

The Constitution

Of

Emmanuel Bible Church
6630 W Ogden Ave
Berwyn IL 60402
708-484-1528

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The Constitution of Emmanuel Bible Church

Preamble

We, the members of Emmanuel Bible Church, do ordain and establish the following articles, to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

Name

The name of the church shall be Emmanuel Bible Church of Berwyn, Illinois.

Purpose

The purpose of Emmanuel Bible Church shall be “To love God and love people by making disciples who make disciples.” In order to accomplish this purpose, it is our desire to:

1. **WORSHIP** - we will Exalt, Magnify and glorify the One True and Living Triune God.
2. **FELLOWSHIP** - we will Encourage believers to commit themselves to loving, supportive relationships, to regular participation in church life, and to formal Membership at EBC as the local expression the Body of Christ.
3. **DISCIPLESHIP** - we will Equip believers with the tools and knowledge they need to grow and reach Maturity in Christ.
4. **SERVICE** - we will Employ believers in Ministry by helping them identify, hone and use their individual spiritual gifts.
5. **OUTREACH** - we will Evangelize those without Christ as our Mission both at home and around the world.

ARTICLE I

Doctrine

The following is the statement of doctrine to which we ask the assent of all applicants for membership.

A. The Word of God

1. We believe that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," in the sense that God guided and inspired Spirit-filled men to write the message in their own language, style, and personality as He superintended their choice of words and the citations from sources they used, so as to guard the message to keep it accurate. His Divine inspiration is not in degrees, but extends equally and fully to all parts of the sacred writings, historical, poetical, doctrinal and prophetic, even to the smallest word, and inflection of a word found in the original manuscripts (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Cor. 2:13; Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Acts 1:16; 2:4).

2. We believe that all the Scriptures, from first to last, center about our Lord Jesus Christ, in His person and work, in His first and second coming; and hence that no chapter, even of the Old Testament, is properly read or understood until it leads to Him; and moreover, that all the Scriptures are designed for our practical instruction (Luke 24:27,44; John 5:39; Acts 17:2,3; 18:28; 26:22,23; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11).

B. The Trinity

1. We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and that these three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfection, and worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence, and obedience (Mark 12:29; John 1:1-14; Matt. 28:19,20; Acts 5:3, 4; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb 1:1-3; Rev 1:4-6).

2. We believe in God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity (1 Peter 1:2).

3. We believe that Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God, which is to say, He is Himself very God; He took upon Himself our unfallen nature, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary; He died upon the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of the world; He arose from the dead in a body which is human, still bearing the scars of death, but a body which is now glorified; He ascended into heaven in that glorified body, where He is now our interceding High Priest; He will come again personally and visibly to set up His kingdom and to judge the living and the dead (Col. 1:15; Phil. 2:5-8; Matt. 1:18-25; 1 Pet. 2:24,25; Heb. 4:14-16; Acts 1:9-11; 1Thess. 4:16-18; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 11:15-17; 20:4-6,11-15).

4. We believe in the Holy Spirit, not as an influence, but as a Divine Person, the source and power of all acceptable worship and service, and our abiding Comforter and Helper; that He never takes His departure from the Church, nor from the feeblest of the saints, but is ever present to testify to Christ, seeking to occupy us with Him; He will not serve our selfish interests (John 7:38,39; 14:16, 17; 15:26; 16:13,14; Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:9; Phil. 3:3).

C. Man

1. We believe that man, originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, fell from his high and holy estate by eating the forbidden fruit, and as the consequence of his disobedience the threatened penalty of death was then and there inflicted, so that his moral nature was not only grievously injured by the Fall, but he completely lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the power of the devil (Gen. 1:26; 2:17; John 5:40; 6:53; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Tim. 6:5,6; 1 John 3:8).

2. We believe his spiritual death, or total corruption of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire race of man, the man Christ Jesus alone excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of Divine life, but is essentially evil, being at enmity against God, and incapable by any human process to live in accordance with His Word (Gen. 6:5; Ps. 14:1-3, 51:5; Jer. 17:9; John 3:6; Rom. 5:12-19; 8:6,7).

D. Salvation

1. We believe that, owing to this universal depravity and death in sin, no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless he or she is born again; no degree of reformation, however great; no attainment in morality, however high; no culture, however attractive; no humanitarian and philanthropic schemes and societies, however useful; no baptism or other ordinance, however administered; can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven; rather, a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation (Isa. 64:6; John 3:5,18; Gal. 6:15, Phil. 3:4-9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23).

