

CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS OF NORTH BAPTIST CHURCH

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**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
OF
NORTH BAPTIST CHURCH**

PREAMBLE AND PURPOSE

North Baptist Church is an independent, autonomous, historically fundamental Bible centered Church whose purpose is to reach a dying world with the living Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is organized as a church exclusively for religious, educational, and charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

We believe and teach the Bible as the very Word of God and that it is the final authority of our faith and practice. The Bible admonishes us saying, “Let all things be done decently and in order.” (1 Corinthians 14:40). To this end do we members of THE NORTH BAPTIST CHURCH, solemnly and sincerely set forth the following Constitution and By-Laws by which we willing and cheerfully agree to be governed.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. Heaven is a free gift provided by the grace of God. It cannot be earned and is not deserved.
2. Man is a sinner, hopelessly lost and cannot save himself.
3. God is loving and merciful. He is also just and must punish sin.
4. God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ to die on the cross of Calvary for our sin and thus purchase heaven for those who come to Him by faith.
5. Saving faith is not mere intellectual assent, but trusting in Jesus Christ as personal Savior, turning from sin to Christ. (Rom. 3:23; 6:23; Eph. 2:8,9; John 3:16; Rom. 10:9,10)
6. The Holy Spirit is a Divine person of the Trinity who convicts the world of sin and of righteousness and judgment. He indwells every believer from the moment of salvation. (John 16:8-11; 1 Cor. 12: 12-14)
7. We believe in the eternal security of the believer. (Rom 8:1,38,39; John 10:28)
8. The Blessed Hope is the Personal, Visible, Pretribulational, Premillennial and Imminent return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, commonly referred to as the “RAPTURE”.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of NORTH BAPTIST CHURCH is five-fold and is outlined in the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-39) and in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19,20). The mission of NORTH BAPTIST CHURCH is to:

1. Love God with all our hearts,
2. Bring people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ,
3. Incorporate them into the membership of the church,
4. Teach them to live in obedience to God's Word, and
5. Equip them to use their spiritual gifts in service to others.

We will endeavor to fulfill our mission by implementing the following biblical priorities:

1. **WORSHIP** - honoring and celebrating Christ in our lives through godly living as individuals and through regular worship and study of God's Word together as a church family (Psalm. 95:6-7; Matthew 22:37-38; John 4:24; Acts 2:46-47; Ephesians 5:19-20; Hebrews 10:25).
2. **OUTREACH** - sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with as many people as possible in our community and throughout the world, with a heart of compassion to meet their needs (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 2:47; 2 Peter 3:9).
3. **RELATIONSHIPS** - fellowshiping, encouraging, supporting, praying, caring for, and in other ways, edifying one another in personal family life and in the family of God (Matthew 22:39; John 13:34-35; Acts 2:42,46; Romans 15:5-7; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 John 1:7).
4. **GROWTH** - developing in maturity, love, discipline and integrity as individual believers, through a lifestyle of Bible study, prayer, giving and spiritual accountability that leads to greater outreach, richer worship, deeper relationships, increased service and discipling of others (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:42; Ephesians 4:11-13; 2 Timothy 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18).
5. **SERVICE** - ministering unselfishly to others both in the church family and outside of it, through discovering and using the gifts and abilities God has given us to meet their spiritual, physical and emotional needs (Matthew 25:34-40; Galatians 5:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

All ministries of the church will be initiated, supported, and evaluated in light of these priorities.

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ARTICLE I NAME

This organization shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan and shall be known as NORTH BAPTIST CHURCH OF FLINT, MICHIGAN or NORTH BAPTIST CHURCH. NORTH BAPTIST CHURCH is complete in itself and has full power to perform all the functions and do all the work which Jesus Christ has committed to His Church on earth. It thus controls the formation of its doctrinal statement; the election of its officers; the admission, discipline and removal of its members; and the ordination of its pastor or pastors.

ARTICLE II AUTONOMY

THE NORTH BAPTIST CHURCH OF FLINT, MICHIGAN shall be and remain independent, fundamental and autonomous. However, it may participate in membership and activity with organizations of like doctrine for the promotion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as long as it does not infringe upon the independence or autonomy of North Baptist Church.

ARTICLE III DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

We, the membership of North Baptist Church of Flint, Michigan, do enact and establish the following beliefs to which we voluntarily subscribe and submit ourselves.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe in the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, consisting of 66 books which constitute the Old and New Testaments, the Word of God, inerrant in the original writings, the complete and unalterable special revelation of God, and our final authority. We believe in the normal, literal, and consistent interpretation of the scriptures (Matthew 5:18; John 16:12, 13; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:20, 21).

THE TRINITY

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—co-eternal 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).

THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became a man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, and lived a sinless life. He came that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man (Luke 1:35; John 1:1, 2, 14).

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious or substitutionary sacrifice in providing an unlimited atonement for

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the sins of the whole world and our justification is verified by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Romans 3:24,25; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 2:9; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 2:24; 1 John 2:2).

We believe 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; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24; 7:25; 1 John 2:1,2).

THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe the Holy Spirit is the Person of the Trinity who in this present age convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; who regenerates and baptizes into the body of Christ those who believe; and indwells and seals them unto the day of redemption. He is the Divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth, and it is the privilege of believers to be filled with, and duty to walk in, the Holy Spirit (John 16:8-11, 13; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 1:13, 14; 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27).

CREATION

We believe the triune God, by a free act and for His own glory, without the use of existing materials or secondary causes, brought into being; immediately and instantaneously in six literal days by the word of His mouth; the whole visible and invisible universe (Genesis 1:1-27; Exodus 20:8-11; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 104:25,26; Isaiah 40:21-31; John 1:1-5; Colossians 1:16,17).

THE PERSONALITY OF THE DEVIL, OR SATAN

We believe the Devil, or Satan was created by God as the angel, Lucifer, but through pride and rebellion became the enemy of his Creator; that he became the unholy god of this age and the ruler of all powers of darkness and is destined to the judgment of eternal justice in the Lake of Fire (Job 1:6,7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 20:10).

THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN

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

HARMONY OF THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

We believe that the Moral Law of God (Ten Commandments) is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government; that it is holy, just and good; that it is rightly defined as any command, instruction, or exhortation which defines a duty, i.e., what we should do, how we should live, what we must be. Man can be justified on no other basis than perfect obedience to the law. The Good News (the Gospel of Jesus Christ) is that God has fulfilled the demands of the law for all men in Jesus Christ. Christ died for our sins, redeeming man from the curse of the law. God was not only saving lost man at the cross, but He was saving the whole universe. God was not only justifying sinners, but He was justifying His own law and government. (Psalm 19:7-9; Isaiah 42:21; Romans 2:13; 3:31; 7:12; 7:23; 8:3, 4, 7) .

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JUSTIFICATION

We believe that justification is that judicial act of God whereby He declares the believer righteous upon the basis of the imputed righteousness of Christ, that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any work of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's shed blood (Romans 3:24; 4:5; 5:1,9; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9).

SALVATION, ETERNAL SECURITY AND ASSURANCE OF BELIEVERS

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice for all people; and all who trust Him are saved by grace through faith on the ground of His shed blood on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins; and according to the mercy of the Father, caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; accepted in the beloved, kept by God's power, and thus secure in Christ forever. 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 (John 1:12; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 8:1,38,39; 10:9,10; 13:13,14; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; Titus 2:11-15; 1 Peter 1:3-5,18,19; 2:13-20).

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God accomplished in a threefold manner: first, an eternal act of God, based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he trusts the Savior; second, a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the life; third, the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord's return (Hebrews 10:10-14; John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 4:3,4; 5:23,24; 1 John 3:2; Jude 24,25).

THE TWO NATURES OF THE BELIEVER

We believe 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 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).

MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY

We believe and affirm that God's Word teaches that marriage is *a covenantal union not meant to be broken, between one man and one woman for life*. Therefore, all sexual conduct outside of the bonds of marriage is sin as fornication, adultery, incest, homosexuality, bisexuality, bestiality, child molestation, pedophilia, pornography, or altering one's gender by surgery or appearance is proclaimed by God as abominations and perversions of His gift of sex. Proclaiming God's Word and warning people of the temporal and eternal consequences of their sins, including these sexual perversions, is an act of loving concern. God's Word remains true and His prohibitions on such sexual perversions and immoralities cannot be satisfied or amended by any human government authority (Genesis 2:22-24; 19:5, 13; Exodus 4:11; Leviticus 18:1-30; Deuteronomy 22:5; Matthew 19:4-5; John 9:3; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 11:3, 7-9; 14:33-37; Ephesians 5:22-25; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; 1 Timothy 2:11-14; Hebrews 13:4).

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THE ROLE OF MEN AND WOMEN

We believe that God has by divine appointment established complimentary roles for men and women in the home as well as in the church, and that this divine appointment is established upon the creational order of God for the best interest of the sexes, and is pictured by the relationship between Christ and the Church; and that this divine order is to be manifested in the Church in regards to all offices and positions of authority so that the woman does not appear to usurp authority in the church or in the home over the man in any way (1 Corinthians 11:3,7-9; 1 Timothy 2:11-14; Ephesians 5:22-25; 1 Corinthians 14:33-37).

THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

We believe that as man was created in the image and likeness of the Creator, all human life is precious and sacred. Therefore, children are a heritage from the Lord, and human life begins at conception, and the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well-being of the mother are acceptable (Genesis 1:27; 2:18-25; Exodus 21:22,23; Psalm 127:3; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1,5; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:44).

CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed except in those things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord of the conscience and the coming King of Kings (Romans 13:1-7; 2 Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21,22; Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:29; 4:19,20; Daniel 3:17,18).

THE MINISTRY OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

We believe that every Christian receives by God's sovereign bestowal one or more spiritual gifts, which are divine enablements for service and are to be used in love for the edifying of the Body of Christ (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-13:3; Ephesians 4:7-16).

We believe that some gifts of the Spirit such as speaking in tongues and sign miracles were temporary and gradually ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established, and that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or the filling of the Spirit (Acts 4:8,31; 1 Corinthians 13:8-13).

We believe that, while the final deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, according to His own sovereign will, for the sick and afflicted (John 15:7; Romans 8:18-25; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, 35-57; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14,15).

ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

We believe that **Christian baptism** is the single immersion of a believer in water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our identification with the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, through Whom we died to sin and rose to a new life; that baptism is to be performed under the authority of the local church; and that it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership

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(Matthew 3:16; Matthew 28:18-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41; Acts 8:12; 35-39; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12).

We believe that the **Lord's Supper** is the commemoration of His death until He come, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. We believe that the Biblical order of the ordinances is baptism first and then the Lord's Supper; and those participants in the Lord's Supper should be immersed believers. (Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34).

BIBLICAL SEPARATION AND UNITY

We believe the saved should be separated unto the Lord Jesus Christ, necessitating holy living in all personal and ecclesiastical associations and relationships. Therefore, North Baptist Church seeks to cooperate wherever possible with other missions, organizations, and indigenous churches of like mind in doctrines and policies as all believers are to maintain the unity of the faith while separating from apostasy and those who have deviated from biblical doctrine and behavior. We will not cooperate with or endorse any movement, organization, or program which is contrary to the faith whether in doctrine or practice.

We desire to be consistent in this difficult area of separation and emphasize that our concern is for the purity of our testimony and ministry. We seek to bring to bear upon the issues of our day the principles set forth in the Word of God while not becoming embroiled in controversy over personalities. It is our desire in this pursuit to maintain an attitude characterized by love and humility. (Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 12:1,2; 14:13;16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:7-11; 6:19,20; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 4:1-6; 2 Thessalonians 3:11-14; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Titus 2:14; 3:10; James 4:4,5; 1Peter 2:9; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).

DISPENSATIONALISM

We believe the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations which define man's responsibility in successive ages. A dispensation is not a way of salvation, but a divinely ordered stewardship by which God directs man according to His purpose (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).

THE CHURCH

We believe the Church, which began with the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, is the body and bride of Jesus Christ. It is the spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons of the present age (Acts 2:1-36; Ephesians 1:22,23; 5:25-27; 1 Corinthians 12:13,14; 2 Corinthians 11:2).

We believe 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).

ISRAEL

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people, that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ, and that she will be regathered in the Holy Land and, after the completion of the church, will be saved as a nation at the second

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advent of Christ. We do not believe the local New Testament Church has replaced God's people, the Jew. (Genesis 13:14-17; Romans 11:1-32; Ezekiel 37).

THE RAPTURE AND THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST

We believe in the personal, imminent, pretribulational (rapture of the church) and premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones. We believe that at the end of the seven-year Tribulation, He will return to earth (Second Advent) with the saints in power and glory to reign for a thousand years (Zechariah 14:4-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18; 5:9; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6).

THE ETERNAL STATE

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). 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 and glorified to be forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Revelation 20:4-6). The souls of unbelievers are, at death, absent from the body and in conscious misery until the second resurrection, when the 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 (Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6,7; Revelation 20:11-15).

ARTICLE IV COVENANT (EXPECTATIONS OF EACH MEMBER)

Having been led by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into these shared expectations of Christian behaviors and fellowship with one another as one body in Christ.

We believe that we should, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, walk together in Christian love; strive for the advancement of North Baptist Church in knowledge, holiness, and unity; promote its prosperity and spirituality; sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and discipline; contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spreading of the gospel throughout all nations.

We believe that we should establish and maintain family and personal devotions; to educate our children with a Christian worldview; 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 language, conversation and self control; to avoid the sinful acts described in Galatians 5:19-21, to abstain from the sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages when the sale and distribution is for the sole benefit of the member, to abstain from the personal use of any

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alcohol as a beverage, and to develop the fruits of the Spirit in our Christian walk, as described in Galatians 5:22-23, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of God.

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one’s sex, or disagreement with one’s biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of North Baptist Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to one another and the community, it is imperative that all members and persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide and agree to the preceding expression of belief on marriage and sexuality, and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of North Baptist Church.

We believe that we should watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the teachings of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe that the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian’s insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)

We believe that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God’s Word.

**ARTICLE V
POSITION STATEMENT**

DOCTRINAL INTEGRITY/ENGLISH BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

North Baptist Church does not hold to a King James Only position. Since no translation can genuinely claim what only may be said of the original, inspired writings, any attempt to make a particular English translation the only acceptable translation of Christianity must be rejected.

We hold that God has providentially preserved His Word in many manuscripts, fragments, and copies of the Scriptures. We hold that the reliability of any text, text type, translation, version, or copy of the Scriptures is to be judged by the original languages only. Thus any translation or version of Scripture in any language is the Word of God if it accurately reproduces what is in the original languages. We believe that the translation of the Word of God from the original languages into the language of common people is a necessary activity and essential for the spread of the Gospel.

BIBLICAL DISCERNMENT/VOTING

North Baptist Church urges its members to be good stewards of the votes entrusted to them by God through our United States Constitution and to support candidates who will:

- Honor Scripture concerning moral issues. Among these are the sanctity of life, the definition of marriage as between a man and woman, and the importance of the family;
- Honor the Baptist principle of religious liberty, protecting the freedom to worship, to preach the Word of God without censure, and to fulfill the Great Commission as commanded by Scripture;
- Appoint and approve judges who uphold these values.

THE LORD'S DAY

At this time in history when society is relentlessly pressuring believers to forgo corporate worship for work on the first day of the week as well as seductively alluring them away from its spiritual refreshment to every sort of carnal amusement, North Baptist Church resolves to keep this day uniquely separate from the other days of the week. This resolve is justified in that Scripture reveals the first day of the week to have been of the Lord's making for our heightened spiritual joy over the fact that on it He raised His Son from the dead (Psalm 118:22-24). This resolve is also justified by the New Testament church's example of assembling for its weekly corporate worship on this day (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:1-2). And further, it is justified by the fact that this day is distinguished from the other days of the week by being designated—the Lord's Day!, a day that is uniquely "the Lord's possession". In light then of these considerations, we resolve to encourage the Lord's people to keep the Lord's Day for the Lord.

CORPORATE WORSHIP

Before sin entered into the world, humanity enjoyed communion with the Creator and perfectly brought glory to God as His sinless image bearers (Gen 1:24-31; 2:7, 18-25). However, humanity lost the ability to appropriately worship the true Creator at the fall (Gen. 3:1-24) and as a result universally seeks to “glorify him not as God” (Rom. 1:21) and to worship and serve “the creature more than the Creator.” (Rom. 1:25) And yet, as Jesus Christ fulfilled the will of the Father to

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reconcile a people through the work of the cross (Col. 1:20-22), those who have been justified can once-again bring glory to God and strive to fulfill humanity's intended purpose of glorifying God (Romans 8:33-34; 12:1-21; Eph. 2:1-10). Therefore, "worship" is not an act mainly on Sunday. Instead, worship should suffuse our entire lives and not be confined to sacred times and places as we are united by faith to Christ and indwelt by the Holy Spirit thereby making all believers both individually and collectively the temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16-17, 6:19; Eph. 2:22).

However, Scripture shows the weekly meeting of the church to be unique as it is the time when believers encourage one another by worshipping God together (Hebrews 10:24-25). As a called-out assembly of the redeemed, North Baptist Church seeks to regularly unite corporately for the purpose of glorifying our Redeemer (Ephesians 5:15-20; Hebrews 10:25). Therefore, we recognize that corporate worship cannot be a matter of arbitrary choice, church tradition, personal preference, or cultural appeal. Instead, all aspects of our corporate worship should be solely motivated by the glorious Gospel and reflective of the Person and nature of God (Hebrews 13:15). Through textual Scriptural teaching, reflective and doctrinally rich music, personal and corporate prayer, the regular observance of the ordinances, and the fellowship of the body of Christ; we strive to be appropriate and reverential in both motive and performance (Psalm 33:1-4; 100:4; 150:1-6; Matthew 15:9; Acts 2:42; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 10:24-25).

MUSIC

North Baptist Church realizes that the subject of music in all churches is very controversial and that there is a great revolution as many churches move toward contemporary music in order to attract and evangelize. **We contend, however, that music is not amoral and that its main purpose is worship and edification.** To this end, acceptable music must exalt Christ, minister to the spirit, and edify the believer. We do not believe that this is true of most contemporary music. We believe that the sensual religious music of the day perverts the message of the Gospel of Christ and creates a "strange fire" (Leviticus 10). **We believe that the music at North Baptist Church should minister to the spirit and not the flesh.** We believe that the melody should not detract from the message with an overuse of ornaments and embellishments as is the trend in Contemporary Christian Music. We believe that the harmony in music be supportive of a creative melody and follow the harmonic principles of the great music of the past as well as some of today's Contemporary Christian Music. **We believe that the rhythm in music should not predominate over the other elements in the music.**

PRAISE CHORUSES

North Baptist Church recognizes that the modern "Praise and Worship" movement (which includes related music publishers and recordings) is a by-product of the Charismatic movement, with a similarly dangerous emphasis of promoting emotion over reason. We therefore urge discernment and caution in using Praise Choruses in any ministry of our church. While we understand that **simplicity** and **repetition** have legitimate use as teaching tools, we note that they form the foundation for hypnosis as well. Since Christians are clearly instructed in Scripture to worship God in Spirit and in truth, we must avoid what Jesus called "the vain repetition of the heathen" (Matthew 6:7). The modern Praise Chorus uses bald repetition as a mantra-like phrase repeated over and over again for emotional incitement, not for instruction. We do not condemn all choruses per se, but appeal that choruses accompanied by appropriate music be used which teach truth rather than emotionally inciting the audience.

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DIVORCE

North Baptist Church recognizes that there are divergent views among Christians on divorce and remarriage, but we must not let our personal views in any way weaken the sanctity of the marriage relationship. We affirm that God's ideal is for permanency in the marriage relationship and that divorce for any reason is an aberration of that ideal. We pray that every church of like faith will help all people to understand the Biblical model of marriage, to give much attention to premarital counseling, and through pulpit messages and other teaching opportunities to hold high this Divine ideal which is under assault in the world. While strongly affirming the ideal, it is our hope that every church of like faith will sympathetically and compassionately minister to those who have been through the trauma of a divorce.

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).

