

Constitution of Northside Baptist Church Elkhart, Indiana

ARTICLE 1 NAME

The name of this assembly of believers shall be known as “Northside Baptist Church of Elkhart, Indiana, Inc.”

We, the members of “Northside Baptist Church of Elkhart, Indiana, Inc.,” do herein establish and accept this Constitution which includes our Doctrinal Statement and Church Covenant.

ARTICLE 2 DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS

1. We believe in the Scripture of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired of God and inerrant in the original writings, and that they are the supreme and final authority in faith and life. II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:21
2. We believe in one God eternally existing in Three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19; I John 5:7
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, was born of the Virgin Mary, and is the true God and true man. Matthew 1:18-23; John 1:14; 5:23
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God. Man sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death which is separation from God. Man is born with a sinful nature, in thought, word and deed. Genesis 3:1-6; 3:24; Romans 3:22-23; 5:12
5. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitute; and that all who believe on Him are justified by His shed blood. John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; Hebrews 2:14; I John 4:10
6. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension into Heaven, and in His present life there for us as Mediator, High Priest and Advocate. Matthew 28:6-7; Acts 1:9-11; Hebrews 2:17; I John 2:1
7. We believe in “that blessed hope”; the personal, pre-tribulation, pre-millennial and imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Titus 2:13; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 4:16
8. We believe that Satan deceived the whole world and is the god of this age. Matthew 4:2-11; John 8:44; I John 5:19; Revelation 12:9-10
9. We believe in the universality of sin, the depravity and lost condition of all men by nature. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. He

regenerates, indwells, enlightens and guides the believers. Romans 3:10-23, 6:23; John 16:8; I Corinthians 3:16

10. We believe that all who receive Christ as Savior are saved by His shed blood. They are God's children, joint heirs with Christ and shall never perish. John 1:12, 3:16, 5:24; Romans 10:9-10
11. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust; the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost. We believe that every born-again person is a member of the Body of Christ, that He will come for His living saints and will raise those who have fallen asleep in death. At the end of the Great Tribulation, Satan will be bound during the Millennial reign of Christ. After the Millennial reign, Satan will be loosed for a season to deceive the nations. There will be a final war between God and Satan. Satan will be cast into the Lake of Fire for eternity. There will be a Great White Throne judgment for all unbelievers who will then be cast into the Lake of Fire. A new heaven and earth will be established for eternity. Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20:1-15; 21:1
12. We believe in Heaven and Hell; that Heaven is a place of pure delight and eternal joy for all those who have been washed in the Blood of the Lamb and that Hell is a place of eternal punishment for all the unsaved. Revelation 22; Matthew 25:46; John 14:1-6; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 20

ARTICLE 3 PURPOSE OF THIS CHURCH

This church is organized to do the following: maintain a public place for Christian worship, study and teach the Bible, preach the Gospel of Christ, administer New Testament ordinances, spiritually improve our members, win the lost to Christ, exercise as much as is possible a Christian and moral influence in the community, instill in our members the missionary vision embodied in the Great Commission, receive tithes, offerings and donations and disperse the same to strengthen the Church and further the cause of Christ.

ARTICLE 4 CHURCH COVENANTS

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

We promise by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; and to 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 through all nations.

We also promise to maintain family and secret devotion; to educate our children in the Christian faith; 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, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and sinful anger, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

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

We moreover promise 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 5 MEMBERSHIPS

1. REGULAR MEMBERSHIP

The requirements for membership in this church are: the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, public admission of this acceptance, and who has received or gives assurance of his willingness to receive the ordinance of water baptism by immersion at the earliest opportunity, and acceptance of the Doctrinal Statement and Church Covenant.

The names of all prospective members and the request for letters shall first be submitted to the Board of Deacons, and, upon approval, shall be submitted to the members for their approval. All church letters shall be granted by this Board. Any member may terminate membership upon written request, submitted to the deacon board.

Members showing no interest in the church by attendance for one (1) year will be contacted and given three (3) months to attend. If attendance is not forthcoming in that time, membership will be terminated, as determined by the deacon board.

1. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

The associate membership will grant all voting and membership privileges to those who meet our membership requirements as stated in the constitution and who wish to unite with the local church but will be in this area only a limited time.