2. We believe that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin, and made a curse for us, dying as a substitute for us; and that no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, or of all the churches that have existed since the day of the Apostles, can add in the very least to the value of the precious blood, or to the merit of that finished work, wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper divinity with perfect and sinless humanity (Lev. 17:11; Matt. 26:28; Rom. 5:6-9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 1:7, 1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

3. We believe that Christ, in the fullness of the blessings He has secured by His obedience unto death, is received by faith alone, and that the moment we trust in Him as our Savior we pass out of death into everlasting life, being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according to the measure of His acceptance, loved as He is loved, and having His place and portion, as linked to Him, and one with Him forever (John 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:1, Eph. 2:4-6,13; 1 John 4:17; 5:11,12).

E. The Eternal Keeping Power of God

1. We believe that a born again believer cannot ever lose his salvation (John 5:24; Phil. 1:6, John 10:27-30; Rom. 8:33-39). Everlasting life commences at the moment of salvation and is eternal; consequently, men who are saved by grace stay saved by grace. Salvation is not dependent on man's works before salvation or man's work to keep salvation. It is accomplished only through the work of Christ which never fails.

2. A believer may fall into carnality and out of fellowship with the Lord and consequently is ineffective in his testimony. This results in God's discipline in such a believer's life (Heb. 12:5-15; 1 Cor. 5:1-5). He or she can suffer loss of reward (1 Cor. 3:11-15) and even become a prodigal but still not lose their salvation. God does not encourage these conditions, but seeks to restore such a believer, as backsliders are never happy people; if necessary, they can become weak or sick and some can even be taken home before their time (1 Cor. 11:28-32).

F. The Church

We believe that the Church is composed of all who are united by the Holy Spirit to the risen and ascended Son of God; that by the same Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, and thus, being members one of another, we are responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian prejudices and denominational bigotry, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently (Matt.16:16-28; Acts 2:32-47; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Col. 3:14,15).

G. Christian Walk

1. We believe that we are called with a holy calling to walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit, and so to live in the Spirit that we should not fulfill the desires of the flesh; but the flesh needs to be kept constantly in subjection to Christ until death, or it will surely manifest its presence to the dishonor of His name (Rom. 8:12,13, 13:13,14; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:1-10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

2. We believe in the priesthood of all believers. Furthermore, we believe the Holy Spirit sovereignly bestows upon every Christian believer, at the moment of spiritual birth, a spiritual gift or gifts. It is the responsibility of every Christian man and woman to discover, develop and employ his or her spiritual gift or gifts for the edification of the church and the accomplishment of the work of Christ in the world. (1 Cor. 12:4-31; Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Pet. 4:10-11). Spiritual gifts are not to be confused with fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) or spiritual offices in the church (1 Tim. 3:1-13). Fruit of the Spirit are facets of Christ's character which every believer is to cultivate. The spiritual offices of elder, deacon and deaconess are positions in the church for oversight of its affairs. (See Article III C, D and E.)

H. After Death

We believe that the souls of those who have trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation do at death immediately pass into His presence, and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at the Rapture, when the soul and spirit of a redeemed person will be reunited with a glorified body and shall be associated with Him forever; but the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting conscious torment separated from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power (Luke 16:19-26; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 1 Thes. 4:13-18; Jude 6, 7; Rev. 20:11-15).

I. Rapture, Tribulation, Millennium and the Eternal State

We believe that our task as believers in a local church is to preach the gospel to the whole world through the leading and power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Our task is not social work to reform the world but to preach the gospel while anxiously awaiting the imminent return of the Lord Jesus to rapture the Church, thus consummating the Church age on the earth (1 Thes. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-58). After the Church is raptured, there is introduced upon the earth a seven-year period of tribulation described in Revelation, chapters four through nineteen. The church, in heaven during this time, is judged (1 Cor. 3:12-15; 2 Cor. 5:10) and made ready for the marriage feast (Rev. 19:7, 8) and then returns to the earth with Christ and other hosts of Heaven to defeat Satan and the foes of the Lord who ruled the earth during the tribulation (Rev. 19:11-21). Then will come the binding of Satan for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-3), and the completion of the first resurrection of the believers of all ages joining the previously resurrected church (Rev. 20:4-6). The second resurrection is for the unsaved and great white throne judgment of the lost (Rev. 20:11-15). Jesus will then, in Person, sit on the millennial throne and rule the earth for 1,000 years. Israel will then be restored to their own land and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord and prosper (Rev. 20:3,4,6; Isa. 11; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 15:15-17). This will be followed by a

loosing of Satan for a short time, his final internment in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:7-10), and then the introduction of the eternal state, which is described in Rev. 21 and 22.

