

Middletown Baptist Church

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CHURCH CONSTITUTION

BY-LAWS

WHAT-WE-BELIEVE

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CONSTITUTION

Article One – Character

Section One – Polity

The government of this church shall be vested in the body of believers who compose it. The fundamental principle is that this church shall be an independent body, and will cooperate with other Bible-believing churches where they conform to the teachings of the Holy Scriptures.

Section Two – Doctrine

The Middletown Baptist Church of Middletown, Delaware, shall receive the Holy Scripture, as it's only authority. The Bible, and it alone, will be the law, the creed, and the final authority in all matter relating to faith and practice.

Section Three – Purpose

The church shall strive, by the Word of God and the aid of the Holy Spirit, to win to Christ the unsaved, and to seek to develop the spirituality of the members.

Section Four – Membership

The membership shall consist of such persons as have been born again, by repenting of sin and accepting the Lord Jesus as personal Savior. Upon favorable recommendation of the church, these, whether by baptism, letter, or personal testimony, shall enter into the fellowship of this church.

Section Five – Refusal

Any objection to any persons being received by three or more members shall be referred to the pastor, and the deacons, who shall examine the objection and report to the church at a later meeting.

Article Two – Privileges

Section One

Members are expected to maintain their prayer life and testimony for Christ, to be faithful in all spiritual duties essential to the Christian life, and in the discharge of all obligations to the church. Members are expected to be zealous in all efforts for the building up of the church, to love the brethren, and to respect the Pastor and Officers of the church by undivided support. Members are expected to attend all service of their church unless providentially hindered, to give regularly to its support and charities, to share in its organized work and to always extend a cordial welcome to all visitors.

Section Two

All persons in uniting with this church, by that act, make themselves responsible for a just proportion of the necessary running expenses of the church and shall contribute regularly, in keeping with the Scriptures, to its support.

Section Three

All members shall have equal rights and privileges except those members less than sixteen years of age who will not have voting privileges or new members for one month.

Section Four

Faithful members may request an absentee ballot from the church Board solely for the annual business meeting vote.

Article Three – Officers

Section One

Permanent officers of the church are Pastor, Deacons, Church Clerk and Assistant(s), Financial Secretary/Treasurer and Assistant(s), and Missions Secretary/Treasurer and Assistant(s).

Section Two

All officers shall be elected for a two-year term from the active membership of the church, by a two-thirds plus one vote of the members that are present at the annual business meeting.

Section Three

Temporary offices and committees may be created with the church's approval to aid in the efficiency of the work, but their nature is temporary.

Article Four – Meetings

Section One

Such meetings, gatherings, and events in fellowship, worship, prayer, instruction, preaching, and soul-winning shall be held in or for the church as its material, physical, and spiritual needs shall demand, to the extent that all shall point to and magnify the main purpose of the church, providing that meetings do not conflict.

Article Five – Discipline

Section One

All cases of church discipline shall come first before the Pastor and Deacons. They shall be authorized, when necessary, to appoint an advisory committee. Each case shall be handled according to the Spirit of Christ. (Matthew 18:15-23)

Article Six – Amendments

Section One

A two-thirds plus one vote of the members present at a regular business meeting may amend the constitution, providing the reading of such change shall have been given from the pulpit on the Sunday preceding and following the date of the meeting.

BY-LAWS

Article One – Membership & Election of Officers

Section One – Pastor

In case of a vacancy in the pastorate, the church shall call a male minister who is fundamental in belief and true to the Word of God, who shall be accepted on a no less than three-fourths vote of the members present at a meeting being held for the calling of a pastor, for which there shall have been given one week's public notice from the pulpit. When it is necessary, a pulpit committee will be formed, consisting of at least two Deacons and two male members at large, whose duty it shall be to hear ministers and recommend them to the church for hearing. In the case that the church or the pastor should desire to terminate the pastoral relationship, each shall give the other one-month's notice.

Section Two – Pastor's Duties

He shall conduct himself in the spirit and manner of 1 Timothy 3:1-7; faithfully teach and preach God's Word; administer the ordinances of the Gospel, Communion and Baptism; serve as the moderator at all church meetings, be responsible for the hiring, work assignments, and dismissal of all staff personnel, in every way to use his best endeavors to further the spiritual and temporal interests of the church, to take oversight of the flock and to agree to abide by the provisions of these By-Laws.

Section Three – Removal of an Unfaithful Pastor

If the Pastor is teaching a doctrine contrary to the Scriptures, or has a questionable social life, or is guilty of compromise, he shall be immediately dismissed from the church and immediately relieved from all Pastoral duties, but shall be granted one month's pay by the church.