ARTICLE 6 PASTORAL STAFF

1. THE SENIOR PASTOR

The pastor shall be a man who meets the spiritual requirements of 1 Timothy 3:1-7. The office of the pastor shall be a continuing office, terminated by death, deposition or resignation. It shall be his duty to visit the sick and infirm, to faithfully feed and assume oversight of the flock of God and see that all committees perform their duties as assigned to them. It shall be his duty on behalf of the church to receive applicants into membership, and to administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He shall by virtue of his office be a church member and an ex-officio of all committees. He shall have an annual paid vacation of two (2) weeks or more. His salary and

vacation shall be determined by the Board of Deacons, subject to approval or alterations by the members. (See Article 8, Section 1, Paragraph 7) His salary shall be paid weekly.

2. OTHER PASTORAL STAFF

Additional men who meet the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 may be called as deemed necessary by the senior pastor and the board of deacons subject to approval of the members. They shall be required to obtain church membership. Their salary and vacation shall be determined by the Board of Deacons, subject to approval or alterations by the members. (See Article 8, Section 1, Paragraph 7) Their salary shall be paid weekly.

2. CALLING & DEPOSING OF PASTORAL STAFF

It shall be the responsibility of the Deacon Board to appoint three (3) deacons to interview and present applicants to the Deacon Board for recommendation to the congregation. The Deacons shall rely upon the Doctrinal Statement, the needs of the ministry, the Biblical qualifications, and the gifts, ability, and experience of the candidates as the standard for their deliberations.

A pastor shall be called or removed upon the deacon's recommendation and a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of all members present at a meeting designated for that purpose. Notice of such meeting must be given by public announcement from the pulpit on two (2) consecutive Sundays prior to the said meeting. (See Article 11, Section 2)

A minimum of one (1) month notice prior to the effective date shall be given regarding the resigning or deposing of the pastor or staff member.

ARTICLE 7 OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

All of the following officers shall be elected by the members at the Annual Business Meeting held on the second Sunday of January, and shall take office on February 1 the same year. These officers shall be elected for one (1) year unless otherwise stated. Candidates for these offices shall be members over 21 years of age. In case any of these offices are vacated, they shall be filled by appointment of the Board of Deacons until the next Annual Business Meeting. Nominations will be accepted from the floor for all offices except Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer.

1. THE CLERK

The Clerk shall keep a record of all business transacted at the congregational business meetings. Before a business meeting is called to order, he/she shall determine whether or not a quorum is present and inform the moderator. It shall be his/her duty to keep all church records, papers and other matters designated by the church.

2. THE ASSISTANT CLERK

In the absence of the Clerk, the Assistant Clerk shall perform the duties as stated.

3. THE TREASURER

The Treasurer shall keep a full and accurate account of all money received and paid out, and to make payment for bills, accounts and purchases as designated and presented by the trustees or others empowered to make such purchases. A report shall be made at quarterly and annual business meetings of the church. The Treasurer must meet qualifications as deemed by the Trustee and Deacon Board.

4. THE ASSISTANT TREASURER

The Assistant Treasurer shall serve only in the absence of the regular Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer must meet qualifications as deemed by the Trustee and Deacon Board.

5. THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Financial Secretary shall count and record all offerings in cooperation with the Head Usher and Assistant Head Usher. The money, with a copy of the amount received shall be entrusted to the Financial Secretary of the church and a copy of transactions sent to the Treasurer. He/she shall make bank deposits.

6. THE ASSISTANT FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Assistant shall perform the duties as stated for the financial secretary.

7. THE MISSIONARY SECRETARY

The Missionary Secretary shall take care of all missionary correspondence and shall send out all designated funds as received from the treasurer.

8. THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent shall be elected for one (1) year, but not for more than four (4) consecutive years. The Superintendent shall work with the pastor for the advancement of the spiritual life and teaching ministry and administrative efficiency of the Sunday School ministry. It shall be the Superintendent's duty to direct the activities of the Sunday School. The Superintendent shall appoint Departmental Superintendents subject to approval by the Board of Deacons for a (1) year term. The Superintendent shall chair the Christian Education Committee.

9. THE ASSISTANT SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The Assistant Sunday School Superintendent shall be elected for one (1) year, but not more than four (4) consecutive years. The Assistant Superintendent shall work with the pastor and the Superintendent for the advancement of the spiritual life and teaching ministry and administrative efficiency of the Sunday School ministry.