J. Ordinances

We believe that there are two ordinances given to the New Testament church. They are water baptism and the Lord's Supper. Water baptism is symbolic of the Spirit baptism described in Eph. 4:5, Rom. 6:3,4 and 1 Cor. 12:13. Spirit baptism happens to the believer at the moment of the new birth when he is baptized (placed) into the body of Christ. Water baptism is to be accomplished by immersion in water of a believer who, by so doing, acknowledges his personal belief in Christ. It does not save, but indicates obedience to the Lord's command of Matt. 28:19,20. Immersion typifies the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and the believer who is identified with Christ.

The Lord's Supper, as described in 1 Cor. 11:23-34, is to be partaken of in a regular fashion by believers only. Any believer present is invited to join in this time of fellowship. It is to be a time when partakers are enjoined to respond to the Spirit who searches their hearts by confession of any known sin (1 Cor. 11:27-32) and a time when we especially remember the Lord's death on our behalf (1 Cor. 11:24,25).

K. Human Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological gender is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen 2:18-25, Rom 7:2, 1 Cor 7:10, Eph 5:22-23). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor 7:2-5, Heb 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, attempts to "alter gender" by surgery or appearance, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Gen 19:4-7, Gen 26:8-10, Lev 18:1-30, Matt 15:18-20, Rom 1:24-27, 1 Cor 5:1, 1 Cor 6:9-10, 1 Thes 4:1-8, Heb 13:4).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Emmanuel Bible Church as the local body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the members of Emmanuel Bible Church and the community at large, it is imperative that all members and persons employed by Emmanuel Bible Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt 5:16, Phil 2:14-16, 1 Thes 5:22).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21, Rom 10:9-10, 1 Cor 6:9-11, 1 John 1:9). We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31, Luke 6:31-36). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed towards any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the biblical convictions of Emmanuel Bible Church.

ARTICLE II

Membership

A. Steps to Membership

All individuals 18 years of age or older who have received Christ as their personal Savior, who have received baptism as a believer, and who desire membership in Emmanuel Bible Church shall apply for membership as follows:

1. Completion of Membership Classes

Membership classes shall be offered to familiarize the prospective member with the elements of The Constitution of Emmanuel Bible Church. Completion of these classes is a prerequisite to the personal interview.

2. Personal Interview

The individual desiring membership shall meet with an elder or pastor to verbalize their personal testimony. The purpose of the interview is to determine the integrity of their faith, their desire to be committed to Emmanuel Bible Church, their assent to the fundamentals of the faith portions given in Article I of this constitution, and their support of the church government and mission as described in this constitution.

3. Signed Statement of Commitment

A signed statement of commitment shall be used as an instrument to affirm one's desire for membership, and to serve as a formal record of one's membership.

4. Public Affirmation of New Members

New members will be publicly recognized and welcomed.

B. Responsibilities of Members

Membership should indicate a desire to grow in the likeness of Christ and exhibit the fruit of the Spirit in their life (Galatians 5:22-23). Emmanuel Bible Church is committed to providing ministries that equip its people to that end. Members are expected to be involved in such ministries for their personal growth and the spiritual growth of others.

1. Members shall regularly attend the worship services of the church.
2. Members shall receive biblical instruction as provided by classes and other training opportunities.
3. Members shall participate in the fellowship ministries of the church such as small groups.
4. Members shall support the work of the ministry, both here and abroad, with their time, treasure and talents.

C. Termination of Membership

Membership in the church will be terminated for the following reasons:

1. Exclusion (see Article IV - Discipline and Restoration).
2. Requisition - Letters of recommendation shall be granted to members in good standing who request them. Letters shall be granted only to churches whose beliefs correspond to the fundamentals of the faith portions given in Article I of this Constitution. Membership in any other church automatically terminates membership in Emmanuel Bible Church.
3. Non-participation - If the elders, after investigation, determine that a member, without reasonable excuse, has not sufficiently participated in Emmanuel Bible Church and its goals and ministries for a period in excess of one year, they may remove that person from membership.
4. Resignation – A member requests, in writing, to be removed from membership. The elders will acknowledge the request.

