



NORTHWEST BAPTIST CHURCH

C o n s t i t u t i o n

1 KINGS 8:60 NIV

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e a r t h m a y k n o w t h a t t h e L o r d i s
G o d a n d t h a t t h e r e i s n o o t h e r .

The Constitution of
Northwest Baptist Church
Peoria, IL.

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Article 1 Name and Purpose

Preamble

We the members of Northwest Baptist Church band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ to adopt and submit to the following Constitution for our governance.

Name

This congregation of believers shall be known as Northwest Baptist Church of Peoria, IL. (NWBC)

Purpose

This church exists by the grace of God and for His glory alone. This will be accomplished by the preaching and teaching of the Word of God and the proclamation of the Gospel. It will be evidenced in the administration of the ordinances of the New Testament, the spiritual care and improvement of its members, consistent Christian living by the membership, and personal evangelism. It will be obvious in the way that they encourage one another, serve one another, care for one another, and love one another. It will be obvious to those outside of the church because of their involvement in charitable and benevolent work both at home and around the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

Article 2 Statement of Faith

Authority

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe that the Statement of Faith accurately represents the teachings of the Bible and therefore is binding upon all members. All literature, whether print or electronic, that is used at NWBC shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith. In all conflicts regarding interpretation of the Statement of Faith, the Board of Elders, on behalf of the NWBC, shall have the final authority.

Biblical Doctrine

- **Scripture** We believe that the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God, divinely inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. (Rom 10:17; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:21; Heb 4:12)
- **The Trinity** We believe that there is one God, creator, and sustainer of all things, who eternally exists in three persons; the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are equal in every divine perfection, and they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption. (Mt 28:19; 1 Pet 1:2; 1 Jn 5:7; Mt 3:16-17; 2 Cor 13:14)
- **God the Father** We believe in God the Father, the first person of the Trinity. He is an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of all people, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. (Rev 4:11; 1 Cor 8:6; Jn 3:16; Is 45:21-22; Ex 15:11; Ps 18:30; Prov 15:3; Ex 15:6; 1 Jn 4:7-16)
- **Jesus Christ** We believe in Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, God's only begotten Son, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, and ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth. (Jn 1:1-14; 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:14-15; Acts 2:22; 1 Cor 15:3-4; Mk

15; Lk 24; Acts 1:9-11; Titus 2:13; 1Jn 1:1-3; 1Jn 5:9-10; Jn 14:10-11; Col 1:15-17; Mt 1:18-25)

- **The Holy Spirit** We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, equal with God the Father and God the Son who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells, guides, instructs, and empowers every believer in Christ, for godly living and service. (Jn 14:16-17; Mt 28:19; Heb 9:14; Jn 14:26; Lk 1:35; Gen 1:1-3; Jn 16:8-11; Jn 3:5-6; Acts 5:30-32; Eph 1:13-14; Mk 1:8; Jn 1:33; Acts 11:16; Lk 24:49; Rom 8:14-16, 27-27; 1Cor 12:12-13)
- **Mankind** We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who trust in Jesus Christ are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. (Gen 1:26-27; Gen 3:6-7; Rom 3:10-23; Rom 5:12; Gen 2:17)
- **Salvation** We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of God's grace; that Christ died, was buried, and rose again for the justification of sinners. We believe that the blood of Christ alone cleanses from sin. We believe that all men are sinners by nature and by choice and are therefore all under condemnation. We believe that those who are regenerated by the Holy Spirit by faith receive Jesus Christ as Savior and are kept by the Father for all eternity. (Eph 2:8-9; Jn 1:12-13; Eph 1:7; Gal 3:26; Rom 3:10; Jn 3:18-19; Rom 4:4-5; 1Cor 15:3-4; Rom 8:38-39; Phil 1:6)
- **The Church** We believe in the universal church, a living body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We also believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work, fellowship, and accountability. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of the furtherance of the Gospel. We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government free from the interference of any hierarchy within or without, and is the sole judge on all matters of membership, policy, government, and discipline. The one and only authority is Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:41-42; Col 1:18; Eph 1:22-23; Eph 4:11; Acts 20:17-28, 35; 1Tim 5:17; 1Pet 5:1-4; Is 62:5; 1Tim 3:1-13; Rev 19:7-9; Eph 5:23; Titus 1:6-9)
- **Ordinances** We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: believers baptism and the Lord's Supper,

neither of which contributes to, is a part of, nor is necessary for salvation. (Mt 28:19-20; Acts 8:26-29; Jn 3:23; 1 Cor 11:23-29; Col 2:12)