10. THE HEAD USHER

There shall be one (1) usher elected as Head Usher. It shall be the responsibility of the Head Usher and Assistant Head Usher to appoint men to serve as ushers for a term of one (1) year. He shall have charge of the seating of the audience, the ventilation during the services, and shall oversee the collection of tithes and offerings. He shall assist in counting, recording and tabulating such money.

11. THE ASSISTANT HEAD USHER

There shall be one (1) usher elected as Assistant Head Usher. The Assistant Head Usher shall assist the Head Usher in his stated duties.

12. ASSOCIATE HEAD USHER

There shall be two (2) ushers elected as Associate Head Ushers. The Associate Head Ushers shall assist the Head Usher and Assistant Head Usher with duties that are assigned. Their primary duties will be to serve on a rotation basis in the opening and closing of the church for services.

13. MODERATOR

The moderator shall preside over all business meetings.

14. THE ASSISTANT MODERATOR

In the absence of the Moderator, the Assistant shall perform the duties as stated.

ARTICLE 8 BOARDS

1. THE BOARD OF DEACONS

The Board of Deacons shall consist of men who are members and who meet the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:8-13 nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the members of the church for a term of three (3) years. Nominations for Deacon will not be accepted from the floor.

The Board of Deacons shall assist the pastor in the administration of the Lord's Supper; visiting the sick; and any other way possible for the spiritual interest and advancement of the church.

The Board of Deacons, with the pastor, shall be responsible for the administration of church discipline in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17.

The Board of Deacons shall consult with the pastor as to who shall speak from the pulpit of the church and furnish the pulpit with a supply speaker in the absence of the pastor. The Deacon Board shall grant approval of all special speakers.

The Board of Deacons shall call men to become candidates for the position of pastor. (See Article 6, Section 3)

In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Deacons, the Board shall present nominations to the members and the office be filled by an election by the members at a specially called business meeting. This elected deacon shall complete the term of the position being filled.

The Board of Deacons, in consultation with the Trustee Board, considering the needs of the ministry, and the ability of the church, shall submit the amount of salary and length of vacation for the pastor(s) to the church membership for their approval or alteration.

The Board of Deacons shall consider for approval all prospective members and the request for all letters, and, upon approval, shall submit the names of prospective members to the members for their approval. They shall be responsible for maintaining the church membership roll.

The Board of Deacons shall consider for approval all teachers and helpers upon recommendation from the Christian Education Committee.

In case of a vacancy in any office under Article 7, Sections 1 through 16, the Board of Deacons shall fill such office by appointment until the next Annual Business Meeting.

2. THE BOARD OF DEACONESSES

The Board of Deaconesses shall consist of two (2) women who are members and who meet the requirements of Titus 2:3-5, elected by the church members for a term of two (2) years.

It shall be the duty of this Board to furnish and prepare the emblems for the Lord's Supper; help with the Baptismal service; care for the Baptismal robes; counsel; and assist the pastor in any way possible for the spiritual interest and advancement of the church. The returning deaconess shall serve on the nominating committee with the other deacons.

3. THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees shall consist of no more than nine (9) men who are members nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the members of the church for a term of three (3) years.

The duties of the Board of Trustees shall be to perform such activities and duties as civil law so require; to care for and maintain all church property; and authorize purchases of items for church possession and functions.

The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for all valuable papers pertaining to the church and its property, (Titles, Abstracts, etc.) and shall keep these in a safe place.

The Board of Trustees shall conform to the following regulations:

The corporate power of this church shall be vested in the Board of Trustees, who shall have the management and control of the business of the Corporation and shall fix the rate of compensation for all non-pastoral church employees.

The Board of Trustees shall have the custody of the church property but shall not sell, mortgage or make any major alterations to it except by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the church membership present at a meeting and constituting a quorum thereof, called for the purpose of considering a proposed sale, mortgage, or major alteration. At such meetings the Church Clerk, shall note the presence of a quorum from the membership and the number of votes cast for and against said propositions. They shall hold the property of the church under the direction of the pastor, subject to its use by the church body and shall have sole authority concerning its use for other than church purposes. They shall not permit its use for any unworthy purpose nor any purpose that shall interfere with the plans of the pastor.

They shall have charge of the financial affairs of the church and the disbursement of funds. They shall have authority to borrow such sums of money and for such periods of time as they may agree and decide by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the entire board, subject to approval by vote of the members.

