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# SAFE HAVEN WORSHIP CENTRE CONSTITUTION

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To the glory of God



March 27, 2019  
SAFE HAVEN WORSHIP CENTRE  
Pickering, Ontario

# Church Constitution and Bylaws Draft Document

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## STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Whereas we, being a body of people of like precious faith:

- Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life through His death and the power of His resurrection.
- Believe the Bible to be God's word and the revelation of His will to humanity and accept it as our rule for faith and conduct.
- Believe Christian fellowship, mutual edification and evangelistic effort, in the form of local churches, is God's ordained order for His people.
- Believe each church is to assemble together for worship, fellowship, counsel, and instruction in the Word of God, and the work of the ministry.
- Believe each church should exercise the gifts and offices provided for in the New Testament to obtain the Christian goal, "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Matt: 5:48
- Believe God has called and anointed us to emphasize the fullness of the Gospel through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, we have accepted and adopted the following Statement of Fundamental Truths and Constitution. We shall seek, by the grace of God, to be governed by the Constitution as set forth, and will also seek to teach and propagate the doctrines contained in the Statement of Fundamental Truths.

## STATEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS

- **The scriptures inspired.** The Bible is the inspired Word of God, a revelation from God to man, the infallible rule of faith and conduct, and is superior to conscience and reason, but not contrary to reason (2 Timothy 3:15, 2 Timothy 3:16, 1 Peter 2:2).
- **The One true God.** The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent, self-revealed "I AM" and has further revealed Himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association, i.e., Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4, Mark 12:29, Isaiah 43:10, Isaiah 11, Matthew 28:19).

- **Humanity: fall and redemption.** People were created without sin in the image of God for God said, “Let Us make man in our image, after our likeness.” But through voluntary transgression, fell and their only hope of redemption is in Jesus Christ the Son of God (Genesis 1:26-31, Genesis 3:1-7, Romans 5:12-21).
- **Conditions of Salvation.** The grace of God, which brings salvation, has appeared to all, through the preaching of repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ; the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, and being justified by hope of eternal life (Titus 2:11, Romans 10:13-15, Luke 24:47, Titus 3:5-7).
- **Evidence of salvation.** The inward evidence to the believer of their salvation is the direct witness of the spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all is a life of righteousness and true holiness bearing the fruit of the Spirit.
- **Baptism in water.** The ordinance of baptism by a burial with Christ should be observed as commanded in the scriptures by all who have repented and believed in Christ as Saviour and Lord. In so doing, they have the body washed in pure water as an outward symbol of cleansing, while their heart has already been sprinkled with the blood of Christ as in inner cleansing. They declare to the world that they have died with Jesus and been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19, Acts 10:47, Acts 48, Romans 6:4, Acts 20:21, Hebrews 10:22).
- **The Lord’s Table.** The Lord’s Table/Communion, consisting of the elements, bread and the fruit of the vine, is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4), a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26), a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26), and is enjoined on all believers until He comes.
- **Regeneration.** All people who turn from their sins and put their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ receive a new birth by which their life is regenerated by the power of God’s Holy Spirit (John 3:3-6, Titus 3:5). From that time forth the regenerated person has God’s Holy Spirit dwelling within them enabling them to live a holy life (1 Corinthians 3:16, 2 Peter 1:3-4). Also giving them power to be witnesses for Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8).
- **Reconciliation.** Sin has not only incurred guilt and aroused the wrath of God but has also affected an enmity and alienation between God and humanity. For this reason, Scripture also speaks of the atonement as a work of reconciliation, whereby the ground of the enmity between God and His people—namely, the guilt of sin and the punishment of God’s wrath—is removed and dealt with, thus

accomplishing peace (Rom. 5:10–11; 2 Cor. 5:18–19; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20–22). By imputing our sins to Christ our scapegoat, by exercising His wrath on Him as our substitute, and by imputing His righteousness to us (2 Cor. 5:21), God has removed the ground of His enmity against us, namely, the guilt of sin.