NEW TESTAMENT PRINCIPLES ON GIVING

We believe the New Testament to teach that the principle of giving to the local church is based on free-will or "Grace Giving." Like salvation, which is by God's "grace", the New Testament teaches that financial giving to God should also be based on "grace." Since it is impossible for the Christian to pay God back for His "grace" in providing salvation, all financial giving to the local church should also be based on "grace". (Ephesians 2:8, 9)

We believe the New Testament gives four principles to help the Christian determine how much to contribute to the local church through "Grace Giving." The first principle of "Grace Giving" is found in I Corinthians 16:1-2 where the Apostle Paul teaches that on the "first day of each week" (Sunday) Christians are to give "as he may prosper." The second principle of "Grace Giving" is found in 2 Corinthians 9:7a, where the Apostle Paul taught that giving is to be planned ("purposed in his heart"). The third principle of "Grace Giving" is found in 2 Corinthians 8:1-5. There, the Apostle Paul taught that giving to the Lord must be sacrificial ("beyond their ability they gave of their own accord"). The fourth and final principle of "Grace Giving" is found in 2 Corinthians 9:7b where the Apostle Paul said, "God loves a cheerful giver", ("not grudgingly, or of necessity").

ISLAM AND OTHER FALSE RELIGIONS

North Baptist Church opposes the religion of Islam and other false religions which contradicts the Word of God, rejects the Deity of Jesus Christ, and denies that eternal salvation is the free gift of God.

**ARTICLE VI
CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

UNION IN THE UNIVERSAL BODY OF CHRIST

At the time of personal faith in Jesus Christ, a believer is called into the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor. 1:2, 9; 12:12-13, 20; Col. 1:18), and joined into union with the universal body of Christ, the church, by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12-13; Col. 1:18).

UNION WITH A LOCAL ASSEMBLY OF BELIEVERS

There is another aspect of this fellowship into which the believer is joined. He is brought into the fellowship of fellow members of that body, other living believers on earth that he might share and participate in the various blessings and ministries of the body of Christ. For this to occur properly, believers are to seek the fellowship of one another in a local body or assembly of believers to which they are to become responsible, a mini-flock, so to speak, of the greater and universal flock of God (1 Pet. 5:2-3; 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1).

Believers in isolation, operating independently of other believers of a local assembly, are an idea contrary to Scripture. Scripture teaches that there are to be local assemblies of believers, united together by a common faith, by union in Christ, and the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, by common purposes, commitments and responsibilities, and with a common leadership of that specific body, independent in government from other local assemblies (Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Pet. 5:1-3; 1 Cor. 1:2; Heb. 13:7, 17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13). The local church is to be a body of people allotted to the charge of the pastor (1 Pet. 5:2-4; Acts 20:28; 1 Thess. 5:11; Heb. 10:14-15; 1 Pet. 4:8-10; 1 Cor. 12:20-27), and subject to the discipline of that body or assembly (1 Cor. 5:2; 1 Thess. 5:14 [admonish the unruly], 2 Thess. 3:6, 14; 1 Tim. 5:20).

This of necessity implies more than a loose relationship of a believer or believers to a particular body or assembly. It involves a tie, an involvement, a commitment, responsibility and submission to both the leadership and to each other.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

The Scriptures contain neither a mandate for nor a command against an official membership roll. In Acts, we see that believers were added to the church in Jerusalem; however, this serves primarily to show the growth in the early church (Acts 2:47; 9:31; 16:5). These people were devoting themselves to a local assembly and its leadership for teaching, leadership, fellowship and worship (Acts 2:42). There were also letters of commendation or acceptance written on behalf of both men and women to be welcomed and accepted into the fellowship or various assemblies. These letters commended believers to other assemblies regarding their faithfulness and ministry and thus they were not a transfer of membership by letter (Rom. 16:1-2; 1 Cor. 16:10; Col. 4:10; 2 Cor. 3:1; 8:16-24).

The emphasis of these Scriptures is that every believer become identified and committed to a specific local assembly of believers following the leading and direction of God. This commitment is revealed by their attitude, faith, attendance, involvement, giving and submission to that assembly. Thus a membership roll cannot, in and of itself, serve as the sole means of commitment a believer has to a local body.

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North Baptist Church does have a membership roll to aid in conducting business in an orderly manner and to provide legal protection in important, yet potentially controversial church decisions such as discipline, or financial matters. An individual's decision to be placed on the membership roll should flow from their commitment to the church. The individual should remember that being on the membership role has no merit or value so far as his spiritual maturity or growth is concerned. It is, however, an important tool in helping the church function smoothly.

PROCEDURE FOR MEMBERSHIP

Any individual who confesses the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior and who has been baptized by immersion is eligible for membership in North Baptist Church. The church will not solicit anyone to become a member and thus will respect the privacy and personal initiative of the individual in this matter. Anyone who desires to become a member should contact the Senior Pastor or a deacon and request membership. The Senior Pastor along with a deacon or two deacons will meet with the individual to discuss this decision. If the individual meets the qualifications for membership, he/she may be received into membership.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

1. A profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as his/her personal Savior;
2. Baptism by immersion following his/her conversion;
3. An evident Christian testimony;
4. Written agreement with North Baptist Church's Mission Statement, and Purpose;
5. A stated willingness to submit to the authority of the church and its leaders as set forth in the Word of God and this document;
6. Completion of such pre-membership requirements as shall be deemed appropriate by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons.

All persons desiring to unite with North Baptist Church shall first complete a membership class. Candidates shall be given a copy of the Constitution, to review in advance so that, in conference with the Pastor and deacons, they may ask questions regarding the church's doctrines and practices. After completion of the membership class, candidates may be received into membership in one of four ways:

1. Baptism by immersion following one's profession of faith;
2. A letter of recommendation from another church of like faith and practice stating that the person is a member in good standing;
3. The personal testimony of one's conversion and baptism by immersion;
4. Restoration to membership following satisfactory repentance and the public confession of the sin which led to the loss of membership.

Upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor and board of deacons, candidates shall be presented to the church for acceptance into membership. Candidates are encouraged, but not required to give the congregation a brief verbal or written testimony of their salvation experience. They shall be received into membership upon a majority vote of the members present and voting.

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ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

College students (new to this geographic area), military personnel, members of special care homes, and others temporarily residing in the community who desire fellowship with North Baptist Church and to serve in some capacity, may apply for associate membership. Applicants must meet the same requirements and follow the same procedures as would an applicant for regular membership. They will not be eligible to be elected to an office nor have voting privileges. When an associate member makes a permanent move from the area, they are automatically removed from our associate membership roll.

EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERSHIP

As Christians, members of North Baptist Church are expected to show love to each other in word and deed (John 13:35); to accept one another regardless of race, sex, education, social standing or level of spiritual maturity (Romans 15:7); to readily forgive one another when offenses occur (Colossians 3:13); to willingly serve others in the work of the ministry (Galatians 5:13); and to encourage the rest of the church family (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

In joining North Baptist Church people are committing themselves:

1. To cooperate with leadership of the church by adopting the church's goals and philosophy of ministry as their own (1 Corinthians 1:10);
2. To actively participate in the life and ministry of North Baptist Church through faithful attendance and the acceptance of ministry assignments so as to further the church's various programs and help maintain its properties and facilities (Hebrews 10:25; Ephesians 4:11,12);
3. To contribute financially to the support of North Baptist Church through "Grace Giving" as God prospers them (1 Corinthians 16:2).

Members should honor those in authority in the church, pray for them, submit to their leadership, and assist them with wholehearted cooperation.

PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

Members in good standing who are eighteen years of age or older, and who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. Absentee and proxy voting are inadmissible and shall not be allowed at North Baptist Church.

This congregation is to function under the headship of Jesus Christ and the direction of the Senior Pastor, with the assistance of the board of deacons, and in accordance with the guidelines set forth in this Constitution. While congregational in nature, the North Baptist Church is not a pure democracy. Determinations of the internal affairs of North Baptist Church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The Senior Pastor is the spiritual and administrative leader of North Baptist Church and is responsible to exercise oversight of all aspects of the church while relying upon the counsel and assistance of the deacons (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2).

Membership in North Baptist Church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all the church's worship services, the church property remains private property.

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A member, upon five-business days prior written request made upon the church, may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church, the minutes of the proceedings of church meetings, and of board meetings. They may not, however under any circumstances, inspect or copy any record relating to an individual's contributions to the church other than their own.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

We believe in the responsibility and necessity of church discipline as clearly outlined in Scripture. It is a very difficult area and hard to practice. Nevertheless, church discipline has the divine authority of Scripture and is vital to the purity of the church. In church discipline, the following matters must be carefully understood and applied.

THE PATTERN AND BASIS FOR DISCIPLINE

The discipline of the church is first patterned after the fact that the Lord Himself disciplines His children (Heb. 12:6) and, as a father delegates part of the discipline of the children to the wife, so the Lord has delegated the discipline of the church family to the church itself.

Discipline is further based on the holy character of God (1 Pet. 1:16; Heb. 12:11). The pattern of God's holiness, his desire for the church to be holy, set apart unto Him, is an important reason for the necessity of church discipline. The church is therefore to clean out the leaven of malice and wickedness from its ranks (1 Cor. 5:6-8). A failure to discipline in a church today evidences a lack of awareness of the holiness of God.

Church discipline must be patterned after and based on the divine commands of Scripture. We have numerous passages which both command and give us biblical directives on the how, when and where of church discipline. Again, a failure to exercise this responsibility demonstrates a lack of obedience and belief in the authority of the Bible (1 Cor. 5:1-13; Matt. 18:17-18; Titus 3:10; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 5:20; Gal. 6:1).

A final basis for the necessity of church discipline is the testimony of the church in the world. The world observes the behavior and life of the church. When the church acts no differently than the world, it loses its credibility and authenticity (1 Pet. 2:11-18; 3:8-16; 4:1-4).

THE PURPOSE OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

1. Concern for the glory of God and the testimony of the flock;
2. The restoration and building up of the sinning believer;
3. The winning of a soul to Christ (if only a professing Christian);
4. The purity of the local body and its protection from moral and doctrinally impure influences, knowing a little leaven can leaven the entire lump (1 Cor. 5:6-7).

