

# CONSTITUTION

## PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, to govern this body in an orderly manner; to preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church, and the freedom of action of this body.

### ARTICLE I: Name

This body shall be known as University Baptist Church of Middletown, Ohio.

### ARTICLE II: Purpose

The purpose of this church is to worship God and to follow His teachings.

### ARTICLE III: Statement of Faith

We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. This church subscribes to the Baptist Faith and Message adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention.

### ARTICLE IV: Character

#### *Section 1. Polity*

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it, and is subject to the control of no ecclesiastical body.

#### *Section 2. Affiliation*

This church will cooperate with and support Southern Hills Baptist Association, the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, and the Southern Baptist Convention so far as may be consistent with the principles and teachings of God's Word.

#### *Section 3. Incorporation*

The University Baptist Church shall be incorporated in accordance with the laws of the state of Ohio governing religious bodies, and the handling of property shall be in accordance with such laws.

### ARTICLE V: Church Covenant

Having been led by the Spirit of God to receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized according to the Scriptures, we the members of University Baptist Church, enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We resolve, therefore, in this fellowship, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to serve together in Christian love. We will strive for the spiritual growth of our church, actively participate in its worship and ordinances, uphold its discipline and doctrines, and contribute cheerfully and regularly to support its total ministry.

Seeking to bring every phase of our lives under the Lordship of Christ, we commit our lives and destinies to Him. Accordingly, we covenant to have family and personal devotion, guide our children toward a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and seek constantly the salvation of our family and acquaintances.

Recognizing that our words and actions are a living witness of Jesus Christ, we will be just in our dealings and exemplary in our conduct and speech. Although we are free in Christ, we will refrain from any practice that either harms our bodies, the temples of God's Holy Spirit, or impairs our influence with others.

We further covenant to pray for each other, watch over one another in Christ-like love, and aid each other in times of need. We will cultivate Christian compassion and courtesy in our daily lives, being slow to take offense and always ready for reconciliation.

We promise that when we move from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with a local church where we can continue to carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

## BY-LAWS

### I. Membership

*Section 1. Candidacy:* Membership of this church shall be composed of persons who are approved by vote of the church after presenting themselves in any of the following ways:

- (1) By profession of faith in Christ and baptism;
- (2) By promise of letter from a church of like doctrine;
- (3) By statement that he or she has had believer's baptism.

*Section 2. Termination of Membership:* Membership in this church shall be terminated by:

- (1) death;
- (2) granting of a letter of dismissal to another Baptist Church;
- (3) affiliation with a church of different doctrine;
- (4) dismissal
  1. Members may be dismissed upon recommendation of the pastor and deacons.
  2. A member may be dismissed for inexcusable absence, non-support or unrepentant sinful behavior as defined by the Bible.

*Section 3. Rights:* All members are equal in rank and privilege. Members who are age 16 or older may act and vote in the transactions of the church.

*Section 4. Discipline:* Scriptural discipline may be exercised whenever a member becomes an offense to Christ or the church by reason of unchristian conduct.

(Matt 18:15-17; Gal 6:1-2; James 5:19-20)

### II. Church Officers

The officers of the church shall be as follows:

*Section 1. Pastor:*

- (1) Qualifications:
  - A. The pastor must give evidence of scriptural qualifications and calling. (I Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)
  - B. He must be ordained by a church of like doctrine.

(2) Selection:

- The Pastor Search Team will seek a suitable pastor.
- The recommendation of the Pastor Search Team will constitute a nomination.
- The Pastor Search Team will bring to the church only one name at a time to be considered.
- At least one week's public notice must be given.
- Election will be by secret ballot.
- An affirmative vote of at least three-fourths (75%) of the members present and voting will constitute sufficient warrant to extend a call.
- The pastor's tenure will be indefinite in time.
- A Quorum for the election of a pastor shall be fifty percent of the active church members. The number of Active Church Members shall be estimated as the average number of Adults attending Sunday School over the previous twelve-month period. (Also, See Article 1, Section 3)

(3) Responsibilities:

- A. The pastor shall yield himself to the leadership of the Holy Spirit and lead the church to function as a New Testament church.
- B. He will be an ex-officio member of all church committees.
- C. He will have supervision of the church staff.
- D. He will approve the selection of all speakers for meetings at the church.