- **Gifting.** All believers are immersed into Christ Jesus at the moment of conversion (Rom. 6:3; cf. Matt. 3:11). They are baptized by Christ with His Holy Spirit. Through this Spirit baptism (which is entirely God's work), believers are united with Christ (1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:27) and placed into His body, the church (1 Cor. 12:13). The Spirit also bestows all believers with spiritual abilities to build up one another in the church (Rom. 12:5–8; 1 Cor. 12:4–31; 1 Pet. 4:10–11).
- **Sanctification.** The scriptures teach a life of holiness without which no one shall see the Lord. By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command, "Be holy, for I am holy." Sanctification is the will of God for all believers, and should be pursued by walking in obedience to God's Holy Spirit. Sanctification is experienced in basically three ways:
  - **Progressive or practical sanctification.** This is the process by which we strive to live on a day to day basis by considering ourselves dead to sin and alive to God in holy living through the power of God's divine nature within our lives (Romans 6; Philippians 2:12, Philippians 2:13, 2 Peter 1:3, 2 Peter 1:4).
  - **The church.** The church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the spirit with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the spirit, is an integral part of the church, which is written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22, Ephesians 1:23, Ephesians 2:22, Hebrews 12:23).
  - **The ministry and evangelism.** A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the evangelization of the world and the edifying of the body of Christ (Mark 16:15-20, Ephesians 4:11-13).
  - **Divine healing.** Deliverance from sickness is provided for us in the atonement, and physical healing is always secondary to the primary need of spiritual healing from sin (Isaiah 53:4, Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 8:16, Matthew 8:17).
  - **The blessed hope.** The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation, together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 1 Thessalonians 4:17, Titus 2:12, 1 Corinthians 15:51, Romans 8:23).

- **The millennial reign of Jesus.** The revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, the salvation of elect Israel, and the millennial reign of Christ on earth are the scriptural promise and the world's hope (2 Thessalonians 1:17, Revelation 19:11-14, Romans 11:26, Romans 11:27, Revelation 20:1-7).
- **The lake of fire.** The devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, and whoever not found written in the Book of Life, shall be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake, which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Revelation 19:20, Revelation 20:10-15).
- **The new heaven and the new earth.** We eagerly await, "But according to His promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells." (2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 21, Revelation 22).
- **Glorification.** This is when we are totally set free from the presence of sin within our life after seeing Jesus our Lord and being made like Him because of seeing Him as He really is in all His glory (1 John 3:2).

## **BYLAWS**

We believe Safe Haven Worship Centre was founded for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of the one true God; to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, irrespective of social position or worldly possessions; for the propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ both in home and foreign lands, this church shall be governed by the following Constitution:

### **PREAMBLE:**

That, we, the undersigned have this day voluntarily associated ourselves together for the purpose having formed a charitable entity under Laws of the Province of Ontario, and we hereby certify:

### **ARTICLE I – NAME OF CHURCH**

Corporately, this local body of Christ is known as Safe Haven Worship Centre

## ARTICLE II - PURPOSES AND POWERS

THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH THIS CHARITY IS FORMED ARE:

- To establish a Biblical Christian Church with missionary, literature, educational and all other departments it may deem useful to propagate and practice the full Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and for its service to the community and the world for worship.
- It is one purpose of Safe Haven Worship Centre to earnestly seek and promote the unity of God's people in the Scriptural manner of Godly love, respect and faithful voluntary cooperation with liberty. To that end it shall associate and co-operate freely with other churches and with church organizations.
- As needed, to act as Trustee under any trust incidental to the principal objects of the church and to receive, hold, administer and expend funds and property subject to such trust.
- To enter into, make, perform and carry out contracts of every kind for any lawful purpose without limit as to amount and with any person, firm, association or corporation; to draw, make, accept, endorse, discount, issue and execute promissory notes, warrants and other negotiable or transferable interests.
- To take, purchase or otherwise acquire; to own, hold, occupy, use and enjoy, manage, improve, develop and work; to grant, sell, exchange, let, demise and otherwise dispose of real estate, buildings; and improvements, interest and estate therein without limit as to the amount thereof and wheresoever the same may be situated; to erect, construct, alter and repair buildings; to assume any and every kind of contract, agreement and obligation by or with any person, firm, corporation or association, or any Federal, Provincial or other Government for the erection, construction, alteration, repair, renewal, equipment, improvement, development, use, enjoyment, leasing, management or control of any buildings, improvements or structures of any kind wherever the same may be situated.
- To purchase or otherwise acquire, to own, hold, use and enjoy, to sell, assign and transfer, exchange or otherwise dispose of, deal in or deal with personal property of every kind and description without limit as to the amount thereof and wheresoever the same may be situated.
- To do all other acts necessary or expedient for the administration of the affairs and attainment of the purposes of the entity and to have and exercise all