A trustee may resign at any time by filing his written resignation with the Secretary of the Board of Trustees. In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Trustees, the Board of Trustees shall present trustee nominees to the church, and the church members shall by vote at a special called business meeting fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

Special meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held whenever called by the Secretary upon direction of the Chairman, or upon the written request of any three (3) trustees. The Secretary shall give sufficient notice of such meeting in person or by mail to enable the trustees so notified to attend such meetings.

A majority of the trustees, convened by a duly called meeting, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The Chairman, and in his absence, a vice-chairman, if one is elected, and in their absence, any trustee present shall call the meeting of the trustees to order, shall act as Chairman of such meeting and in the absence of the Secretary, the presiding officer may appoint any trustee to act as Secretary of the meeting.

ARTICLE 9 STANDING COMMITTEES

1. THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Pastor and the Deacons and Deaconess, whose terms are not currently expiring.

This committee shall meet at least four (4) weeks prior to the annual business meeting and shall choose nominees for the offices of Article 7, Sections 1 through 16. The proposed ballot shall be posted two (2) weeks prior to the Annual Business Meeting.

2. THE BUDGET COMMITTEE

The Budget Committee shall consist of the Treasurer, Chairman of the Trustee Board and Trustee Board appointee, Chairman of the Deacon Board and Deacon Board appointee, and the Pastor.

This committee shall meet at least four (4) weeks prior to the October business meeting and shall submit a proposed budget to the Trustee Board at least two (2) weeks prior to the October Business Meeting. The proposed budget shall be presented to the congregation for approval at the October Business Meeting.

3. THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Christian Education Committee shall consist of the Sunday School Superintendent as chairperson for this committee, Assistant Sunday School Superintendent, Preschool Department Superintendent, Primary Department Superintendent, Junior Department Superintendent, Youth Department Representative, and an Adult Class Representative. This committee shall recommend potential teachers and helpers to the Deacon Board for their approval. They shall approve all curriculums. This committee shall oversee all Sunday School promotions.

ARTICLE 10 BUSINESS MEETINGS

The Annual Business Meeting will be held on the second Sunday of January. The church shall hold three (3) regular business meetings during the remainder of the calendar year. These meetings shall be held on the second Sunday of April, July and October unless otherwise announced.

These Business meetings shall be open to all members, with every member the age of 16 or older having the privilege and duty of casting a vote.

Any Special Business meeting can be called by the pastor; The Board of Deacons; or a signed petition of five (5) officers of the church. The meeting shall be announced publicly at two (2) consecutive Sunday Morning Worship Services, and at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting, and with such business to be transacted as stated.

ARTICLE 11 BY-LAWS

1. The Church shall observe the Lord's Supper once a month, or as often as deemed wise by the Pastor and Deacons.
2. Twenty percent (20%) of the existing membership, ½ of them being over 21 years of age, shall constitute a quorum to transact business at all business meetings.
3. The fiscal year shall follow the calendar year.
4. Elections at the Annual Business Meeting shall be by ballot except where there is no run-off for an elected office. In this case, a verbal vote may be allowed if so moved and approved. Absentee ballots will be available from the nominating committee, upon request, at least two weeks prior to the Annual Business Meeting.
5. The findings and decisions of committees and boards are subject to review and alterations by the governing body at a business meeting.
6. The will of the church on any given matter duly expressed by its vote shall be binding and carried out by all boards, committees, officers, staff, and Sunday School auxiliaries.
7. The function and direction of the Worship Service shall be under the direction of the Pastor.
8. Roberts Rules of Order shall be the standard in deciding questions of Parliamentary practice, in so far as it does not conflict with this constitution.
9. An audit/review of the Treasurer's books shall be conducted at regular intervals as determined by the Board of Trustees.
10. The Northside Baptist Church of Elkhart, Indiana, Inc. shall never join or be joined by any other church group, council or conference as stated in our title. (This has reference to unholy alliances and unequal yokes; but not to united revival efforts with those of like precious faith.)
11. All church officers of the church shall be members of the church.

ARTICLE 12 AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the members. Amendments shall require two readings prior to voting for approval. These readings shall take place during regular or special business meetings. The first reading and the second reading shall not take place within the same meeting. The second reading and the vote for approval can take place within the same meeting. All proposed amendments must be written and a copy delivered to the acting Moderator and the acting Clerk at or before the first reading. In addition, a public announcement of the proposed amendments must be made during the two (2) consecutive

Sundays just prior to voting on the proposed amendments. Such amendments proposed shall be adopted by the vote of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members present constituting a quorum thereof.