Section Four – Deacons

They shall conduct themselves in the manner and spirit of 1 Timothy 3:8-13. They shall meet the church’s interpretation as listed in the Deacon Qualification Guideline Form. This board shall consist of a minimum of two male members elected by the people at the annual business meeting for a term of two years, in accord with Acts 6:1-6.

Section Five – Deacon’s Duties

They shall assist the Pastor in the work, shall zealously promote the spiritual interests of the church, shall prepare and distribute the elements of the Lord’s Support, and shall assist the Pastor in making all nominations for church offices. They shall also serve in the capacity of trusteeship in taking the oversight of church property, equipment and improvements thereof.

Section Six – Membership

Members neglecting to contribute to the support of the church by their presence for the period of one month, unless providentially hindered, shall forfeit all voting rights as a member.

Section Seven – Termination of Membership

Letters of recommendation, certificate of good standing may be given when the necessity arises, upon approval of the church.

Section Eight – Nominations

A person must be a member in good standing for one year to be eligible for nomination to church office. Nominations shall be made through the Board of this church no later than one week prior to the annual business meeting.

Article Two – Duties of Officers

Section One – Church Clerk

Shall keep a faithful record of all proceedings in business meetings, shall keep a correct list of the membership, shall grant

letters of dismissal, shall record and fill out all dedication and baptismal certificates, and shall read the minutes from the last business meeting of the church.

Section Two – Financial Secretary/Treasurer

Shall receive all receipts, pay all bills, submit monthly financial statements, and prepare and submit a year-end report at the annual business meeting of the church.

Section Three – Missions Secretary/Treasurer

Shall receive mission receipts, pay all missions support, and oversee the preparation of all missionary correspondence.

Article Three – Unfaithful Officers

Section One

If any officer of this church leads a questionable social life, teaches or approves things contrary to the Scriptures, or willingly neglects their official duties, they shall immediately resign their office upon request of the Board of this church.

Section Two

The Sunday preceding the monthly business meeting, the church Board will meet at 5:00 p.m. Any board member who misses two successive meetings, unless providentially hindered, shall resign their office upon request of the Board of this church.

Article Four – Meetings

Section One

The church shall set Sunday for public worship and Wednesday for mid-week prayer service.

Section Two

Communion shall be served the first Sunday of each month.

Section Three

The monthly business meeting shall be held the third Sunday of each month, provided there is business on the agenda. All new business must be submitted to the church Board no later than one week prior to the business meeting. Twenty active members must be present to transact any business. The annual meeting shall be held the first Sunday in December of every year, or two weeks before or after, depending on inclement weather. The new officers and budget will go into effect the first of January of each year.

Section Four

In the absence of the Pastor, the business meeting will be postponed until his return, other than for increases in pastoral salary or benefits.

Section Five

The Board meeting shall be held the Sunday preceding the monthly business meeting as needed.

Article Five – Amendments

Section One

The By-Laws may be amended or altered in the same manner as the constitution.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired of God, inerrant in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life.
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and is true God and true man.
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God, that he sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also that spiritual death, which is separation from God; and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and in case of those who reach moral responsibility, become sinners in thought, word and deed.
5. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all that believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood.
6. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension into Heaven, and in His present life there for us, as High Priest and Advocate.
7. We believe in that “blessed hope,” the personal and imminent return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
8. We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit of God and thereby become the children of God.

9. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost.
10. We believe that the local church is a body of baptized (immersed) believers organized for worship, work and fellowship; that the two ordinances of the church are baptism (immersion) and the Lord's Supper; that the local church is an independent and self-governing body responsible to Christ alone, who is its Savior and Lord.
11. We hold as unscriptural the modern day healing, tongues and extra biblical revelations movement.
12. We stand opposed to the modern day ecumenical movement that seeks to unite believers and unbelievers in unholy alliance.

COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe of the LORD, by the Spirit of God to receive Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, we do now in the presence of God and angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ. We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness and in comfort, to promote its prosperity and spirituality, to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to its support, the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel throughout all nations. We engage also to maintain family and personal devotions, to educate our children religiously, to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances, to walk circumspectly in the world, to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, exemplary in our deportment, to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger, to abstain from the sale and use of alcoholic drink under any circumstances, to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior, to watch over each other in brotherly love, to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to be courteous and sympathetic, slow to take offence, always ready to be reconciled, mindful of our Savior's words to secure reconciliation without delay. We also engage that when we remove from this place, as soon as possible we will unite with a church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

PURPOSE FOR EXISTENCE

To Glorify God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, **LOCALLY**, by personal holiness, loving worship and service to God; then striving to enlarge His Kingdom by seeking to win others to Christ, purposefully striving to train them in personal holiness, service and the winning of others to Christ, then **WORLDWIDE** through missions seeking to win the world to Christ by faithful intercession and sacrificial giving!

BIBLICAL BASIS

Acts 1:8 “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”