

# **CONSTITUTION**

Revised and Reissued 4-29-2012  
Amendments 4-17-2016

## **Article I**

### **Name and Organization**

1. **NAME:** The official name of this organization shall be Emmanuel Baptist Church.
2. **ORGANIZATION:** The organization took place on July 18, 1954.
3. **INCORPORATION:** This organization was incorporated in the State of Minnesota, No. 84170.

## **Article II**

### **Statement of Faith**

(Ephesians 2:8, 9)

#### 1. **THE BIBLE:**

We believe that the Bible is God's Word (John 1:1) and that it was written by men divinely inspired (II Peter 1:19-21). We believe that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct (II Timothy 3:14-17).

#### 2. **THE TRINITY:**

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons; Who are equal in divine perfection; and Who execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption. (Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14)

#### 3. **GOD THE FATHER:**

We believe in God the Father Who is perfect in holiness (I Peter 1:15, 16), infinite in wisdom (James 1:5), and measureless in power (I Corinthians 1:18).

We rejoice that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of people (Ephesians 2:4, 5) and that He hears and answers prayer (Philippians 4:6).

We rejoice that He saves us all from sin and death when we come to Him through Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:21-23, I John 5:11-13).

Statement of Faith cont'd.

4. **JESUS CHRIST:**

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, Who was miraculous in His birth (Luke 1:30-35, Luke 2:10, 11). He is sinless in His life (II Corinthians 5:21) and makes atonement for the sins of the world by His death (John 11:25-27).

We believe in His bodily resurrection (John 20:1-20) and His ascension into heaven (Mark 16:19).

We believe in His perpetual intercession for His people (Hebrews 7:24-26, John 14: 13, 14) and His personal visible return to the world according to His promise (John 14:1-6).

5. **HOLY SPIRIT:**

We believe in the Holy Spirit Who came forth from God to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, of judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and comfort those who believe in Jesus Christ (John 16:7-14B, Acts 9:31).

6. **SALVATION:**

We believe that all people by nature and by choice are sinners (Genesis 3, Romans 3:10, 23, Romans 5:12). As stated in John 3:16, we believe that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, shall not perish but have everlasting life."

We believe that those who accept Christ as Savior and Lord will rejoice forever in God's presence while those who refuse His plan of salvation will be forever separated from God (Mark 16:15, 16 and John 3:18).

7. **THE CHURCH:**

a. **Spiritual Body:**

We believe in the Church as a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head (Colossians 1:15-18) and of which all regenerated people are members (Ephesians 5:29, 30).

We believe that a visible church is a company of believers in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:22) who have been baptized on a credible confession of faith (Acts 8:12).

The Church assembles for worship (John 4:23 and 24), work (II Timothy 2:15), and fellowship (I John 1:3, 7).

b. **Ordinances:**

We believe that the visible Church is committed to the perpetual observance of the ordinances of Baptism (Acts 8:35-39) and the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 11:23-29).

Statement of Faith (Cont'd.)

c. **Commission:**

We believe that God has laid upon His Church the task of persuading a lost world to accept Jesus Christ as Savior (Matthew 28:19, 20) and to enthrone Him as their Lord and Master (Ephesians 3: 16-21).

We believe that all human betterment and social improvement are the inevitable by-products of such a gospel (Matthew 5:13-16).

8. **RELATIONSHIPS:**

a. **Personal Faith:**

We believe every person has direct relations with God (Revelation 3:20) and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith (Hebrews 11:1, 6).

b. **Church Autonomy:**

We believe that each church is independent and autonomous and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority (Hebrews 13:17). Therefore, church and state must be kept separate as having different functions each fulfilling its duties free from the dictation or patronage of the other (I Timothy 2:1-3).

**Article III**

**Objectives**

1. **LOCAL CHURCH:**

The objective of Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be the maintenance of the preaching of the gospel, the administration of the ordinances of the New Testament, and the spiritual care and improvement of its members and regular attendees (Acts 20:28).

2. **MISSIONS OUTREACH:**

A broader objective of Emmanuel Baptist Church is the evangelization of the world and the conversion of all people to Christ (Acts 1:8).