the powers now or hereafter conferred by Laws of the Ontario, upon non- profit entities.

### **ARTICLE III - A NON-PROFIT ENTITY**

This church is organized pursuant to the Laws of the Province of Ontario; the property of this entity is irrevocably dedicated to religious and charitable purposes, and upon liquidation, dissolution, or abandonment, shall not inure to the benefit of any private person except a fund, foundation, or corporation organized and operated for religious or charitable purposes and as designated in Article II of this Constitution.

### **ARTICLE IV - ORDINANCES**

(A) The ordinance of Baptism by immersion in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit as commanded in the Scriptures, shall be administered to all those who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls and who give clear evidence of their fruit (Matthew 28:19, Colossians 2:12).

(B) The ordinance of the Lord's Table/Communion shall be observed regularly as a part of public worship, as commanded by the Lord (Luke 22:19, 20; I Corinthians 11:23-26).

### **PRIVILEGES**

(C) Infants and small children may be dedicated to the Lord in the church upon the request of the parents or guardians (Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15, 16).

(D) The ministration of laying on of hands accompanied with the anointing with oil, for the healing of the sick, shall be granted as a request is made and the need may require (Mark 16:18; James 5:14).

### **ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in Safe Haven Worship Centre shall be eligible to all who give evidence to their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and who voluntarily hold to the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. When a person desires to be a



member of Safe Haven Worship Centre and agrees with our Statement of Fundamental Truths, they will be interviewed by at least two elders who then recommend to the membership their names to become members. A member is one who attends regularly, uses their spiritual gifts in service at and contributes financially to Safe Haven Worship Centre and regularly attends congregational meetings. Removal of membership can occur if a member stops attending and contributing to Safe Haven for a period of 6 consecutive months and must be voted on for removal from the membership list by the elders. If a member demonstrates a flagrant disregard for the teachings of Scripture especially in areas of lifestyle and personal conduct and refuses to submit to the counsel and authority of the Senior Pastor and/or elders, the membership can be revoked by a majority vote of the elders.

## **ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS**

The officers of Safe Haven Worship Centre shall consist of a Chair, a Vice-Chair of the Board of Elders plus the Treasurer and Secretary. The Chair and Vice-Chair must be elders. The Treasurer and Secretary must be accepted as such by majority vote at the Annual Meeting.

### **SENIOR PASTOR**

**Section 1. Term of Office:** The Senior Pastor is the under-shepherd of Safe Haven Worship Centre accountable to Christ, the Chief Shepherd. He is also a non-voting elder holding the office of pastor and will stay in this position without a set term, however, we understand he must continuously sense God's call for his ongoing service at Safe Haven.

**Section 2. Duties of Senior Pastor:** The Senior Pastor shall be considered the spiritual overseer of the church and shall oversee all the church's activities. His main responsibility will be using his spiritual gifts to preach, teach, counsel and proclaim the vision and hope of the scriptures to the congregation. He is responsible for all paid staff and will properly manage them and adhere to all policies and laws dealing with employees. He should be present at all congregational and constituted meetings of the church.