- **Satan or the Devil** We believe in the reality and person of Satan, the Devil; he was created by God as an angel but through pride and rebellion became the enemy of God his Creator. He became the unholy god of this age and the ruler of the powers of darkness and is destined to the judgement of an eternal justice in the lake of fire. (Mt 4:1-11; 2Cor 4:4; Rev 20:10; 1Pet 5:8; Is 14:12-15)
- **Creation** We believe in the literal scriptural account of creation that “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.” (Jn 1:3; Col 1:16-17; Gen 1; Gen 2:7)
- **Civil Government** We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society. Government officials are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of God. (Rom 13:1-7)
- **Christian Conduct** We believe that Christians should live for the glory of God and the well-being of others; that their conduct should be blameless before the world and worthy of the Gospel; that they should be faithful stewards of their possessions; and that they should seek to realize for themselves and others the full stature of maturity in Christ. (1Cor 10:31; Rom 12:1-3; Heb 12:1-2; Jn 14:15, 23-24; 1Jn 2:3-6; 1Cor 4:2; 2Cor 9:6-9; Col 1:9-10)
- **The Last Things** We believe in the personal, visible, and imminent return our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. The Church ought to consider the return of Christ as an event which is about to happen, and therefore, though patient, we are to be watchful as we seek to glorify Him through our lives. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgement, the eternal joy of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked. (Mt 16:27; Mk 14:62; Jn 14:3; Acts 1:11; Phil 3:20; 1Thess 4:15; 2Tim 4:1; 1Cor 15; Titus 2:13; 1Cor 4:5; 2Thess 1:7-10; Rev 20:4-6, 11-15)

Marriage and Sexuality

- We believe that the term “marriage” has only one, legitimate meaning, and that is marriage sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman in a single, covenantal union, as delineated by Scripture. (Mt 19:4-6)

- Whenever there is a conflict between the church's position and any new legal standard for marriage, the church's statement of faith, doctrines and biblical positions will govern. (Gen 2:24; Eph 5:22-23; Mk 10:6-9; 1Cor. 7:1-9).
- Marriage ceremonies performed in any facility owned, leased or rented by Northwest Baptist Church of Peoria will be only those ceremonies sanctioned by God, joining one man with one woman as their gender was determined at birth.
- We oppose efforts to alter one's bodily identity (e.g., cross-sex hormone therapy, gender reassignment surgery) to refashion it to conform to one's perceived gender identity.
- We continue to oppose steadfastly all efforts by any governing official or body to validate transgender identity as morally praiseworthy (Is 5:20); and be it further that we oppose all cultural efforts to validate claims to transgender identity. (Ps 139:13-16)
- Our love for the Gospel and urgency for the Great Commission must include declaring the whole counsel of God, proclaiming what Scripture teaches about God's design for us as male and female persons created in His image and for His glory (Mt 28:19–20; Acts 20:27; Rom 11:33-36)
- We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage as defined above. We believe that any other type of sexual activity, identity or expression that lies outside of this definition of marriage, including those that are becoming more accepted in the culture and the courts, are sinful expressions of and contradictory to God's original design and purpose for human sexual activity. (Gen 2:24; Lev 18:1-30; Rom 1: 26-29; 1Cor 5:1; 6:9-10; 1Thess. 4:1-8)