Such goals automatically govern the spirit in which all disciplinary action is to be given. Thus:

1. It must be done in the spirit of humility, gentleness and patience, looking to yourself lest you too be tempted (Gal. 6:1-2; 2 Tim. 2:24-25).
2. Those who walk disorderly are to be admonished, warned, and appealed to in love (1 Thess. 5:14-15; 1 Tim. 5:1-2; Eph. 4:15; 2 Tim. 4:2). This admonishing, etc., is not restricted to the leaders but may be done by any member (1 Thess. 5:14).
3. If there is no response in repentance and obedience, then members are to withhold intimate fellowship until there is obedience (2 Thess. 3:6, 14). This is to indicate to the

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offender that his action has caused a rupture in the harmony of the body. Its goal is restoration and the person is still to be counted as a brother (2 Thess. 3:14-15).

4. If the person persists after admonition and withdrawal of intimate fellowship, the final step is rejection or excommunication (Titus 3:10; Matt. 18:17b), and telling it to the church. Examples of church discipline are found in Scripture. The Corinthian believers were to be "gathered together" in order to take action against the offending brother (1 Cor. 5: 1-4). We also find that it was the whole church in Rome and in Thessalonica who were to take action with regard to the unruly and schismatic and not just a few (2 Thess. 3:6-15; Rom. 16:17).
5. Finally, discipline in the name of our Lord always includes a readiness to forgive. Those who administer the discipline must also be ready and eager to forgive, comfort, and reaffirm their love to the sinning person (2 Cor. 2:6-8).

THE PRACTICE OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Great care must be exercised whenever church discipline is initiated. Scripture does not warrant the exercise of church discipline for an individual or a church's pet taboos or peeves. According to Scripture, there are five categories which warrant church discipline. These are:

1. Difficulties between members, or having an unrepentant attitude (Matt. 18:15-17).
2. Divisiveness, people causing divisions in the church (Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:9-11).
3. Disorderly conduct. Conduct clearly out of line with the prescribed commands of Scripture (2 Thess. 3:6-15).
4. Immoral behavior, including the type of sins mentioned or implied in 1 Corinthians 5: incest, immorality, homosexuality, adultery, covetousness, idolatry, abusive speech, drunkenness, and swindling.
5. False teaching. Erroneous teaching and views which concern the fundamentals of the faith, not lesser differences of interpretation (1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:17-18; also implied in Rev. 2:14-16; Phil. 3:2-3, 15-19; Rom. 16:17-18).

The key concerns here are: (a) the holy character of God, (b) the testimony of the flock, (c) the effect upon the unity and purity of the flock, and (d) the edification and restoration of the individual.

HOW CHURCH DISCIPLINE IS TO BE PRACTICED

Scriptural procedure here is clear and specific steps are prescribed. They are as follows:

1. Recognize the offense. Caution—one must be sure it is an offense which calls for discipline. Again, the Word is our criterion.
2. Seek private correction and/or reconciliation with the offender (Matt. 18:15). This is when the problem involves two believers. The one offended or the one who recognizes the offense is to go privately and try to rectify the problem. If this fails, he is to take witnesses, preferably spiritual leaders, so that if it has to be brought before the whole church it can be firmly proven or established (Matt. 18:16-17).
3. Seek reconciliation through the spiritual leadership if the problem involves an offense that is against the whole body, or is a threat to its unity. Initiatory action following the concept of Galatians 6:1 should be taken by the mature spiritual leaders of the church rather than by just one person. "You who are spiritual" in Galatians 6:1 is plural meaning literally, "you, the spiritual ones ..." These initial contacts provide opportunity for loving

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admonition, correction and forgiveness. On the other hand, if these first steps are not heeded, it constitutes a warning that further action will be taken and gives occasion for serious rebuke (2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:12-14; Titus 2:15; 3:10).

4. Seek reconciliation through the whole body. If further action is necessary, it is to be taken before the whole church (Matt. 18:17). This action would consist of a minimum of loss of voting privileges, but may result in more severe action. Any action taken shall be by majority vote of members present and voting.

In essence then, this is the action of the Lord carrying out discipline through the action of the whole body through the leadership of the Senior Pastor, board of deacons, and/or the spiritually mature (1 Cor. 5:4 "in the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled,...with the power of our Lord Jesus ..."). Similar heavenly authority is seen in the ratification of this disciplinary action as spelled out in Matthew 18:18-19.

TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Removal of members from the church roll shall be accomplished by the following means:

1. Death – Any member who has died shall be automatically removed from membership roll.
2. Letter of Recommendation – Any member of North Baptist Church in good standing may be granted a letter of recommendation to another church of like faith and practice upon its request by majority vote of members present and voting.
 - a) The letter will be sent to the church and cannot be given to an individual.
 - b) No letter of recommendation will be sent after six (6) months of absence, only a letter of dismissal.
 - c) No letter of recommendation will be given to a person uniting with a church of unlike faith or practice.
3. Letter of Dismissal – Any member who seeks to unite with another church which is not of like faith and practice may be granted a letter of dismissal without recommendation by majority vote of the members who are present and voting.
4. Letter of Withdrawal- Any member who seeks to withdraw from the church may be granted a letter of withdrawal.
5. Exclusion - Members who do not attend the regular services of North Baptist Church for a period of six months shall have automatically excluded themselves from the membership of the church.
6. Termination of Membership - A member may be removed from the membership of North Baptist Church as a disciplinary action by majority vote of members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose.

RESTORATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Individuals who have lost their membership privileges may be restored to full membership upon the recommendation of the discipline committee, if there is satisfactory evidence of genuine repentance, forsaking of the behavior in question, a public confession of the wrong doing, and the reaffirmation of the church covenant and membership responsibilities. Restoration to membership shall be by majority vote of members present and voting.

**ARTICLE VII
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

GENERAL STRUCTURE

The local church body is composed of one body with many members all of whom are in vital relationship with Jesus Christ, but the body also has "joints of supply," units of control, and unity, i.e., church leaders (Eph. 4:16). This together suggests body participation under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ with leadership direction, submission and authority in a two-directional manner.

First, the local government is invested in the body of believers who compose the local body under the headship of Jesus Christ according to the Word of God and the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 18:20; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16; 5:21; Col. 1:18; 2:19).

Second, executive authority or leadership, however, is invested by the congregation, as authorized by Scripture, in the Senior Pastor who leads the church and to whom the congregation is to submit under the headship of Christ. The biblical synonyms for this office are **Bishop** (Overseer—the office, what he does) Titus 1:5-9; Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1; **Elder** (President of the Assembly—the man, what he is) 1 Timothy 5:1; **Minister** (Servant) 2 Timothy 2:1-24; Colossian 1:25. This man has the authority and responsibility to delegate to individuals, committees or other boards (as a Board of Deacons) authority and responsibility to carry out the business or ministry of the church in spiritual and physical (material) matters (Eph. 4:11-12; Phil. 1:1; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:7, 17).

In using his delegated authority, and in making his decisions, the Senior Pastor must seek to be guided by the Scripture, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and by input from the congregation (Acts 20:32; 6:2-5a; 11:22; 15:22; 2 Cor. 8:19).

OFFICERS, OTHER LEADERSHIP AND STAFF POSITIONS OF THE CHURCH

- A. **Elected Officers** - The elected officers of the church shall be the deacons, and church clerk. Upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor and board of deacons, the church may elect or appoint members to other offices (i.e. treasurer) and/or leadership positions at its discretion as the need arises.
- B. **Designation of Corporate Officers** – As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the Senior Pastor shall serve as the president of the church corporation; the chairman of the deacons shall serve as the vice-president of the corporation; the church treasurer shall serve as the secretary of the corporation.
- C. **Election and Terms of Office** – The election or appointment of officers shall take place in the month of May during the Annual Business Meeting. Officers may serve in the same office no more than three consecutive years (UNLESS THERE ARE NO QUALIFIED CANDIDATES) at which time they must step down from said office for at least twelve months. Vacancies occurring in any office (except pastor and deacon) may be filled at any regular business meeting of the church.
- D. **Duties of Officers** – The records of all officers are considered to be church property and are to be maintained in good order. All officers shall turn in any records in their possession to the church clerk at the close of their term of office or give them to the succeeding officers as soon as practical for safekeeping.

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- E. **Membership Requirements** - Anyone elected or appointed as an officer or to a leadership position of North Baptist Church shall have been a member of North Baptist Church in good standing for at least one year, except the one year requirement may be waived by vote of the church upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor and board of deacons.
- F. **Qualifications** - All officers, leaders, teachers, and staff personnel shall be spiritually mature, of unquestionable Christian character, loyal to the Word of God, dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the spiritual and material welfare of North Baptist Church. They shall be in full agreement with the Constitution of North Baptist Church.

They shall also be faithful in attendance at the regular services, business sessions, and special meetings of the church. Their moral conduct shall be beyond reproach and free of carnal indulgences or worldly practices.

- G. **Dismissal** - Any officer (except Senior Pastor) or staff member unable or unwilling to fulfill the duties of his/her office/position of leadership shall graciously submit his/her resignation to the Administration Committee. If any officer or staff member refuses to subscribe to any part of this Constitution, his/her resignation shall be requested. If it is not received within a reasonable time, the office/leadership position shall be declared vacant upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor and a majority vote of the board of deacons.

If any officer, church leader or staff member is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he/she shall be entitled to the same steps as other members and shall be subject to the same discipline. However, in cases where an officer, church leader or staff member admits to or has been proven guilty in a duly called church proceeding of engaging in unbiblical, immoral, illegal or unethical practice that brings reproach upon the name of Christ, he/she shall be removed from office/leadership position immediately.

THE SENIOR PASTOR

- A. **Pastoral Qualifications** – The Senior Pastor of North Baptist Church shall be a historically fundamental, Baptist in belief minister (servant) of the male gender who meets the qualifications of a pastor (Bishop or Elder) listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. He shall be a spiritually mature man who evidences a burden for lost souls and shall be in full agreement with the Constitution of North Baptist Church. He shall be a man who has never been divorced nor married to a divorced woman.
- B. **Pastoral Candidature** – A Senior Pastor shall be chosen and called by ballot vote of the church whenever a vacancy occurs.
1. The Pulpit Committee shall, without unnecessary delay, begin searching for acceptable pastoral candidates.
 2. The Pulpit Committee shall make a monthly report to the membership of its activities and the progress in their search.
 3. Each candidate for the pastorate shall be carefully examined by the Pulpit Committee as to his salvation, doctrine, Christian conduct, and call to the ministry. A criminal and financial background investigation shall be required. If he has served in other churches, his ministry there should be explored for evidence of the Lord's blessing.
 4. The Pulpit Committee shall present only one candidate at a time for consideration and vote by the church.

