dissolve the church, nor dispense of real-estate.

Other Organizations Associated With the Church

All adult and youth organizations of this church shall be approved by the board. Such organizations shall be required to submit annual reports of their activities and financial condition to the annual meeting of the congregation.

The Officers of all adult organizations and the sponsors of the Sunday School, (teachers, youth leaders, Lightbearers) shall be members in good standing and testimony of the Allegan Bible Church.

The church board shall be empowered to set whatever methods or regulations are necessary in the organizing of or procedures to be followed in the various organizations of the church.

Article 7

The Ordinances of the church

We believe in two ordinances of the church for this age – the Lord's Supper and water baptism. They are not to be regarded, however, as a means of salvation. We do not believe that these ordinances are to be considered as a means of grace.

1. The Lord's Supper

Shall be observed once a month and as often as the pastor and elders decide on special occasions. All who have accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior and walking in fellowship with the Lord shall be welcome to join in this service – unless they are under discipline of the church.

2. Water Baptism

Shall be encouraged for each believer as a means of identification with Christ. Anyone desiring to be baptized, the Pastor and the board shall make provision. It is expressed desire of this church to practice Water Baptism by immersion.

Article 8

Dissolution Clause

No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, member, director, or officer of the corporation or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets. Upon dissolution, any assets of the corporation must be distributed to one or more organizations recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as one organization exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific literary or educational purposes.

Article 9

Current Issues

We believe it is as important upon the church to respond to current issues as they touch on matters pertinent to the Word of God.

We do not view these as statements of condemnation, but of biblical concern.

Our desire is to respond with compassion of Christ to any who need help in regard to these very difficult issues.

1. Homosexuality

- a. We believe that the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, describes the homosexual lifestyle as that which is outside the realm of what is a biblically allowed relationship.
- b. We believe that this position is affirmed by Romans 1:18-32. Though the homosexual is not outside the love of God, the lifestyle is sinful, and is declared to be under the wrath of God, not only in principle but also practice. (Gen. 19:15-29)
- c. We believe that homosexuality, as a declared sin, is to be dealt with as sin by the local church.

2. Abortion

- a. We believe life begins at conception. (Ps. 139:13; Jer. 1:5; Ps. 51:5)
- b. We believe that the baby in the womb is a person and not a fetus, a living soul and that the life of that unborn person is of concern to God.
- c. We believe to take that life is not the prerogative of man, but is only within the privilege of the God who created that life.
- d. We believe the God of creation and redemption is also sovereign over the womb, and man does not have the right to infringe on that divine authority.

3. Pornography

- a. We believe that the Bible condemns pornography in all its forms, as it attacks the purity of the thought life (Phil 4:8) and the sanctity of sex as a private act of marriage. (Heb. 13:4)
- b. We believe that pornography is a root of decay and destruction for our society.
- c. We believe pornography contributes to violent sexual crime and devaluation and exploitation of women (Prov. 31:10) and children, and undermines the family and values.
- d. We believe the use and/or tolerance of pornography cannot be an acceptable part of life for any believer in Jesus Christ. (2Cor. 7:1; 1Peter 1:13-16)

4. Ordination of Women in Ministry

- a. We believe there are many areas of ministry for women to serve and women have been greatly used in teaching and evangelism. (Rom.16:1; Acts5:14; 16:15-14; 18:24-26; 21:8-9; Ps. 68:11)
- b. We believe in addition to these positive areas of ministry, scripture is clear there are areas in which women are not to serve.
- c. We believe that the offices of Pastor/Bishop, Elder, and Deacon are commanded by God for men only to serve in. (1Tim.2:11-12; 3:1-13; 5:17-25; 2Tim.4:1-5; Titus 1:5-9)

5. Creation

- a. We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and it is to be accepted literally and not allegorically or figuratively.
- b. We believe that man was created directly in God's own image and after his likeness.
- c. We believe that the creation of man was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms.
- d. We believe that all animal and vegetation life was made directly and God's established law was that they should bring forth only "after their own kind". (Gen.1:1; Ex.20:11; Acts4:24; Col.1:16-17; Heb.11:3; Jn.1:3; Rev.10:6)

6. Marriage and Family

- a. We believe God instituted marriage as a lifelong commitment between one man and one woman, to be established outside of your parent's home. (Eph 5:31)
- b. We believe adultery is strictly forbidden of God. (Ex.20:14)
- c. We believe the husband is to be the head of the home, but he is to love and cherish his wife as Christ loved the church.
- d. We believe living together outside of marriage goes against God's commands, and is a sinful practice, every Christian should abstain from such practices, as they will be outside of God's will and shall miss His blessing. (Eph.5:22-23; 1Cor.6:9-20)

7. Charismatic and Faith Movements

- a. We believe that both these movements have done great harm to the body of Christ, by building upon emotionalism, sensationalism, and materialism, and they have moved away from sound doctrine to teaching a false religion.
- b. We believe this is a replica of the Corinthian church which the Apostle Paul in 1st and 2nd Corinthians wrote to correct their wandering.

- c. We believe there are some who are saved within these movements but follow after carnality and sadly there are many within these movements who are nothing more than false teachers and heretics. (1Tim.1:3-7; 4:1-5; 6:1-10; 2Tim.3:1-13; Titus1:10-16)

Article 10

Missions Policy

1. Supporting Missions

- a. It shall be the policy of this church to prayerfully and financially support our missions. (Matt. 28:18-20)
- b. Mission support shall be by freewill offerings.
- c. The amount given to each mission will be a set amount per month voted on by the congregation at the Annual meeting, special meetings can be called at any time to discuss missions support by the missions committee with a two week notice to the congregation.

2. Qualifications of Missionaries

- a. Each missionary must first be interviewed by the Missionary Chairman and the Missions Committee.
- b. Each missionary before receiving support must be in agreement with the constitution of Allegan Bible Church.
- c. Each missionary must speak at 2 services (morning and evening or separate Sundays) before being voted upon by the congregation.
- d. Each missionary must provide a Statement of Faith and their Doctrinal Statement.
- e. Each missionary must be called of God for the mission field and know precisely what their ministry shall be.
- f. A missionary may lose support when a moral defection from God's Word has occurred.
- g. Each missionary shall be reviewed yearly as to their support.

3. Missionary Chairperson and Committee

- a. They shall insure the regular activity of the church in the cause of missions at home and abroad.
- b. They shall be appointed by the Church Board each year at the first board meeting after the Annual Meeting.
- c. They shall communicate with all missions that ABC supports on a regular basis, and report to the church any matters that require action.

- d. They shall make recommendations to the church regarding any changes or additions to missionary support.

Article 11

Ministry Support

The financial program of this church and its sub-organizations shall be supported only through free-will offerings of Christians, and unsolicited gifts of those interested in this ministry.

1. Loans and Credit

- a. Loans or credit in excess of \$500.00 above liabilities reported in the last Annual Meeting must have approval of membership.

2. Designated Funds

- a. Any temporary use of funds for purposes other than designated must have approval of the Church Board.
- b. If the purpose for which funds have been previously designated is to be changed permanently; it must be done with the approval of the membership.
- c. Gifts designated through the church for a specific purpose or person shall be so used, unless the donor approves a change otherwise, the gift must be returned to the donor.

Article 12

Acceptance of Constitution By Membership

Revised and Updated October 2014

Voted upon and accepted by Congregation

Date of Acceptance: 10/26/2014

Amendments

Benevolence Funding by Board

The board will need a letter of urgent need by a Christian Financial Institution in order to give any money out of the benevolence fund. With this recommendation and a 2/3rds vote of the board an amount of up to a \$500.00 maximum amount can be given.

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