## **Article IV**

### **Membership**

#### 1. **ADMISSION:**

##### a. **By Baptism:**

Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of regeneration and adopting the view of faith and practice held by Emmanuel Baptist Church may, upon baptism by immersion, be received into its membership (Acts 2:41-42, 47; Romans 6:3, 4).

##### b. **By Letter:**

A member of another Baptist church may be received by virtue of a letter certifying baptism by immersion duly granted by said church.

##### c. **By Restoration:**

A former member of a Baptist church whose membership has lapsed due to dereliction on his or her part, may be restored to fellowship on profession of faith.

##### d. **By Experience:**

A person who is not a member of a Baptist church but has been immersed upon profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and accepts the views of faith and practice, as approved by Emmanuel Baptist Church, may be received into membership by virtue of faith experience.

##### e. **Application:**

Any applicant, under Items a, b, c, or d, who requests admission to the membership of Emmanuel Baptist Church, shall appear before the Board of Deacons for consultation and examination. **No** applicant shall be presented to the congregation without the recommendation of the Board of Deacons.

##### f. **Procedure:**

The names of all applicants for membership admission to Emmanuel Baptist Church by the Board of Deacons shall be presented to the congregation at any **regular** or **special** scheduled business meeting.

New members shall be officially welcomed by the congregation into the fellowship of Emmanuel Baptist Church at the observance of the Lord's Supper.

2. **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Members in good standing shall participate in the life and work of the Emmanuel Baptist Church to the best of their abilities.

The minimum voting age shall be 14 years.

3. **TRANSFER/DISMISSAL:**

a. **Transfer to Other Baptist Churches:**

Any member, if in good standing, shall be granted on request, a regular letter of transfer to any other church of the same faith and order.

b. **Dismissal of Members Not in Good Standing:**

Upon recommendation of the Board of Deacons, members not in good standing may be dismissed at a business meeting of the Emmanuel Baptist Church congregation.

4. **GRIEVANCES:**

In all cases of grievances between members, the offenders shall be dealt with in accordance with the guidelines laid down in Matthew 18:14-35.

Charges, when made, shall be in writing and shall be submitted to the Board of Deacons for proper recommendation to Emmanuel Baptist Church.

5. **INACTIVE MEMBERSHIP**

A member is considered to be inactive if he or she has not been able to participate in the worship and church life of Emmanuel Baptist Church for 12 months.

The establishment of this classification does not diminish membership status but does recognize that certain life situations preclude members from attending and participating in church life. The sole purpose of the classification is to base the quorum for business meetings on an active member status.

Life situations may include but are no limited to, moving out of town, having physical disability preventing attendance at services; or residence in an extended care facility. Should the situation change and the member can participate in church life, active status may be restored.

The Deacon Board will be responsible for administering the inactive status with communication with the member.

## **Article V**

### **Elected Offices**

All elected positions of the congregation and terms of office shall be stated in the constitutional by-laws along with a summation of the duties for each office. An office holder in Emmanuel Baptist Church must be a member in good standing. More detailed Job Descriptions shall be maintained apart from the by-laws.

## **Article VI**

### **Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be from July 1 through June 30, inclusive.

## **Article VII**

### **Meetings**

#### 1. **ANNUAL MEETING**

The annual meeting of Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be held within two months following the close of the fiscal year.

#### 2. **BUSINESS MEETINGS:**

Business meetings of Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be held at least once each quarter. No church business shall be discussed during the Sunday morning service.

#### 3. **SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS:**

Special business meetings of Emmanuel Baptist Church may be held at any time with two weeks notice.

#### 4. **QUORUM:**

A quorum shall consist of 40% of the Emmanuel Baptist Church membership for all congregational business meetings.

#### 5. **NOTIFICATION:**

Notification of all business meetings of the congregation shall be at least two weeks in advance.

## **Article VII (Cont'd)**

### **6. PUBLIC WORSHIP:**

The stated meeting of Emmanuel Baptist Church for public worship shall be Sunday and other meetings may be scheduled as deemed necessary.

### **7. THE LORD'S SUPPER:**

The Lord's Supper shall be observed monthly.