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5. A potential candidate shall first fill the pulpit as pulpit supply, after which the candidate may return as candidate for consideration as Senior Pastor. The second engagement preferably should be more than just one day to allow time for a candidate for consideration to meet the church's leadership and a good number of the church's membership.
 6. Before a candidate for consideration is called to speak at North Baptist Church, he shall submit in writing to the Pulpit Committee any disagreements or differences he holds concerning the Constitution of North Baptist Church. He also shall state differences relating to any groups, associations, and/or fellowships as they may relate to North Baptist Church.
 7. All candidates for consideration shall have opportunity to question and be questioned by the church membership.
 8. Before a call is made to an acceptable candidate, a letter will be mailed to the membership advising of the Pulpit Committee's intent to extend a call. This letter will also advise the date of a special meeting called for the purpose of taking a ballot vote on an acceptable candidate.
 9. The Pulpit Committee shall secure the permission of the acceptable candidate before the mailing and announcements are made to the membership. He shall send a written communication stating his agreement to be a candidate for consideration.
- C. **Pastoral Call** - A call to be the Senior Pastor of North Baptist Church may be extended to an acceptable candidate at a meeting of the church called for that purpose and announced from the pulpit on two consecutive Sundays (morning and evening services) immediately preceding the date of the meeting. A minimum eighty percent majority vote of those eligible members present and voting by ballot shall be necessary for a call.
1. The Pulpit Committee shall inform the candidate of the church's decision as soon as possible.
 2. If favorable, a written call and agreement shall be presented to the prospective Senior Pastor, giving details of church-pastoral relationship, including salary, housing, insurance, vacations, and any other pertinent items.
 3. Written acceptance or rejection by the candidate shall be required.
 4. The Senior Pastor shall serve for an indeterminate time, and shall continue in office as long as it is mutually agreeable to him and the church.
 5. The Senior Pastor and his wife shall become members of this church upon the assumption of their duties.
- D. **Pastoral Duties** – The Senior Pastor shall serve as the spiritual and administrative leader of the church and shall exercise oversight of its various ministries; he shall preach and teach the Word of God and have charge of the stated services of the church; he shall appoint the choir director(s) and/or song leader(s) for the worship services; he shall administer the ordinances and perform the usual duties of a Senior Pastor.
1. The Senior Pastor shall preside as the moderator of all regular and special business meetings of the church. No business meeting of the church may be held without the Senior Pastor's knowledge. He may appoint an assistant pastor, deacon or another person to represent him at any meeting. The chairman of the deacons shall serve as moderator of business meetings if the office of Senior Pastor is vacant.
 2. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees of North Baptist Church with the right of choice to attend all meetings. He shall have

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- access to all the records of the church, boards, and committees, except the personal giving records of individuals.
3. The Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Christian Education Committee, shall be responsible for determining the literature to be used in the programs and ministries of the church.
 4. The Senior Pastor shall secure speakers and programs for the services of the church, which shall be in accord with the Doctrinal Statement and Philosophy of Ministry of North Baptist Church.
 5. All church staff, except the caretaker(s) and custodian(s), whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the Senior Pastor and Administrative Committee.
 6. The Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Administration Committee shall have the authority to recruit, appoint, or dismiss all church staff (except pastors), including caretaker(s) and custodian(s).
 7. The Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Budget and Finance Committee, shall determine the salary and benefits (if any) to be paid to all hired staff.
- E. **Pastoral Compensation** – The Senior Pastor’s salary, housing, car allowances, insurance, etc., shall be reviewed annually by the Budget and Finance Committee. Their recommendation shall go before the board of deacons for approval. A recommendation as to his compensation package shall be submitted as part of the church budget to be voted upon by the membership at the December Monthly Business Meeting.
- F. **Pastoral Termination**
1. The Senior Pastor may announce his resignation at any time, but shall give the church written notice not less than ninety days of his intention to resign as Senior Pastor of North Baptist Church. He shall continue his duties for ninety days or until a time mutually agreeable both to him and the board of deacons. He shall receive six weeks severance pay when his duties end.
 2. A Senior Pastor may be dismissed by a *Vote of Confidence*. A *Vote of Confidence* may be requested at such time a majority of the board of deacons determines the spiritual and administrative services of the Senior Pastor have deteriorated (i.e. failure to carry out Pastoral obligations, or make decisions that are detrimental to the future of North Baptist Church). Upon a majority vote of the board of deacons, they may recommend to the church membership a *Vote of Confidence* be expressed by ballot of the eligible voting members present at a special meeting called for that purpose. The date and time of the special meeting shall be announced from the pulpit on two consecutive Sundays (morning and evening services) immediately preceding the date of the meeting. The Senior Pastor shall be notified two weeks in advance of the pending action. He shall cease his pulpit/pastoral ministry immediately if the *Vote of Confidence* is 75% or greater that he should be dismissed. He may be available to assist the Administrative Committee for thirty days if the board of deacons desires his assistance. He shall receive ninety days salary and benefits from the date of the special meeting called for the purpose of taking the *Vote of Confidence*.
 3. If the Senior Pastor is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the Discipline Committee, but shall be entitled to the same steps as other members and shall be subject to the same discipline. However, in cases where the Senior Pastor admits to or has been proven guilty in a duly called church proceeding of engaging in unbiblical, immoral, illegal or unethical practice that brings reproach upon the name

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of Christ, he may be removed from office immediately by majority vote of the church without notice being given in advance. He shall receive two weeks pay and have thirty days use of a parsonage, if a parsonage is made available.

4. In the event the Senior Pastor either resigns or is dismissed from his position, the Pulpit Committee shall secure the services of an Interim Pastor during the time North Baptist Church is without a Senior Pastor.

THE DEACONS

- A. **The Role of Deacons** - The biblical role of deacons is one of loving service, ministry, and assistance to others. Their name (“diakonos”) describes their work - they are ministers (servants) of mercy who visit widows and those less fortunate, care for various tasks assigned to them, and seek to lighten the load of their pastor(s) so they (the pastors) can focus on other vital aspects of the ministry. Deacons are servant helpers who are chosen by the church, but work in an advisory capacity under the authority and supervision of the church and its spiritual leader.
- B. **Qualifications of Deacons** – The deacons of North Baptist Church shall be men who fulfill the qualifications of a deacon as stated in Acts 6:1-7 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. They shall have servant hearts and teachable spirits, and be in full agreement with the Constitution of North Baptist Church. Potential candidates for the diaconate shall have completed such training as may be deemed appropriate by the church leadership.
- C. **Election of Deacons** – The election of deacons shall take place during the May Annual Business Meeting of the church from among those qualified individuals who are members in good standing. The number of deacons shall be determined by the Senior Pastor and the board of deacons after evaluating the needs of the church.
- D. **Term of Service** – Deacons shall serve for a term of three years, at the expiration of which they shall be required to take a one-year recess before being eligible for re-election. Terms of service shall be arranged to end alternately to provide for a smooth transition of leadership. If a deacon is unable or unwilling to complete his term of office, a special business meeting may be held to choose another qualified individual to complete the unexpired term.
- E. **Termination of Deacons** -Any deacon being absent from regular monthly board meetings for three months in succession, apart from illness or valid excuse, shall be automatically dropped from the board. If a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the Discipline Committee.
- F. **Duties of Deacons** – Deacons are servants of the church who have no authority unless given herein. Their primary ministry is to care for the temporal needs (“wait on tables”) of the church family and to assist the Senior Pastor through godly counsel, supportive prayer, and such means as he may request. The deacons shall function as an advisory council to the Senior Pastor.
 1. Deacons shall promote the spiritual welfare of the church through their personal example by faithfully attending the services of the church, being involved in servant ministries, sharing their faith with others, and giving of their time, energy, and resources in support of the church.
 2. The deacons and Senior Pastor shall meet monthly (Deacons Meeting) or at the call of the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall serve as moderator of all such meetings. A chairman, vice-chairman and a secretary shall be selected from among the deacons,

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and the secretary shall keep minutes of their meetings in a permanent record. If the church is without a Senior Pastor the chairman of the deacons may call the deacons together and serve as moderator.

3. The deacons shall assist the Senior Pastor in exercising prudent watch care over the membership of the church; visiting the sick and shut-ins; offering help and assistance to the needy where possible; calling on prospective and delinquent members; participating in the examination of candidates for membership; assist in oversight of the membership class; helping with the administration of the ordinances; distributing any benevolence funds as is deemed wise; and assist the staff with the ministries of Christian Education, Administration & Finance, Property and Social Events.
4. The deacons and Senior Pastor shall serve as the trustees of the church for legal purposes, and as such shall be the representing agents for North Baptist Church.
 - a. Subject to the church's approval they shall have authority to purchase, hold, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the church, and to take real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church
 - b. They shall have no authority to lease, buy, sell, give away or dispose of church property in any manner to exceed the value of \$1,000.00; nor to mortgage or encumber the same with debt to exceed \$1,000.00, except as the church shall order the same by corporate act.
 - c. They shall be responsible for arranging for the care and maintenance of the physical properties of the church through the Property Committee, superintending any improvements that are not entrusted to a special committee; and performing such business concerns of the church as shall be assigned to them.
 - d. The board of deacons shall be authorized to spend up to \$5,000 for non-budgeted emergency expenses.
 - e. They shall exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church corporation if such action is mandated by a vote of the church membership.

THE CHURCH CLERK

- A. A church clerk shall be elected each year during the May Annual Business Meeting by a majority vote of the eligible voting members present.
- B. The church clerk shall be responsible for all official correspondence requiring an official signature, and shall keep minutes of all business meetings and an accurate record of all church business approved at each meeting. A copy of these minutes shall be kept as a permanent record of the church. Minutes of the last meeting may be made available to the church membership prior to the monthly and Annual Business Meetings of the church.
- C. The church clerk shall maintain a record of the church membership; of the reception and dismissal of members; of baptisms, deaths, ordinations and of other dates and action concerning members, as well as important events in the history of the church; and, issue letters to other churches of like faith and practice.
- D. The church clerk shall provide promptly a transcript of all minutes in which authority to grant disbursement or transfer of funds is dealt with, to the pastor, deacons, and treasurer.
- E. The church clerk shall perform such other duties as properly belong to the office.
- F. Annually, the church clerk shall certify to the financial institution(s) the names of the officers/trustees/members authorized to have access to safety deposit boxes and to sign

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checks for the church. A copy of the minutes will be required along with this notification.