Family Relationships

- We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be leaders in the church. (Gal 3:28; Col 3:18; 1Tim 2:8-15; 3:4-5,12)
- We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a wonderful gift and heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible

for teaching their children spiritual and moral values through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate training and discipline. (Gen 1:26-28; Ex 20:12; Deut 6:4-9; Ps 127:3-5; Mk 10:6-12; Prov 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; 1Cor 7:1-16; Eph 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Col 3:18-21; 1Pet 3:1-7)

Divorce and Remarriage

- We believe that divorce was never intended to be part of God's design and is always costly to the divorcing parties, connected children and society (Mal 2:14-16; Mt 19:3-12)
- Divorce is not an unforgivable sin, but it is a result of sin and hardness of heart by one or both parties. Anyone who loves God and knows of His goodness would never consider divorce without broad input from community and spiritual counsel.
- Divorced, remarried persons or divorced single persons are not prevented from holding positions of service and/or leadership in the church (Mk 10:11-12; Rom 7:1-3; 1Tim 3:2,12; Titus 1:6; 1Cor 7:10-16).

Abortion

- We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion is murder and constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. (Job 3:16; Lk 1:36, Lk 1:44; Ps 51:5; 139:13-16; Is 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer 1:5; 20:15-18;)
- In addition, there is forgiveness for mothers who have had an abortion. The Gospel affirms that they can be washed of its guilt and spared its just punishment through the atoning work of Jesus Christ. In His mercy, God is willing to forgive anyone who has participated, in any manner, of facilitating or performing an abortion. The Bible declares that God's grace is far greater than our sin. (Is 1:18; Mk 3:28b; Rom 4:7)

Euthanasia

- We believe that an act or omission, which, of itself or by intention, facilitates premature death, is assuming a decision that is to be reserved for God.
- We do not believe that discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome is euthanasia. (Ex 20:13; 23:7; Job 14:5; Ps 139:16; Mt 5:21; Acts 17:28)

Love

- We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions.
- We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice.
- Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such actions. (Lev. 19:18; Lk 6:31; Mt 5:44-48; Jn 13:34-35; Rom 12:9-10, 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil 2:2-4; 2Tim 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1Pet 3:8-9).

Racism

- The Bible, our infallible guide in all matters of human relationships, speaks clearly and explicitly against racism, prejudice, and discrimination.
- We consider racism, prejudice, and discrimination to be sins against our fellowman, and therefore sins against God, who has created all humankind in His image.
- NWBC calls to repentance any and all that have sinned against God by participating in racism through personal thought or action, through religious and social structures, or through failure to address the evils of racism. (Acts 10:34-35; Gal 3:28; Col 3:11; James 2:9; 1Jn 2:11; Rev 7:9)

Lawsuits Within the Church

- We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits within the Church.
- We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries or losses from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32).

Protection of Children

- We believe that children are a heritage from the Lord and must be absolutely protected within the church from any form of abuse or molestation.

- The church has zero tolerance for any person, whether a pastor, elder, deacon, paid staff, church ministry leader, volunteer, member, or visitor, who abuses or molests a child. (Ps 127:3-5; Mt 18:6; Mt 19:14; Mk 10:14).
- The Lead Pastor and/or Elder should be informed immediately of any suspected child abuse.

Article 3 **Membership**

Definition

- The membership of this church, referred to in this constitution as the “church” consists of all persons whose names appear on the church membership roll and who are living in harmony with the principles, practices, and doctrines as set forth in the Bible and this constitution.

Membership Requirements

An individual applying for membership must:

- Articulate a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ
- Be a baptized believer.
- Be in agreement with the Statement of Faith of NWBC.
- Pledge his/her faithfulness to the membership responsibilities as set forth in the church covenant.

Admission

Applicants may be received into membership by the church following sharing their testimony with the Elders and their recommendation to the church body at any regular worship service or business meeting of the church. Applicants will be received into membership upon three-fourths affirmative vote of the church.

Discipline of Members

The purpose of church discipline is to effect a return by the member to a Biblical standard of conduct and doctrine in a member who errs (Galatians 6:1), to maintain purity in the local church (1Corinthians 5:6), and to deter sin (1Timothy 5:20).