D. Reinstatement of Membership

Any former member of Emmanuel Bible Church having left the church in good standing may, upon written request, reinstate their membership at EBC without the need to attend membership classes once again by completing the following:

1. Request for Reinstatement of Membership form

A completed and signed “Request for Reinstatement of Membership” form acknowledging continued agreement with the EBC constitution and indicating re-commitment to the responsibilities listed in Article II.B.

2. A Personal Interview

The former member desiring reinstatement of membership shall meet with an elder or pastor to discuss their request. The purpose of the interview is to evaluate their spiritual health, their desire to be once again committed to Emmanuel Bible Church, their assent to the fundamentals of the faith portions given in Article I of this constitution, and their support of the church government and mission as described in this constitution.

Any former member desiring reinstatement whose membership was terminated due to disciplinary exclusion or because of interpersonal conflict must show the fruit of genuine repentance by completing any steps toward reconciliation and/or restitution as prescribed by the Elders before also completing the requirements of Article II.D.1 and D.2 above.

ARTICLE III

Government

We believe that Scripture establishes unique offices within the local church, which complement one another in providing pastoral oversight and practical care for its people; these are the offices of elder, deacon, and deaconess. While Scripture teaches that it is the responsibility of the elders to provide pastoral oversight by teaching, protecting, and leading the church, it is the deacons and deaconesses who assist the elders in completing the ministry of the church by providing care for its suffering and needy members. It is this pattern of Biblical leadership that we seek to follow in establishing the government of Emmanuel Bible Church.

A. Leadership

The government of Emmanuel Bible Church is vested in the elders along with the support and counsel of the deacons and deaconesses and the input of the membership.

B. Selection of Church Officers

The Nominating Committee (see Article III G 1) shall act on behalf of the elders in choosing from the membership mature believers who, upon confirmation by the membership at the annual meeting, will become officers of the church. All new officers shall assume office after adjournment of the annual meeting, except for elders (see Article III H 2), deacons and deaconesses (see Article III H 5).

C. Elders

1. The Nominating Committee shall evaluate from the membership and recommend to the elders men who are qualified to conduct, administer, and oversee all of the affairs and activities of the church. Candidates for elder should possess and exercise one or more of the following spiritual gifts: shepherding, prophecy, leadership, administration, teaching, discernment or wisdom. These, along with the senior pastor and other selected staff pastors, shall be known as the elders of the church.

2. Elders shall be confirmed by simple majority vote of the membership present at the church's annual meeting. All candidates for the position of elder must meet the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4; that is, demonstrating already the qualities exhibited by godly elders. Furthermore, all elders, with the exception of the senior pastor and appointed staff pastors, must have been members of the church for at least one year. The number of elders may vary according to the size of the church and the extent of ministries, and every effort should be made to add to the numbers of elders, as qualified men are available. However, there will be no more than nine elders serving at any one time, excluding the senior pastor and appointed staff pastors. The elders shall serve a three-year term. With a 2/3 majority confirmation vote of the of the remaining Elders, an Elder may serve a second consecutive term without going through the Nominating Committee process after which they must step out of the office for a minimum of one year before they can be reconfirmed.

3. The elders have duties that include administration, pastoral care, and instruction. They are caring overseers who watch over the souls of their people, directing them away from error and protecting them from false teachings and immoral practices (Heb. 13:17; Titus 1:10-11). They are concerned shepherds who feed and lead the flock of God, comforting the sick, encouraging the weak, counseling the afflicted, caring for the poor, and disciplining the erring (1 Peter 5:1-3). They are conscientious teachers who guide by both instruction and example, teaching the truth of the Scriptures, exhorting in sound doctrine, and refuting those who contradict (Titus 1:9). Elders should be given over to prayer for the body of believers. They shall administer the Lord's Supper and baptism with assistance from the deacons and deaconesses. They shall represent the church in all legal matters.

4. The elders shall select from among them a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and any other officers deemed appropriate to discharge their duties under this constitution. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the elders, and combined meetings with the deacons and deaconesses, and meetings of the membership. If the Chairman is not present, the Vice-Chairman shall preside. The Secretary shall keep the minutes at all such meetings. The Chairman shall be the chief executive officer of the church, charged with the general oversight and care of all its activities in cooperation with the rest of the elders. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall have such other and further duties as may be directed by the Constitution or as assigned by the elders.