THE TREASURER

- A. The treasurer of North Baptist Church shall be appointed annually by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons. Such appointment shall be announced to the members present at the May Annual Business Meeting.
- B. The Senior Pastor and board of deacons, upon the recommendation of the treasurer may appoint one or more assistants to assist the treasurer in his/her duties.
- C. The treasurer shall Chair the Budget and Finance Committee.
- D. The treasurer shall have custody of all Church and Sunday school monies, including monies received from outside sources. He/she shall be responsible for an accurate record of all Church and Sunday school receipts and expenditures; oversee the counting of all receipts; maintain an accurate record of contributions by individuals and issue to each an annual report of their contributions; deposit all funds received in appropriate accounts at an approved banking facility; and shall file reports in accordance with government regulations.
- E. It shall be the duty of the treasurer, his/her assistant(s), and at least one other member so appointed by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons, to count and prepare a weekly deposit of all the monies received in offerings for the church.
- F. The treasurer or his/her assistant(s) shall prepare a weekly receipts summary report for the Senior Pastor and deacons.
- G. The treasurer or his/her assistant(s) shall approve all budgeted expenditures.
- H. The treasurer or his/her assistant(s) shall disburse all church funds according to approved church actions.
- I. In addition to the treasurer and his/her assistant(s), at least four members in good standing of this corporation shall be authorized to sign checks. All checks shall bear two signatures from among those authorized to sign checks.
- J. The Chairman of the deacons shall not be authorized to sign checks if he is also functioning as the treasurer. No person shall be permitted to sign checks written to him/her self.
- K. The Senior Pastor and board of deacons may require the treasurer to be bonded, at church expense.

ASSOCIATE PASTORS, YOUTH PASTORS AND OTHER CHURCH STAFF

- A. Associate Pastors, Youth Pastors, and other church staff may be hired to assist the Senior Pastor in carrying out the various ministries of North Baptist Church.
- B. Anyone seeking a position of pastor at North Baptist Church shall meet the same qualifications as the Senior Pastor and be in full agreement with the Constitution of North Baptist Church.
- C. Potential candidates for a position of pastor shall be interviewed by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons, and shall be hired, subject to a minimum eighty percent majority vote of those eligible members present and voting by ballot.
- D. Pastors shall become members of North Baptist Church upon assumption of their duties and shall serve for an indeterminate period of time.

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- E. Anyone seeking a position other than a pastor must also be in full agreement with the Constitution of North Baptist Church.
- F. All church staff, except the caretaker(s) and custodian(s), whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the direct supervision of the Senior Pastor.
- G. The Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Budget and Finance Committee shall determine the salary and benefits (if any) to be paid at the time of employment.
- H. A staff member may voluntarily sever relationship with North Baptist Church.
- I. The Senior Pastor and the Budget and Finance Committee shall review all staff compensation annually. Their recommendation shall be submitted to the board of deacons for approval. All staff compensation shall be included as part of the church budget which is approved at the December Monthly Business Meeting.
- J. The congregation shall be informed of the process of hiring or dismissing any staff member.

ARTICLE VIII MEETINGS AND ADMINISTRATION

WORSHIP SERVICES

- A. It shall be the purpose of North Baptist Church to conduct a regular schedule of worship services to the end that God is glorified through the teaching of God's Word, the edification of the saints, and the evangelization of the lost world.
- B. Worship services shall be held regularly for corporate worship, prayer and praise, fellowship, biblical instruction, the preaching of the Bible, observance of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and music, the form of which is to exalt Christ and minister to our spirit. The Senior Pastor, or his designee, shall have the oversight of all the worship services of the church.
- C. It shall be the intent of North Baptist Church to maintain its integrity, testimony, and distinction as a Baptist church with a ministry to the people of this community. To that intent, cooperative worship services with churches of other denominations shall not be made.
- D. Use of the church property or facilities for events other than church sponsored activities must be approved by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons.
- E. Special worship services may be held at the discretion of the Senior Pastor and board of deacons.

BUSINESS MEETINGS

- A. The annual meeting of the church, for election of officers and transaction of other business, shall be during the month of May at a time and date set by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons. Public notice of said meeting shall be announced from the pulpit on two consecutive Sundays (morning and evening services) immediately preceding the date of the meeting.
- B. Monthly or Special business meetings may be conducted throughout the year at a time and date set by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons. Public notice of said meetings

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shall be announced from the pulpit on two consecutive Sundays (morning and evening services) immediately preceding the date of the meeting.

PROCEDURES AT BUSINESS MEETINGS

- A. All items for church action shall first be submitted to the Senior Pastor and board of deacons for their consideration and recommendation. If an item is rejected by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons, it may be appealed by the dissenting member(s) presenting a signed formal statement requesting the Senior Pastor and board of deacons bring the issue before the Church membership for a vote of confirmation or reversal.
- B. The Senior Pastor shall moderate all business meetings. If the Senior Pastor or Senior Pastor-related areas are to be discussed in a business session, the Senior Pastor shall temporarily relinquish his position as moderator to the chairman of the board of deacons. The Senior Pastor and his family may be dismissed from the meeting room at this time.
- C. The moderator, using fairness and common sense shall provide all eligible members present with reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. He shall have full authority to require non members to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member who is deemed to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence.
- D. All business meetings shall be conducted on the basis of Robert's Rules of Order.

VOTING AT BUSINESS MEETINGS

- A. For conducting church business, those eligible voting members present at any business meeting of the Church shall constitute a quorum.
- B. Active members in good standing, eighteen years of age and older, shall be eligible to vote.
- C. A majority of the voting members present shall decide all elections and matters of business except: the call of an individual to serve in the position of a Pastor shall require an eighty percent vote by ballot; amending the constitution, and the purchase or sale of church property shall require a two-thirds vote by ballot.
- D. Voting by proxy shall not be allowed.
- E. Newly elected officers shall assume their responsibilities at the close of the business meeting during which they are elected.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

A Policies and Procedures Manual shall be maintained in the church office. It shall outline the various policies, guidelines, and procedures to be followed in carrying out the various ministries of the church and in implementing the provisions of this Constitution. It shall be accessible to all members upon request, but shall be kept in the church office.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Baptism

- A. Those professing faith in Christ, shall upon authorization of the church, be immersed by the Senior Pastor or someone appointed by him. Baptism is a prerequisite to church membership.
- B. North Baptist Church shall not practice infant baptism.

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The Lord's Supper

- A. It shall be the practice of North Baptist Church to observe the Lord's Supper, also known as Communion, on a regular basis for the purpose of "remembering the Lord's death till He comes." It shall be open to all who profess to be born again baptized believers, following a time of personal examination. None shall be barred, as it is the Lord's Supper. The Scriptural order, meaning, and purpose of the ordinance shall be explained at its observance.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor and board of deacons to determine the time for the observance.
- C. The Lord's Supper shall be administered by the Senior Pastor, or his designee, and the board of deacons.
- D. The elements of bread and grape juice shall be used for its observance.

Marriage Ceremonies

- A. Marriage ceremonies using the church facilities or grounds shall only be performed by the Senior Pastor of North Baptist Church, or by ministers in agreement with the doctrinal position of North Baptist Church, and who have been approved by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons.
- B. Marriage shall be between one natural man and one natural woman only.
- C. The Senior Pastor shall have the right to set whatever premarital prerequisites he deems appropriate and may refuse to marry any couple.
- D. Permission for the use of the church building for weddings must be approved by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons.

Funerals

- A. Funeral services may be held at North Baptist Church as part of its ministry when called upon to render such services.
- B. Only those in agreement with the doctrinal position of North Baptist Church may officiate at funerals conducted within North Baptist Church.
- C. No practices shall be permitted as part of funerals which are contrary to the Bible or the position of North Baptist Church.

Child Dedications

- A. Child dedications may be conducted as a part of the regular worship service wherein the parents dedicate a child unto the Lord and commit themselves to bringing up that child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
- B. The church family shall be challenged to their responsibility to pray for and be involved as good role models for the child.

**ARTICLE IX
FINANCES AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

GENERAL

- A. The fiscal year of the church shall begin on January 1st and end on December 31st of each year.
- B. It is the policy of North Baptist Church to keep the congregation informed of financial needs by means of the weekly bulletin, announcements from the pulpit, or other means as necessary. This will not include individual solicitation of members to taking of financial pledges. The purpose of this information is not to coerce or pressure anyone into giving, but rather to provide avenues for giving as the Lord provides.
- C. Recognizing that giving is done unto the Lord, it is critical that the local church handle the finances given with care and wisdom both for the glory of the Lord and for the testimony of the church (2 Cor. 8:20-21).
- D. All gifts given as a designated gift will be used as designated so long as those designations are in accord with biblical principles. If any special gifts are given with the directions to use it in whatever area has the greatest need, the Senior Pastor, together with the board of deacons, will decide how that gift will be used. All other gifts will go into the General Fund.
- E. The compensation of the Senior Pastor and staff personnel shall be paid from the General Fund. All paid staff shall be paid compensation commensurate to their duties and abilities. All staff personnel compensation packages shall be reviewed at least once a year with consideration being given to the rising cost of living.
- F. All expenses for special meetings and speakers shall be paid from the General Fund with speakers being reimbursed for their travel expenses. They may receive honorariums and/or a special love offering may be taken as determined by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons.
- G. The local church has the privilege and responsibility to provide financial support for those in service for the Lord (missionaries, seminary students, etc., Phil. 4:14-17; 2 Cor. 8:1-5). North Baptist Church will support certain of those in service as the Lord leads and provides. All of these supported must hold a doctrinal view in agreement with the doctrinal statement presented in this Constitution. The Senior Pastor and the board of deacons will recommend to the congregation which people and ministries North Baptist Church may consider for support.
- H. The Budget and Finance Committee shall decide all non-budgeted expenditures. Approved non-budgeted expenditures will be presented to the board of deacons for review and approval. All non-budgeted expenditures within the spending limits of the board of deacons (\$5,000) or the Property Committee (\$2,000) will be shared with the church. All approved non-budgeted expenditures that exceed the authorized spending limits of the board of deacons or Property Committee will be brought before the church for final approval.