A member whose conduct or expressed belief has become a reproach to the church and the name of Christ, or has violated the membership covenant, or persists in disturbing the unity and peace of the church, will be dealt with according to Scriptural discipline as set forth in Matthew 18:

1. It is the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of an erring member’s heresy or misconduct to warn and correct the erring member in private, seeking his/her repentance and restoration.

2. If the erring member does not heed this warning, the warning member shall again go to the erring member accompanied by one or two other members as witnesses to warn and correct, seeking repentance and restoration.
3. If the erring member still refuses to heed the warning, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Elders, who, upon careful and prayerful investigation, shall tell it to the church encouraging the congregation to pray for repentance and restoration of the erring member.
4. If the erring member refuses to heed the warnings of the Elders and the church, he/she shall be dismissed from the church pursuant to the Scriptures and treated as an unbeliever. There shall be no appeal of the discipline process or the dismissal to any court. The congregation shall be encouraged to pray for the repentance and restoration of the erring member,

It is clearly understood that the discipline process will continue to conclusion whether the erring member leaves the church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership.

Termination of Membership

The names of members may be dropped from the church roll for the following reasons:

- Death of a member
- At the member's written request for reason sufficient unto himself/herself
- Upon moving away from the area or joining another church for reasons unrelated to church discipline
- If a member habitually absents himself/herself from the stated meetings of the church without valid reason, or if due to relocation he/she ceases to maintain a vital contact with the church, he/she may be excluded from membership. If an excluded member applies for membership, the procedures set forth will again be followed.
- By dismissal as a final step of church discipline.

Article 4 Church Covenant

Responsibilities of Church Members

The responsibilities of church membership are summarized in the church covenant as follows:

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, we do now in the presence of God and this church most solemnly and joyfully enter into the Covenant with one another as one body in Christ. We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit:

1. To walk together in Christian love.
2. To exercise Christian care and watchfulness over one another.
3. To pray with and for one another, sharing our burdens, sorrows, and joys.
4. To be thoughtful and courteous to one another, to be slow to take offense and to be quick to forgive and to seek forgiveness.
5. To guard the spiritual and Scriptural purity, peace, and prosperity of the Church, and to promote its usefulness as a witness to the saving grace of God and Jesus Christ.
6. To assist, through the gifts of the Spirit, in the work of the Church and to promote its usefulness as a witness to the saving grace of God and Christ Jesus.
7. To contribute, as the Lord directs, to the financial support of the Church, the relief of the needy, and the evangelism of all people.
8. To love and pray for all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.
9. To engage regularly in personal Bible reading and prayer, and to establish family devotions where possible.
10. To bring up children who have been entrusted to our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
11. To walk circumspectly in the world, to provide things honestly in the sight of all men, to be faithful in engagements, exemplary in behavior, denying ungodliness and worldly lust.
12. To live my life in a manner worthy of the Gospel in word, deed, and prayer that points people to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
13. To display submission to Jesus Christ as the Chief Shepherd by seeking to properly respond and follow the pastor and elders as they serve as under-shepherds of Jesus.

14. To purpose that when we remove ourselves 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.

These Biblical obligations reflect my commitment as a member of NWBC. Should I fall into a pattern of neglect regarding this covenant, I expect to, and will receive corrective discipline from my fellow members for the sake of restoration and the name of Jesus. (Matthew 18:15-18)

Membership does not involve an expectation to live perfectly. Rather, it is a commitment to worship and minister together in a body of believers where members covenant together to hold each other accountable and to encourage one another to pursue obedience to what Scripture teaches.