5. The elders are responsible to approve all church policy decisions that would change the direction of a ministry, change a staff assignment, or change the church budget.

6. Should an elder desire to resign, a written statement should be given to the Chairman of the Elders one month before the effective date of the resignation.

7. All persons confirmed or appointed to ministries within Emmanuel Bible Church shall be responsible to the elders and shall act in accordance with their guidance, direction and evaluation (Hebrews 13:17). While there is equality among elders, deacons, deaconesses, and in fact, all members of the body, for the purpose of order, Scripture teaches that the elders are entrusted with the final authority within the local church. However, the elders should seek the counsel of the deacons and deaconesses in matters that are under their respective administrations. Elders give ministry direction to the deacons and deaconesses. Elders are not to lord it over those who are under their charge, but rather are to discharge their duties with the mind of Christ as servant-leaders and as stewards in God's church.

D. Deacons

1. The Nominating Committee shall choose from the membership men who shall assist the elders in providing for the physical and spiritual needs of the congregation. These shall be known as the deacons of the church.

2. Deacons shall be confirmed by simple majority vote of the membership present at the church's annual meeting. Candidates for the position of deacon must have been members of the church for at least one year and meet the qualifications of a deacon as given in 1 Timothy 3:8-10,12 and Acts 6:1-8. The number of deacons may vary according to the size of the church and the extent of ministries, and every effort should be made to add to the number of deacons, as qualified men are available. The deacons shall serve a **two-year** term. With the confirmation of the deacons, they may serve a second consecutive term without going through the Nominating Committee process after which they must step out of the office for a minimum of one year before they can be reconfirmed.

3. The deacons are servants whose tasks are delegated by the elders in cooperation with the deaconesses. Deacons assist the elders in caring for the needs of the people of the church to enable the elders to lead the church in the Word and in prayer. Their duties include but are not limited to the material and financial needs of the congregation. Deacons receive and see to the proper disbursement of benevolence monies and shall visit and minister to the physical and spiritual needs of especially the poor and elderly. Deacons shall assist in the training and mentoring of younger men by both instruction and example. They shall assist in administering the Lord's Supper and Baptism. The Deacons shall have the responsibility of welcoming and seating the congregation, oversee the collection of offerings as well as maintain proper order. They are also to oversee the heating, cooling and lighting of the rooms during services.

4. The deacons shall select from among them a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and any other officers needed to fulfill their ministry.

5. Should a deacon desire to resign, a written statement should be given to the Chairman of the

Elders and the Chairman of the Deacons one month before the effective date of the resignation.

6. The deacons shall seek the counsel and direction of the elders and the input of the deaconesses in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities.

E. Deaconesses

1. The Nominating Committee shall choose from among the membership women who assist the elders and deacons in providing for the physical and spiritual needs of the congregation. These shall be known as the deaconesses of the church.

2. Deaconesses shall be confirmed by a simple majority vote of the membership present at the church's annual meeting. Candidates for the position of deaconess must have been members of the church for at least one year and meet the qualifications of a deaconess as given in 1 Timothy 3:11 (see also Romans 16:1). The number of deaconesses may vary according to the size of the church and the extent of ministries, and every effort shall be made to add to the number of deaconesses, as qualified women are available. The deaconesses shall serve a **two-year** term. With the confirmation of the deaconesses, they may serve a second consecutive term without going through the Nominating Committee process after which they must step out of the office for a minimum of one year before they can be reconfirmed.

3. Deaconesses are servants whose tasks are delegated by the elders in cooperation with the deacons. Their duties include but are not limited to the material and financial needs of the congregation. They shall provide counseling and encouragement for those who are troubled, especially the women of the church. They shall also provide physical help such as meals, caring for the sick, and distributing food. Deaconesses shall assist in the training and mentoring of younger women by both instruction and example (1 Timothy 5:3-16). They shall assist in preparing for the Lord's Supper and Baptism.

4. The deaconesses shall select from among them a Chairwoman, Vice-Chairwoman, Secretary, and any other officers needed to fulfill their ministry.

5. Should a deaconess desire to resign, a written statement should be given to the Chairman of the Elders and the Chairwoman of the Deaconesses one month before the effective date of the resignation.