**Section 3. Support of Senior Pastor:** The Senior Pastor shall be supported financially in accordance with recommendations from the Finance Committee to the Elders and reviewed on an annual basis. A job performance

review is to be done at least once per year to highlight areas of strength and areas requiring growth. The whole congregation agrees to regularly pray for and assist the Senior Pastor as he endeavors to shepherd the flock entrusted to him.

**Section 4. Vacancy of Senior Pastorate:** The vacancy shall be filled by the appointment of a new pastor by the Board of Elders under the recommendation of the Search Committee. The elders will select a Search Committee made up of elders and members who will search for pastoral candidates and submit them to the elders and then for final approval by the membership with a minimum of 80% at a duly called meeting. If an interim pastor is required, the elders will recommend an interim candidate to the members who must approve the interim pastor with a 70% vote in order to fill the roll until a permanent pastor is in place.

## **BOARD OF ELDERS**

The Board of Elders will be voted on by the membership by a slate nominated by the elders. If there are more nominated than needed, the top vote getters will be asked to join the board. There shall not be less than three (3) and no more than nine (9) elders. They shall, along with the Senior Pastor, seek God's direction for the church, and support the pastor in the vision given him by God, in the church's present and future ministry. Elders shall serve for 3 year terms and can only serve 2 consecutive terms before needing to be off the board for 1 year. It is recommended that half the board be replaced every three years. The elders will choose from among themselves a chair, vice-chair and secretary.

**Requirements:** An Elder must be deemed to have the character qualities of an elder based on 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 and must have been a member of Safe Haven for a minimum of one year prior to being chosen as an elder.

## **DEACONS**

In keeping with Scriptural teaching, it is our desire to have a functioning group of Deacons made up of godly men and women (Romans 16:1) with the spiritual gift of service and meeting the minimum character qualities found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Titus 2:3-4. There will be no set number of Deacons since the number of Deacons needed will be based on the size of the congregation and the number of men and women who would be able to serve. Deacons will

be nominated by congregants and their names posted for a minimum of two weeks prior to being confirmed by majority vote of the membership at a constituted meeting and thus they will be appointed to this duty by the elders (Acts 6:1-6). Deacons will serve a 1 year term with indefinite renewals confirmed by the elders and membership. The Deacons will elect a chair among themselves and will report regularly to the Senior Pastor and the Elders Board.

**Requirements:** A Deacon must be deemed to have the character qualities of a deacon based on 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Titus 2:3-4. They must be a member of Safe Haven for a minimum of one year and served at Safe Haven for a minimum of two years prior to being chosen as a deacon.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The Finance Committee shall be made up of members including the Treasurer. They will be nominated by the elders and voted on by the membership at our Annual Meeting. There shall be no obvious conflicts of interest and all members of the committee must be arm's length of one another. The primary role of the Finance Committee is to monitor the expenses and income of the church and offer advice to the elders on financial matters. The Finance Committee will give regular reports to the elders of no less than every 3 months and a third party reviewed statement once per year within 3 months of the end of the fiscal year. The firm doing the reviewed statement must be approved by the members as nominated by the Treasurer at the Annual Meeting.

## **TRUSTEES**

Trustees shall be nominated by the elders and approved by a majority vote by the membership at a constituted meeting. There will be a minimum of three (3) trustees with no term limit. All must be members in good standing and fulfill all duties required of trustees.

## **VACANCY OF OFFICES**

The elders shall have the authority to declare any office vacant. Grounds for such action shall be:

- Failure to cooperate with the church's programs and ministry
- Unscriptural conduct and refusing to repent

- Doctrinal departure from the tenets of the Christian faith
- For any good and sufficient cause. Any incumbent under charges shall have opportunity for a fair and impartial hearing before the joint meeting of the Board of Elders. Their decision shall be considered final and the incumbent may have no further recourse.

## **ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS**

**Section 1. Meetings for Worship.** Meetings for public worship shall be held on each Lord's Day and during the week as may be provided for under the direction of the Senior Pastor or his designate.