BENEVOLENCE FUND

- A. A benevolence fund shall be maintained for the purpose of meeting people's **basic needs** during times of distress. This fund is intended as a source of last resort, to be used when

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a family or individual requesting assistance has explored all other possibilities of help from family, friends, savings, or investments.

- B. The fund has no budget for either income or expense. The fund receipts consist entirely of designated giving and special offerings that the Church takes following the Lord's Supper. This fund shall be subject to an audit by the Administrative Committee.

BUILDING FUND

- A. A building fund shall be maintained for the purpose of acquiring properties, new construction, remodeling existing structures and maintaining the property of the church. Funds for our building program may come in voluntarily from individual church members or from allocations from the General Fund as approved by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

- A. A scholarship fund shall be maintained for qualified high school seniors through the **Carlton-Frost Scholarship Fund**. The initial resources for the **Carlton-Frost Scholarship Fund** came from memorial contributions in memory of the deceased loved ones of the Marie Carlton and Donna Frost families. Funds for our scholarship program may come in voluntarily from individual church members or from allocations from the General Fund as approved by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons.

ARTICLE X COMMITTEES

GENERAL

- A. North Baptist Church shall have authority to establish any and all committees deemed important to its function. Such committees may be appointed by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons or established by vote of the church.
- B. All committees shall be in accordance to the standards set forth in this Constitution as to their composition, accountability, and authority. No committee shall engage in any practice or conduct contrary to the position and policies of North Baptist Church. All committees shall be ultimately responsible to the church body, through the Senior Pastor and board of deacons.
- C. Each committee chairman shall submit a written report of discussions, decisions, and plans to the Senior Pastor and board of deacons.
- D. Committees shall make available upon request all records and materials to the Senior Pastor, board of deacons or the church. The Senior Pastor and board of deacons shall have the right to overrule any plans or decisions made by a committee.
- E. Committee members may remain on the same committee unless otherwise prohibited under another Article of this Constitution.
- F. A committee is defined as a person or group of persons elected and/or appointed to perform some service or function; as to investigate, report on, or act upon a particular matter. North Baptist Church utilizes two types of committees:

1. **Standing Committees**—a committee with a continued existence; not related to the accomplishment of a specific once-only task such as:
 - **Administrative Committee**

The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the board of deacons shall serve with the Senior Pastor in a supervisory capacity in relation to all employed staff members (except: caretaker and custodian). They will also oversee the purchase and use of all office equipment, including computers and their operating software. They shall conduct an annual audit (November) of the Deacons' Benevolence Fund.
 - **Budget and Finance Committee**

The Treasurer, Chairman and Vice Chairman of the board of deacons shall serve with the Senior Pastor to administer the financial program of the Church. They shall be responsible to review the needs of the church and to prepare the Annual Budget (January-December) to be presented to the church for approval by a majority vote of the eligible voting members present at the December Monthly Business Meeting. The proposed budget shall be made available to the church membership at least two weeks prior to taking a vote.
 - **Audit Committee**

A financial review committee of two members of the church shall be appointed annually by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons at least 60 days prior to the December Monthly Business Meeting. All financial records, except individual giving records, shall be made available to the audit committee for review. The Senior Pastor and treasurer may be present to answer any questions the committee may ask. A written report of the committee's findings shall be submitted to the church at the December meeting. At least once every five years, the Budget and Finance Committee will request an audit of the church's financial records by an outside professional auditing firm. However, the church membership may authorize a review or an audit of the church's financial records by an outside professional auditing firm at anytime.
 - **Discipline Committee**

The Senior Pastor along with the board of deacons shall supervise the Spiritual work of the Church. This may include making decisions about the personal conduct of its members which the committee believes, if such conduct is allowed to continue, will injure the unity and effectiveness of the Church. See Article VI, Membership, for additional information about the process of church discipline.
 - **Christian Education Committee**

A Christian Education Director, and/or a designated church staff member appointed by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons, and at least one deacon appointed by and from the deacon board shall serve with the Senior Pastor to oversee the Christian Education Program of the Church. They will select and order all teaching curriculum and materials as well as establish, implement, and monitor a selection and training process for all teachers and helpers. They shall also be responsible for preparing an Annual Budget which identifies education needs and costs by department within the Christian Education Program. The Christian Education Annual Budget shall be submitted to the Budget and Finance Committee at least eight weeks prior to the December Monthly Meeting.

- **Missions Committee**

The Senior Pastor, and at least one deacon appointed by and from the deacon board, along with any eligible voting members in good standing may serve on this committee. They will be responsible to establish and maintain procedures for selecting and approving missionaries and missionary organizations, investigate the status of present and prospective church missionaries, and develop a structure which encourages members of the church to be involved in missions. They shall submit a proposed Missionary Budget for the ensuing year to the Budget and Finance Committee at least eight weeks prior to the December Monthly Business Meeting.

Support for a missionary or missionary organization may be discontinued, upon recommendation from the Missions Committee, and by a majority vote of the eligible voting members present at any business meeting of the church.

- **Nominating Committee**

The Senior Pastor and board of deacons shall function as the nominating committee of the church. All nominations shall be presented through this committee for the elected positions of the church. There shall be no nominations from the floor. Church members may provide the committee with their suggestions for nominations for each position, at least eight weeks prior to the May Annual Business Meeting, to ensure the committee has time to determine if candidates for nomination are qualified and willing to serve. The nominating committee may remove from consideration any name they deem to be unacceptable. A list of available and qualified candidates shall be made available to the church membership for their prayerful consideration at least two weeks prior to the May Annual Business Meeting. All candidates shall have given their consent prior to being placed on any ballot as a candidate.

- **Music Committee**

The Music Committee shall consist of the Senior Pastor, a choir director and/or a designated church staff member appointed by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons, and at least one deacon appointed by and from the deacon board. The Music Committee, under the Senior Pastor's leadership, shall be responsible to maintain a music ministry that is focused on exalting Christ and ministering to our spirit. They shall be responsible for arranging the special music for the services of the Church; maintaining the musical instruments and sound systems; the purchase and storage of music and equipment; and ensuring that current copyright laws are understood and enforced. They shall submit a proposed Music Budget for the ensuing year to the Budget and Finance Committee at least eight weeks prior to the December Monthly Business Meeting.

- **Property Committee**

This committee shall consist of four men elected by the congregation by ballot at the May Annual Business Meeting of the Church. At least one deacon appointed by and from the deacon board shall also serve on this committee. They shall cooperate with the Senior Pastor and board of deacons for the care and maintenance of all church property. They shall provide supervision over the work of the caretaker(s) and custodian(s).

Their term of service shall be for a two year period, so arranged that there shall be two vacancies by reason of expiration each year. Members whose terms are expiring are not required to take a one year recess before being eligible for re-election. They shall meet at least one time per month; elect their own Chairman and Secretary; provide meeting minutes to the Senior Pastor and chairman of deacon board each month. They are authorized to spend up to \$2000 for any non-budgeted item or an emergency repair, provided the Senior Pastor and/or Chairman of the Deacons are immediately notified and approve of the purchase or impending emergency repair. This committee shall submit a proposed Property Budget for the ensuing year to the Budget and Finance Committee at least eight weeks prior to the December Monthly Business Meeting.

- **Deaconess Committee**

The election of deaconesses shall take place at the May Annual Business Meeting of the Church. The number of deaconesses on this committee shall be determined by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons after reviewing the needs of the Church as well as the recommendation of the current Chairperson of the Deaconess Committee. The Deaconess Committee shall assist the Senior Pastor with the preparations for the administration of the church ordinances, charitable visitation, ordering funeral arrangements, and preparing funeral dinners. Their term of service shall be for a three year period, so arranged that there shall be two or more vacancies by reason of expiration of term each year. Members whose terms are expiring are not required to take a one year recess before being eligible for re-election.

- **Building/Planning Committee**

This committee shall consist of individuals selected and appointed by the Senior Pastor and the board of deacons from various ministry leadership positions, and may include individuals that possess certain artisan skills. They shall develop a plan that addresses the Church's current and future needs; setting goals and planning strategies for reaching those goals.

- **Security Committee**

This committee shall consist of individuals selected and appointed by the Senior Pastor and board of deacons who possess certain security skills including specialized knowledge and training that will lead to identifying and addressing the safety concerns of North Baptist Church. They will develop a plan that establishes the requirements for assembling a Security Team whose primary responsibility will be to provide a safe and secure environment for the members, their guests and all visitors of North Baptist Church.

2. **Special Committees**—The following Special Committees shall be limited in time, formed for a specific task and shall be organized by the Senior Pastor and the board of deacons, or by vote of the Church as necessary for the efficient operation of the Church:

- **Pulpit/Search Committee**

The board of deacons shall constitute this committee, recommending candidates for the Senior Pastorate to the church. They may appoint additional members to this committee from the church membership, as they deem necessary. This

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committee shall secure pastoral candidates and provide pulpit supply during the time the Church may be without a Senior Pastor.

- **Constitution Revision Committee**

This committee shall consist of five members elected by the congregation by ballot at a regular or specially called business meeting of the Church. They shall review the constitution, making recommendations to the Senior Pastor and board of deacons of changes necessary for the effective and efficient operation of the Church.

QUALIFICATIONS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

All committee members whether appointed, elected or a volunteer shall meet and maintain the following individual qualifications:

- A. One must have been a member in good standing in North Baptist Church for one year, except the one year requirement may be waived by vote of the church upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor and board of deacons.
- B. Member shall have attained the age of 18 years.
- C. Committee members shall be members of the church who are willing to faithfully fulfill their assigned duties.
- D. Committee members may be removed if absent from regularly scheduled committee meetings for three consecutive months.
- E. Committees shall have the power to carry out the established policies of the Church, but shall not establish new policies. They may, however, make recommendations to the Senior Pastor and board of deacons for the adoption of new policies.
- F. All committee members shall commit themselves unto the Lord and His direction in the ministry of the Church. Their commitment unto the Lord shall be according to the scriptural instruction as stated in Romans 12:1,2; Ephesians 4:1-32; 2 Timothy 2: 21-25.