(4) Privileges:

- A. The pastor will be entitled to the following paid vacations:
  - (a) two weeks after one year of service
  - (b) three weeks after five years;
  - (c) any additional paid vacations by vote of the church.
- C. Conventions: If economically feasible, the church will provide expenses for the pastor to the Southern Baptist Convention and other denominational meetings.
- D. Revivals: The pastor will be allowed two revival meetings per year not to exceed four weeks. No revival meeting may exceed two weeks, without the special consent of the church.
- E. Honorariums: The church will be responsible for payment of honorariums during revivals, vacation, illness or business of the church.
- F. Retirement: The church shall participate in the Southern Baptist Convention retirement fund, Plan A, and pay the entire amount.
- G. Termination:
  - The pastor shall give the church thirty days notice before leaving.
  - When the church calls for the resignation of the pastor, his services will end immediately. The pastor will be entitled to four weeks severance pay in such case.
  - Before the church calls for resignation of the pastor, one week's public notice must be given at a morning worship service.
  - A Quorum is defined as Fifty percent (50%) of the active church membership. The number of Active Church Members shall be estimated as the average

number of adults attending Sunday School over the previous twelve-month period. (Also see Article 1, Section 3)

- Termination shall be by secret ballot with an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of members present and voting.
- Section 2. Other Staff: The church will call or employ other staff members as needed. A job description shall be written by a personnel committee when the need for staff members is determined.

*Section 3. Deacons:*

- (1) Selection: The church shall consider selection of deacons as deemed necessary.
- (2) Number: The number will be consistent with the needs of the church and qualified candidates.
- (3) Election:
  - A. After examination, they will be nominated by the existing deacon body.
  - B. They will be elected by ballot.
  - C. An affirmative vote of seventy-five (75%) percent of votes cast is necessary for election.
  - D. They shall be elected for an indefinite term.
- (3) Qualifications:
  - A. Deacons shall comply with the standards of Acts 6:1-6 and I Timothy 3:8-13.
  - B. Examination of the candidates shall be the duty of the pastor and active deacons who will make recommendations concerning election.
- (3) Duties: The deacons shall serve with the pastor and staff in performing pastoral ministries which are: first, to consider all matters pertaining to the welfare of the church, its individual members, and to make recommendations to the church; second, to execute instructions given them by the church.
- (4) Termination: Tenure of a deacon shall be terminated by:
  - A. Voluntary resignation
  - B. Vote of the church, upon recommendation of pastor and active deacons, for failure to perform his duties or uphold scriptural qualifications.

*Section 4. Moderator:* The moderator shall be the pastor or in his absence the acting chairman of the deacons.

*Section 5. Trustees:*

- (1) The number of trustees shall be three.
- (2) They shall represent the church in all legal action as directed by the church.
- (3) Signatures of two trustees shall be sufficient to execute business of a legal nature such as mortgages, transfers of deeds or titles, etc.

*Section 6. Clerk:* The clerk shall be elected annually to record and maintain all records as directed by the church.

*Section 7. Treasurer:* The church shall elect annually a treasurer who shall maintain an accurate record of all financial receipts and disbursements. No disbursement shall be made without approval of the finance committee and prior approval of the church. A complete financial report shall be furnished to the church at scheduled business meetings and records of receipts and disbursements shall be available to any member.

*Section 8. Financial Secretary:* The church shall elect annually a financial secretary whose duties shall be:

- (1) Maintain a confidential record of all contributions;
- (2) Prepare and distribute to contributors a quarterly and annual report of all gifts.

*Section 9. Integrated Ministry Planning Team (IMPT):* The IMPT shall be composed of leaders of all organizations, committees and teams. The function of the IMPT shall be to recommend to the church objectives and goals, and coordinate the schedule of ministry activities.

*Section 10. Other Officers:* Other officers shall be elected by the church as deemed necessary to fulfill its ministry.

### III. Church Committees

*Section 1. General:* All committee members shall be recommended by the nominating committee and elected by the church.