6. The deaconesses shall seek the counsel and direction of the elders and the input of the deacons in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities.

F. The Church Staff

1. The duties of the ministerial staff shall be to attend upon the preaching of the Word of God faithfully, to administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, to teach the Word, to care faithfully for the spiritual life of the church, and to seek to win the lost to Christ. The Senior Pastor shall lead in these activities and shall direct and allocate the responsibilities of the remaining members of the ministerial staff, which shall include all staff pastors, staff ministers, lay pastors, and the remainder of the church staff. The title of staff minister shall be considered for those who can serve effectively in a pastoral staff position but have not clearly established their qualifications as an elder prior to being assigned the title of pastor.

2. The employment of a Senior Pastor shall be decided by a three-fourths majority of the membership present at a special congregational meeting called for that purpose.

3. In case the Senior Pastor should desire to leave the church, he should give three months written notice to the elders, who then in turn, can notify the church in a special business meeting (see III H 3). If the elders should perceive the necessity for the dismissal of the Senior Pastor, it must be by a three-

fourths majority of the elders. Such a decision shall be made known in a special business meeting of the church. The pastor will then have three months in which to settle his affairs and look for further opportunities to serve elsewhere.

4. The Senior Pastor is an ex-officio member of all organizations of the church. Up to three staff pastors may also be appointed annually as elders by a three-fourths majority vote of the elders.

5. The lay pastors should assist the Senior Pastor in pastoral duties as described in Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Tim. 3:1-7. In actual service, they shall be appointed as lay pastors by a three-fourths majority vote of the elders for a term so long as they desire with the option of a sabbatical every fourth year. Such meeting shall be held in the absence of the candidate for the office. They are not eligible for appointment until they have fulfilled at least one term as an elder. Their main emphasis of ministry is to be that described in Acts 6:4, prayer and ministry in the Word. There shall be no limit to the number of lay pastors. Lay pastors may also serve as elders (see Article III C).

6. Support staff (i.e. secretarial and custodial) shall be employed or dismissed by the elders as needed. All other pastoral staff (i.e. youth and adult pastors) shall be employed or dismissed by a three-fourths majority of the elders. Any person currently employed in a pastoral staff position who wishes to assume additional pastoral staff responsibilities, through consolidation or combination of staff positions previously staffed by separate individuals, shall be required to receive a three-fourths majority of the elders before assuming any new pastoral staff responsibilities.

G. Other Church Officers

The elders may establish and maintain certain offices within the church and may fill those offices with church officers. Church officers shall report to the elders as requested and shall be responsible on a day-to-day basis to the elders or a duly appointed representative of the elders. Church officers shall be members of the church. As provided below, church officers shall be appointed by the elders as specified or confirmed by a simple majority vote of the membership present designated terms. Should a church officer desire to resign, a written statement should be given to the Chairman of the Elders one month before the effective date of the resignation. If the resigning individual's position required confirmation by the membership, the elders may appoint a new church officer to fill the position until the next annual meeting. These offices may include but are not necessarily limited to the following:

1. The Nominating Committee

a. The Nominating Committee shall consist of two elders, one deacon, one deaconess and one member of the Missions Committee who will be appointed by their peers annually, and at least two additional members as defined in the Nominating Committee Handbook who will be confirmed by the membership for a two year term. The terms of these members-at-large shall be staggered.

b. Members of the Nominating Committee shall thoroughly investigate the character of each nominee for church office and instruct them as to the duties expected of the office to which they are nominated before presenting them to the elders or to the membership. The committee shall make known to the membership those who have been chosen to be confirmed for church offices no later than the second Sunday preceding the annual meeting.

c. The nominations for church office, where applicable, must come from the Nominating Committee and not from the floor during the annual meeting. However, any member of the church may make suggestions for the filling of any office to any member of the Nominating Committee no less than four weeks prior to the annual meeting, who in turn must discuss this suggestion with the Nominating Committee. This is to make certain that each candidate is carefully screened concerning spiritual and physical ability to serve.

2. The Budget Committee

The Budget Committee shall establish the yearly budget of the church and shall consist of the treasurer, the elder that oversees the budget, a deacon and a deaconess. The proposed budget shall be presented to the elders for approval in the second month before the start of the new fiscal year. An annual audit of the treasurer's records shall be made by the Budget Committee unless otherwise designated by the elders.