## **Article VIII**

### **Pastoral Relations**

#### **1. ESTABLISHMENT:**

The calling of a pastor shall be done by ballot at a quarterly or special business meeting. Announcement shall be given at the worship service on the two weeks prior to said business meeting. The pastor shall be called by a three-fourths majority vote of Emmanuel Baptist Church members in good standing.

#### **2. DISSOLUTION:**

The question of dissolving a pastoral relationship shall be considered at any time by Emmanuel Baptist Church at a special or quarterly business meeting. Notice of such meeting, in the case of the presentation of the Pastor's resignation, shall be announced two weeks prior at the worship service.

Should irreconcilable differences exist, recommendation must be brought to Emmanuel Baptist Church by the Board of Deacons. In this case, the pastoral relationship shall be dissolved by a three-fourths majority vote of Emmanuel Baptist Church members in good standing. Notice of such business meeting shall be given to the membership by letter and shall include the meeting agenda. This notice must be mailed to the entire membership at least two weeks prior to the business meeting.

## **Article IX**

### **Affiliations**

#### **1. STATE CONFERENCE:**

Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be affiliated with the Minnesota-Iowa Baptist Conference.

**Article IX (Cont'd.)**

2. **GENERAL CONFERENCE:**

Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be affiliated with the Baptist General Conference of America (Converge).

**Article X**

**Disposition of Church Property**

1. **DIVISION:**

In case of a division of the Emmanuel Baptist Church membership, the church property shall belong to those members who abide by this constitution.

2. **DISSOLUTION:**

Should conditions arise when Emmanuel Baptist Church work cannot continue, the church property shall be transferred to the Minnesota-Iowa Baptist Conference of the Baptist General Conference of America (Converge).

3. **CONSOLIDATION:**

Should conditions arise where a consolidation with another church of the same denomination be advisable, the following procedure shall be carried out.

a. **Board of Deacons:**

The Board of Deacons shall be authorized to approve and legally finalize the merger negotiations.

b. **Board of Trustees:**

The Board of Trustees shall be authorized to evaluate and negotiate the financial terms of the church property.

c. **Church Members:**

A quorum of the active Emmanuel Baptist Church members shall finalize the consolidation with a favorable two-thirds majority ballot vote.



## **Article XI**

### **Amendments**

1. **PROCEDURE:**

Amendments to this Constitution shall be introduced by recommendation of the Board of Deacons through formal motion at any regular business meeting. Amendments shall not be acted on until the following regular business meeting. An announcement shall be given at the worship service two weeks prior to any regular business meeting.

The active Emmanuel Baptist Church membership shall be informed of the conditions of the proposed amendment in a proper manner.

2. **ENACTMENT:**

A two-thirds majority vote of the active Emmanuel Baptist Church membership present at the meeting shall be required for acceptance. At no time can any amendment be adopted that would be contrary to historic Baptist beliefs and practices.

3. **PLACEMENT:**

All amendments to this constitution shall be placed under Item 4. They shall be listed with the Article and Item that is changed, added to, or deleted. The amendments shall appear in the order of their dated occurrence as approved by congregational vote.

4. **AMENDMENTS:**

Effective, April 17, 2016

Emmanuel Baptist Church believes that God has established marriage as a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman and that all intimate sexual activity outside the marriage relationship, whether heterosexual, or otherwise, is immoral and therefore sin (Gen. 2:24-25; Ex. 20:14, 17, 22:19; Lev. 18:22-23, 20:13, 15, 16; Matt. 19:4-6, 9; Rom. 1:18-31; I Cor. 6:9-10; I Tim. 1:8-11; Jude 7). We also believe that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Ps. 139:14) and that we were created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27) and that God makes no mistakes with gender. Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God in that person. We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21); Rom. 10:9-10; I Cor. 6:9-11).

Because God, in His Love, has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Emmanuel Baptist, in obedience to His Word, will only recognize marriages between a man and a woman. The Staff and building will only participate and host marriages that recognize the union of one man and one woman.

In conclusion, based upon the above truths and the declaration of our Lord Jesus Christ that marriage is between a man and a woman (Mark 10:6-9) Emmanuel Baptist cannot accept, nor adhere to, any legal redefinition of marriage issued by any ruling authority including the United States Supreme Court. We will not recognize such a union, nor perform, nor host same sex ceremonies.