*Section 2. Committees of the church shall be:*

- (1) Nominating:
  - A. This committee shall be comprised of at least three members elected annually.
  - B. This committee will recommend directors of church organizations who upon election will become members of this committee.
  - C. This committee shall recommend persons for election by the church for all volunteer positions.
  - D. Mid-year vacancies for volunteer positions may be filled by appointment of the pastor. The appointment expires when the position is filled through the annual Nominating Committee process and the election of a permanent person.
- (2) Finance:
  - A. This committee shall be comprised of at least three people elected annually, The Treasurer shall be an exofficio member.
  - B. Duties of this committee shall be:
    - (a) Prepare and submit to the church an annual budget.
    - (b) Review proposed expenditures monthly and recommend to the treasurer priorities in budgeted items.
    - (c) Unbudgeted Expenditures in excess of \$5,000 will be presented to the church for approval.

- (3) Building and Maintenance:
  - A. This committee shall be comprised of at least three people elected annually.
  - B. This committee assists the church in maintaining all church properties for ready use and recommends policies regarding their use.
  
- (3) Social Service:
  - A. This committee shall be comprised of three people elected annually.
  - B. Duties of this committee shall be to administer policies of social service established by the church.
  
- (3) Pastor Search Team.
  - A. This committee shall be comprised of at least five members but no more than seven active members, and two alternatives, when a pastoral vacancy occurs.
  - B. No staff members shall serve on the Pastor Search Team
  
- (3) Other.
  - A. Other committees may be established as necessary
  - B. All Committees/Teams are to submit a request for next year's budget. Once the budget is approved, the committee is obligated to operate within that budget unless approved to exceed that amount by the Finance Committee acting within their limits or by the vote of the church body.

#### IV. Organizations

*Section 1. General:* All organizations of the church shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church annually and reporting to the church.

*Section 2. Sunday School:* There shall be a Sunday School, divided for all ages and conducted under the direction of the Sunday School director for the study of God's Word.

*Section 3. Church Training:* There shall be Small Group Discipleship, provided for all ages and conducted under the direction of the Small Group Discipleship director. Its purpose shall be to serve as the training organization of the church.

*Section 4. Church Music:* There shall be a church music program under the direction of the music director.

*Section 5. Other.* Other organizations shall be instituted as deemed necessary by the growth of the church.

#### V. Church Meetings

*Section 1. Worship Services:* The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening and Wednesday for worship, instruction and prayer. All services shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor.

*Section 2. Revival services* and any other church meetings, which will be essential to the promotion of the objectives of the church, shall be placed on the church calendar.

*Section 3. Business Meetings:* business meetings shall be held two times annually. The Annual Church Conference shall be held in the Fall, and the Semi-Annual Church Conference shall be held in the Spring.

*Section 4. Special Business Meetings:* Special business meetings may be called to consider matters of significant nature. One week's notice of the subject, date, time and location must be given.

*Section 5. Quorum:* The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting except for stated exceptions.

*Section 6. Parliamentary Rules:*

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised is the authority for parliamentary procedure.

## VI. Amendments

Changes in this constitution and by-laws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided

- (1) Each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting or church service.
- (2) Copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present.
- (3) Amendments to the Constitution require an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds vote of the active church members present and voting. (Also, See Article 1, Section 3).
- (4) Amendments to the By-Laws require an affirmative vote of at least fifty percent of active church members present and voting (Also, See Article 1, Section 3)
- (5) A Quorum for amendments to the constitution shall be fifty percent of the active church members. The number required to meet quorum will be determined by the church clerk prior to the meeting and posted along with the proposed amendment.

## VI. Definitions

1. For election and termination of pastor and for amendments to the constitution and By-Laws. A Quorum is defined as fifty percent of the active church members. The number of Active Church Members shall be estimated as the average number of adults attending Sunday School over the previous twelve-month period.
2. Parliamentary Rules: The official rules for conducting meetings. Roberts Rules of Order is the authority for correct parliamentary procedure for UBC. Where stipulations of the constitution and by-laws differ from Roberts Rules for Order, they supersede Roberts Rules of Order.
3. The disposition of the vote shall be based on the total number of votes cast not the total number of persons present who are eligible to vote.

Revised 7/22/09

Approved by Deacon Body - August 23, 2009

Approved by Church at Annual Business Meeting - October 11, 2009

## Appendix A: MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

This is a Clarification of our position on Marriage and Sexuality. This appendix is incorporated into the by-laws and carries the full force and authority of the by-laws.

"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 the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement 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 the church."

Approved by Church at Semi-Annual Business Meeting - April 28, 2013