3. The Treasurer

The Treasurer shall have charge of all the moneys of the church, which he/she shall receive, care for, and disburse according to the direction of the elders with the input of the deacons and deaconesses. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all moneys received and expended and shall furnish a report to the elders whenever they may so desire. No fewer than two designated counters shall count each offering. Counters are appointed by the Treasurer and confirmed by the elders. The Treasurer shall be confirmed by the membership for a two-year term.

4. The Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall be the Church Office Manager whose job description shall include the duty of recording gifts and offerings received to providing appropriate records as needed.

5. The Missions Committee

The Missions Committee shall assist the elders in the area of Ministries and Missions. See Article V and the Missions Committee Policy Handbook for more information on the responsibilities of the Missions Committee and the selection of members for the Missions Committee.

H. Meetings

1. The church will operate on a July 31 fiscal year end. The elders shall hold an annual meeting with the membership in the month of August. In this meeting they shall report on the finances and actions of the previous year. The elders shall seek the evaluation (private or public) and input of the membership during these meetings. Confirmation of nominees for church offices will take place at the annual meeting.

2. The elders shall hold a meeting within one month of the annual meeting. Off-going elders shall remain in office until this meeting is adjourned in order to provide the greatest opportunity for informed decision-making. Immediately after the previous elder body has adjourned for the final time, a second elder meeting shall be held, at which time all on-coming elders that were confirmed by the congregation at the annual meeting shall assume office and shall participate in any new business, including the selection of officers and the appointment of staff pastors as elders for the next year. Following this meeting, the elders shall meet at least monthly to conduct official business. Additional meetings of the elders to may be called by any three elders. All elders shall be notified at least seven days prior to any meeting, except for emergency meetings, which may be called as needed. The presence of a majority of the elders shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. However, assent of a majority of all elders present shall be required for passage of any motion.

3. The elders may bring any preliminary plans and decisions regarding the ongoing work of Emmanuel Bible Church before the membership for prayerful input. The expression of the body shall be carefully considered, but shall not be binding on the elders. The elders may decide to submit certain issues or matters to the membership for a vote and shall have the right, if they elect to do so, to establish

the procedures and requirements for any such vote, including the quorum required, the notice required, and the majority required for approval or action.

4. The elders shall be called together for a special meeting by any twelve members upon written request to the elder chairman stating the reason for the meeting and signed by those requesting the meeting.

5. The deacons and deaconesses shall each hold a meeting within one month of the annual meeting. Off-going deacons/deaconesses shall remain in office until this meeting is adjourned in order to provide the greatest opportunity for informed decision-making. Immediately after the previous deacon/deaconess body has adjourned for the final time, a second deacon/deaconess meeting shall be held, at which time all on-coming deacons/deaconesses that were confirmed by the congregation at the annual meeting shall assume office and shall conduct business related to areas that are under their administration, including the selection of officers for the next year. Following this meeting, the deacons and deaconesses shall each meet at least monthly.

6. The elders, deacons, and deaconesses shall meet together at least twice yearly for the purpose of communication and discussion of matters of mutual significance.

7. Attendance at elder, deacon, or deaconess meetings by other individuals shall be by invitation or approval by the appropriate chairperson.

8. Parliamentary rules of order as established in Robert's Rules of Order shall apply in all regular and special meetings of the church. The chairman of the meeting shall see to it that all business is done decently and in order. All decisions shall be made by a majority vote of the members present, unless otherwise specified.

ARTICLE IV

Discipline and Restoration

A. Authority for Discipline and Restoration

According to Matt. 18:15-17, 1 Cor. 5 and Gal. 6:1, the church is obligated to discipline its members. If any of its members fall into a mode of life contrary to Christian teaching and calling, and will not heed due admonition and exhortation to repent and turn from the evil way, such people shall, after due effort has failed to restore them, be deprived of fellowship, and announcement of this decision will be made in a manner deemed best by the elders.

B. Process

1. Confrontation - Should a member of the church know or suspect that another member is practicing sinful behavior condemned in the Bible, that member must immediately and privately go to the one member who is in sin or suspected of being in sin and, in a spirit of love and humility, tell him about the suspected sin or sins.

Should the supposed offender demonstrate that he or she is not in sin, or should he or she repent of his or her sins and make appropriate restitution, the investigating member must keep the incident and discussion completely and forever confidential.