**Section 2. Annual business meeting.** There shall be an Annual Congregational Meeting of Safe Haven Worship Centre. This Annual Meeting shall be held within 3 months of the end of the fiscal year. This meeting shall be conducted in the auditorium of Safe Haven Worship Centre. New officers and elders shall be installed and all reports shall be read and/or accepted at the Annual Business Meeting. Copies of previous meetings will be available prior to the Annual Business Meeting.

**Section 3. Special Congregational Meetings.** Special meetings of the legal members may be called by the Chair or Senior Pastor or by written petition of three-fourths (3/4) of the legal membership.

**Section 4. Notice of Congregational Meetings.** Written notice of the date and place of the Annual Business Meeting and of any special business meetings shall be posted on the Safe Haven web site and posted in the church and in the bulletin for two weeks prior to such meeting.

**Section 5. Quorum.** No record of any special or regular business meetings of Safe Haven Worship Centre shall be made unless twenty percent (20%) or more legal members are present to constitute a quorum. If a member is unable to attend a duly called member's meeting they may assign another member in good standing to be their proxy using the proxy form provided. One member can be a proxy for only one other member. The pastor(s) and elders cannot be proxies for anyone except their spouse.

**Section 6. Agenda.** The regular order of agenda for the Annual Congregational Meeting of Safe Haven Worship Centre is suggested as follows:

- |                                 |                             |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Devotional                   | 5. Unfinished items         |
| 2. Approval of previous minutes | 6. Installation of officers |
| 3. Report of the Treasurer      | 7. New items                |
| 4. Report of committees         | 8. Adjournment              |

This order of the agenda may be altered or suspended at any meeting by a majority vote of the members present. The usual parliamentary rules as laid down in “Robert’s Rules of Order” shall govern all debates when not in conflict with this Constitution.

### **ARTICLE VIII - FINANCES**

- All funds needed for the maintenance of Safe Haven Worship Centre shall be provided by voluntary contributions, tithes and offerings. Every member shall decide before God what he or she can cheerfully give to the support of the Lord’s work at home and in the foreign field (Malachi 3:10, I Corinthians 16:1-2; Romans 12:8).
- All offerings shall be counted by at least two members of the Counting Team.
- Deposits must be made by Safe Haven Worship Centre promptly in a local bank.
- A separate account will be established for Safe Haven Worship Centre.
- Annual reports will be furnished to the officers and made available to the membership.
- Financial records, without exception, are to be stored securely on church property.
- The Senior Pastor or his designated proxy such as the Treasurer shall act as overseer of all financial activities.

### **ARTICLE IX - DEPARTMENTS AND COMMITTEES**

The church shall provide for the establishment of young people’s work, relief committees, home and foreign missionary committees, and any other departments or committees as the needs of the work may require. These committees and departments shall be subordinate to the church and shall

contribute to the harmony and development of the whole. They shall be under the general supervision of the Board of Elders. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-official member of all committees or departments and shall determine when the need for such committees and departments must be organized.

## **ARTICLE X - PROPERTY**

The Officers of Safe Haven Worship Centre shall have power to carry out all of the purposes and powers set forth in Article II. The Chair and the Treasurer's signature shall be sufficient certificate for negotiating any and all of the provided powers in said Articles. Any real property bought or sold must first be approved by a 75% majority of the members at an officially constituted meeting of the members.

## **ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENT**

This Constitution may be amended or changed by a two thirds (2/3) vote of the members at any regular or special meeting called for that purpose, provided due notice of such proposed change shall have been made.

## **ARTICLE XII - ORGANIZATION**

Said organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious and educational purposes, including the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under the laws of Ontario.

## **ARTICLE XIII - CONDUCT OF ORGANIZATION**

No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted by law except where those laws contravene our biblical mandate.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Any policies and procedures not covered in this document must be without contradiction with this document and must be available at the church. Members can move to have policies adopted or changed with a two thirds vote at a constituted members meeting.

## **ARTICLE XIV - DISSOLUTION**

Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes according to the laws of Ontario to another Christian charity that will use the assets for the glory of God.

**Adopted after a majority vote by the members and witnessed here by....**

Name	Signature	Date	Title