POSTING OF COMMITTEES

The names and status of all committee members shall be continuously posted in a prominent place in the Church.

REPORTS AND RECORDS

Each committee shall elect their own chairperson and secretary at their first meeting. The secretary shall be responsible for an accurate record of attendance, discussions and motions made during each meeting.

SUBSIDIARY ORGANIZATIONS

Any and all subsidiary organizations of North Baptist Church shall be established and subject to the same provisions, requirements, and responsibilities applicable to committees under this Constitution.

**ARTICLE XI
CHURCH MINISTRIES**

GENERAL

- A. The ministries of North Baptist Church are to be consistent with the church Statement of Faith, Mission Statement and Doctrinal Statement.
- B. They are to be under the supervision of the Senior Pastor, or his designated church staff member.
- C. In order for a ministry to be considered a ministry of North Baptist Church it must be under the Scriptural authority of the church so as to insure appropriate accountability, integrity, and management of such ministries.
- D. A Directory of Church Ministries is to be maintained in the church office. The directory shall describe the ministry name, the defined ministry objective, and the church staff position having responsibility for that ministry.
- E. The church staff person having that ministry responsibility may create such organizational structure as is needed with the approval of the Senior Pastor.
- F. A church Organizational Chart that describes the church ministries and responsible supervisory staff is to be maintained under the supervision of the Senior Pastor.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

- A. Believing that Christian education, religious instruction, and the impartation of biblical truths to all individuals is a vital part of the Great Commission mandate of the Lord Jesus Christ, North Baptist Church shall establish and maintain a vigorous Sunday School and educational ministry for the purpose of winning every student to personal faith in Jesus Christ as his/her Savior and Lord, and to instruct him/her in Christian living as set forth in the Scriptures.
- B. The Christian Education Committee shall oversee the Christian Education Program of the Church. Either the Christian Education Director or a designated church staff member shall have general supervision over Sunday School. He shall work closely with the Senior Pastor in organizing of all teaching departments and classes; overseeing the classes and teachers; offering suggestions, and providing insight toward enhancing the spiritual development of all attendees.
- C. All officers, staff, instructors, teachers, and helpers shall be members of North Baptist Church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists or ministers engaged for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals, or other special meetings on a temporary basis.
- D. All officers, staff, instructors, teachers, helpers, educational programs, and courses of instruction shall be in agreement with the church's Statement of Faith, Mission Statement and Doctrinal Statement. The church shall not hire, appoint or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs that fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement therewith.

**ARTICLE XII
ORDINATION AND COMMISSIONING**

ORDINATION

Any male member of North Baptist Church who in the judgment of the Senior Pastor, board of deacons and eligible voting members possesses the Scriptural qualifications of a pastor as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, has demonstrated an ability to teach and preach the Word of God, and gives evidence of a genuine call of God to the work of the ministry, may be considered as a candidate for ordination.

- A. An ordination council of pastors and messengers of other churches of like faith and order shall be called by North Baptist Church to thoroughly examine the Scriptural qualifications, call to the ministry, academic preparation, and doctrinal convictions of the candidate.
- B. Upon a positive recommendation by the ordination council, and a majority vote of the eligible voting members, North Baptist Church shall proceed with an appropriate ordination service. Ordination shall be withdrawn when a man ordained by North Baptist Church disqualifies himself by violating the Scriptural qualifications of a pastor or by rejecting the historical fundamentals of the Christian faith as set forth in the Statement of Faith, Missions Statement, and Doctrinal Statement of North Baptist Church.

COMMISSIONING

- A. North Baptist Church may conduct a commissioning service for missionaries from North Baptist Church at the request of the missionary or his/her mission agency prior to departure for their field of service.

**ARTICLE XIII
INDEMNIFICATION**

INDEMNITY CLAUSE

- A. Members of North Baptist Church agree not to pursue civil litigation against this corporation, its members, its officers, its paid staff, its deacons or its pastor(s). This provision will not prevent a member from pursuing a claim for compensation for injuries from another member's insurance company.

INSURANCE

- A. North Baptist Church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this Article.

ACTIONS SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

- A. The church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church. Indemnification may be applicable for any expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding. However, in order for an individual to qualify for indemnification he must have acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of North Baptist Church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful.
- B. The determination shall be made (a) by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the Senior Pastor and board of deacons who were not and are not parties to or threatened with the action, suit, or proceeding; (b) if the described quorum is not obtainable or if a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested deacons so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by a majority vote of the members of North Baptist Church.

TIMING OF INDEMNIFICATION

- A. Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article may be paid by North Baptist Church as they are incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, as authorized by the board of deacons in the specific case. An individual who has received payment may be required to repay the amount if he/she is ultimately determined not qualified to be indemnified by the church.

EXTENT OF INDEMNIFICATION

- A. The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise required as a matter of law or under any agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the church.

**ARTICLE XIV
BINDING ARBITRATION**

SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION

- A. Believing that lawsuits between believers are prohibited by Scripture, all members of North Baptist Church agree to submit to binding arbitration any matters which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bringing any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

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NOTICE OF ARBITRATION

- A. In the event of any dispute, claim, question, or disagreement arising out of or relating to this Constitution or any other church matter, the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreement as befits Christians and in accord with Matthew 5:23,24 and Matthew 18:15-17.
- B. To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interests not to disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution. If they do not reach such solution within a period of sixty (60) days, then upon notice by either party to the other, disputes, claims, questions, or differences shall be finally settled by mediation and/or arbitration as described above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as described below.

LIMITATION ON ARBITRATION DECISIONS

- A. Should any dispute involve matters of church discipline, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures for church discipline as outlined under Article VI were followed.
- B. Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the Senior Pastor or any church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in Article VI and Article VII were followed.

ARBITRATION PROCEDURES

- A. The procedures for arbitration shall be as adopted by the Senior Pastor and the board of deacons of North Baptist Church.

ARTICLE XV PROPERTY

GENERAL

- A. North Baptist Church shall have the right to own, buy and sell tangible properties, both real and personal, in its own name and through properly elected officials, when authorized by majority vote of North Baptist Church.
- B. No part of the assets, holdings, net earnings or other transactions of North Baptist Church shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that North Baptist Church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered.

ARTICLE XVI ADMENDMENTS

GENERAL

- A. This Constitution or any part thereof may be amended, altered, or revised by North Baptist Church at a specially called business meeting for that purpose, provided that

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notice of the meeting and proposed amendment or revisions has been given in written form, posted in a conspicuous place within the church building, and announced in the pulpit for two consecutive Sundays prior to the date of the meeting.

- B. If requested, copies of the proposed amendments, alterations, or revisions shall be made available to each eligible voting member of the church at least two weeks prior to the specially called business meeting.
- C. A general revision of this constitution shall be delegated to a Constitution Review Committee of five members, elected by ballot by the membership at a regular scheduled business meeting of the church.
- D. A two-thirds majority vote of those eligible members present and voting shall be required to either amend, or revise the Constitution of North Baptist Church.
- E. A copy of this Constitution shall, at all times, be kept by the Church Clerk along with amendments to, or revisions thereof. Up-to-date copies shall also be maintained in the church office and made available to any church member upon request.

ARTICLE XVII JURISDICTION

GENERAL

- A. When any question of legality of right or interpretation arises in any ministry of church work, or in regard to this Constitution, the Senior Pastor and the board of deacons shall by majority action express judicial opinion. This opinion may be appealed by the dissenting member(s) presenting a signed formal statement requesting that the Senior Pastor and board of deacons bring the issue before the church membership for a vote of confirmation or reversal. A majority vote of the membership present and eligible to vote shall decide the issue.
- B. Suggestions and proposals from the membership can be a vital and healthy avenue by which the leadership may minister to the rest of the membership. When handled scripturally, this type of communication edifies the body, ministers to the needs of the membership, helps preserve and promote unity within the church and brings glory to God.
- C. Following the principles outlined above, any member of North Baptist Church who harbors a disagreement about any policy or procedure promoted by North Baptist Church or its leadership, should as a first step, prayerfully and privately approach the leadership. This may be done through informal consultation with the Senior Pastor, by means of a signed letter to the board of deacons, or meeting with the board of deacons at the church member's request. It is recognized that these steps should be taken prior to public discussion of any issue so as to help the leadership minister to the body more effectively and to help avoid discord and disunity within the membership (Prov. 13:3; 16:27-28; 17:4).
- D. The Senior Pastor and board of deacons should seek to prayerfully accept and address any complaint thus presented and seek to resolve all problems in a manner which best promotes those benefits mentioned above (Prov. 16:21-24).

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- E. When these policies are not followed, causing factions and strife, it will be necessary to exercise church discipline to deal with the offending member as per Article VI (Titus 2:10-11).

ARTICLE XVIII DISSOLUTION

GENERAL

- A. Upon the dissolution of North Baptist Church the trustees shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of North Baptist Church, dispose of all of the assets to independent, historically fundamental Baptist organizations which are in agreement with the Statement of Faith, Mission Statement and Doctrine of North Baptist Church, and are operated exclusively for charitable, educational, or religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and the laws of the State of Michigan, as the trustees shall determine. No monies shall accrue to any member of North Baptist Church, their relatives, friends or associates except for services contracted.
- B. Any of such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of Genesee County, the county in which the principal office of North Baptist Church is located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.
- C. The Membership of Record on the date of Dissolution agree to hold the Pastor(s), Deacon(s) or Trustees harmless from all losses, liabilities, damages, costs or expenses (including but not limited to reasonable attorneys' fees and other litigation costs and expenses) incurred by any of the Pastor(s), Deacon(s) or Trustees as a result of any claims or suits that a Member (or anyone claiming by, under or through a Member) may bring against any of the Pastor(s), Deacon(s) or Trustees to recover any losses, liabilities, costs, damages, or expenses which arise during or result from the Dissolution of Assets owned by North Baptist Church.

Revision Adoption

This Constitution was adopted by two-thirds vote of the eligible voting members present of North Baptist Church on: April 24, 2016

This constitution supersedes any other Constitution or Bylaws adopted by North Baptist Church.