2. Confirmation - However, if the offender refuses to repent or make appropriate restitution, the investigating member must immediately bring one or two spiritually mature, like-minded church members with him to confront the sinning member, and to confirm the testimony of the original investigating member and the sinning member. Should the member repent and make appropriate

restitution, the investigating members must keep the incident and discussion completely and forever confidential.

3. Publication - However, if the offender refuses to repent and make appropriate restitution, the members involved in "Confirmation" above must immediately and privately inform an elder(s) of the matter. This elder(s) shall investigate and report to the other elders who, as soon as practical, shall then place the matter before the church in a meeting whose attendance shall be limited to the membership. At the meeting, the members should individually and collectively seek to help the offender in a loving and humble spirit, to seek his or her restoration, and to pray for him or her. Should the offender repent and make appropriate restitution, he shall be welcomed back into full fellowship in the church, with the elders to determine whether and to what extent the repentant member shall be returned to any past ministries.

4. Exclusion - If the offender refuses to repent and make appropriate restitution, the elders will instruct the church members to regard that person as an unbeliever and to have no further contact with him, except to restore him or her. The unrepentant member's name shall be removed from membership in the church. Should the offender repent and make appropriate restitution, he or she shall be welcomed back into the church and restored to full fellowship in the church.

ARTICLE V

Ministries and Missions

- A. The elders shall determine what ministries and missions the church shall establish and support and to what extent. The elders have established a Missions Committee to assist them in carrying out their obligation under this article. The membership of this committee shall be as defined in the Missions Committee Policy Handbook and, except for appointed members, shall be confirmed by a simple majority vote of the membership present at the annual meeting.
- B. It is the basic policy of the church to first consider for support those who are members of the church. The church will also attempt to give support based on the number of people in the family and the economic conditions of the area of service. The Missions Committee has established further guidelines regarding the support of missionaries as defined in the Missions Committee Policy Handbook.

ARTICLE VI

Use of Facilities

The facilities of Emmanuel Bible Church were provided by God's benevolence through the sacrificial giving and generosity of the church members and attenders. Emmanuel Bible Church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the body of Christ and to bring glory to God. Although the facilities of Emmanuel Bible Church are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved organizations, groups, and non-members as a witness to our faith in the spirit and practice of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Use of the facilities of Emmanuel Bible Church will not be permitted or granted to persons, groups, or organizations holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church's beliefs or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, Article I of this Constitution of Emmanuel Bible Church. Additionally, the facilities of Emmanuel Bible Church may not be used for activities which contradict, or are deemed to be inconsistent with the church's beliefs or moral teaching.

The Elders are the final decision-makers concerning the use of the church's facilities (see Article III).

This restricted facility use Article is necessary for two reasons: First, the church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing the facilities of Emmanuel Bible Church to be used for purposes that contradict the church's beliefs would be material cooperation with that activity and would be a grave violation of the church's faith and religious practice (2 Cor. 6:14, 1 Thess. 5:22).

Secondly, it is very important for Emmanuel Bible Church to present a consistent message to the community at large and for all church staff, volunteers, and members to conscientiously maintain that message as part of our witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Allowing the facilities of Emmanuel Bible Church to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in activities that are contrary to the church's beliefs would have a severe, negative impact on the message that Emmanuel Bible Church strives to promote. It could also cause confusion and scandal to church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, Emmanuel Bible Church agrees with the beliefs or practices of the persons, groups, or organizations using its facilities.

Therefore, in no event shall persons, groups, or organizations who hold, advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict the church's beliefs be allowed to use the facilities of Emmanuel Bible Church. Nor may the church's facilities be used in any way that contradicts our beliefs. This article applies to all church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities in question are connected to the church's sanctuary, because the church sees all of its property as set apart for the worship of God and His work as defined in this document (Col. 3:17).

ARTICLE VII

Dissolution

Upon dissolution, no part of the net earnings of the church shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, member, director, officer of the church, or any private individual, and no donor, member, director, officer of the church, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the church's assets. Upon dissolution, any asset of the church must be distributed to one or more organizations recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as organized exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes. Those organizations should have similar purpose statements and doctrinal beliefs as Emmanuel Bible Church.

ARTICLE VIII

Constitutional Changes

The elders, by a three-fourths majority vote, may suggest any change in the constitution which seems necessary. However, such changes must be submitted to the membership in written form at least two weeks prior to a congregational meeting, and can be adopted if a two-thirds majority of the membership present at that meeting affirms the changes.

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