Article 5

Qualifications of Church Leaders

All persons who hold any position of leadership (including but not limited to teachers, committee members, church staff, and church workers) must meet and maintain the following spiritual qualifications for leadership:

- Has trusted Jesus Christ as personal Savior.
- Is a member of NWBC (non-members may be invited to teach on a temporary basis).
- Teaches no doctrine contrary to the “Statement of Faith” as put forth in the Constitution of Northwest Baptist Church.
- Provides systematic spiritual, financial, and physical support to NWBC.
- Is known for a dedicated Christian life according to the standards of God’s Word, and will purpose to put any sin, including doubtful conduct and conversation, out of his/her life so that the resulting influence is helpful rather than a hindrance.
- Fulfills such specific Biblical requirements as may apply to the position of responsibility.

Article 6 **Elders and Deacons**

Jesus Christ has graciously given leaders to the church to guide and direct the congregation in carrying out the mission He assigned to them. Jesus defined the leadership structure as a plurality of leaders, in the form of Elders and Deacons. These men who are selected to serve and minister in these roles shall collectively and individually oversee, provide for, and encourage the spiritual life, welfare, and total ministry of the congregation in order to insure proper equipping of the saints.

Elders

As God's servants and stewards, these men shall be persons:

1. Who meet the qualifications as given in Scripture (1Timothy 3:1-15; 5:19-25; 2Timothy 2:24-25; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 6:3-6)
2. Who adhere to the doctrinal basis of this church.
3. Whose soundness in the faith and whose ability to serve has been examined and approved by the church.

Therefore, our church leaders are to be assisted, obeyed, and respected as they carry out their duties. (Hebrews 13:17)

Duties of Elders

- To be devoted to prayer and the study of God's Word and sustain a caring ministry for the flock
- To serve as partners with the Pastor(s) for the church's spiritual growth.
- To pray for the sick and visit the congregation
- To teach and exhort as well as refute those who contradict the Truth.
- To insure that instructors, Bible study leaders and youth leaders are properly qualified.
- To lead by Christ-like example by consistently modeling spiritual character, attitudes, values, and behavior among the congregation.
- To provide and invite the opportunity for frequent on-going contact with the members of the congregation.
- To conduct the affairs of the church in an atmosphere of openness and mutual sensitivity, focusing on nurturing one another.

- To oversee the affairs of the church by being responsible for the employment, terms of employment, direction, and termination of employees with the exception of the Senior Pastor.
- Assisting in the approval of all subordinate organizations of the church.
- Approving all applicants for church membership.
- Maintaining the legal status of the church.
- Conducting the annual and special business meetings of the church.
- Submitting the approved budget to the congregation at the Annual Business Meeting of the church.
- Being responsible for the management of funds necessary to meet the approved budget of the church.
- Approving nominations for the Board of Elders and Board of Deacons for the Annual Business Meeting.
- Communicate to the congregation on a regular basis the activities and concerns of the Elders.
- To perform other constitutional, Scriptural, and general duties of oversight.

Duties of Senior Pastor

- To give himself to prayer and the study of the Word of God.
- To preach and expound the Word.
- Administer the ordinances in accordance with the Word of God.
- Share in the pastoral care of the congregation along with the Elders and Deacons.
- To perform the marriage ceremony at his discretion in accordance with the laws of God and the State.
- To officiate at funerals of members of the church and non-members at his discretion.
- Together with the Elders, maintain church discipline.
- Act as an ex-officio member of all committees and boards.
- Actively participate in all activities of the Elders.

The Senior Pastor shall be free to accept invitations to preach the Word of God to other groups and organizations, provided such engagements do not interfere with the work of the church. Before accepting invitations to speak for other groups which require his absence from the church and its

activities, the Senior Pastor shall consult with the Board of Elders and obtain its blessing.

Distinction Among Elders

The New Testament clearly teaches a plurality of Elders sharing the oversight of the local church. Within this body of men, however, there will be recognized diversity of gifts that should express itself in a uniqueness of function and responsibility. Even though all Elders must be “able to teach” (1Tim 3:2), it is Biblically warranted that a man, or men, by virtue of the call of God and the appropriate gifts of the Spirit, may be publicly set apart as “pastor-teacher” (Eph 4:11). This may carry with it a greater measure of influence and regard among the members of the congregation. This is not inconsistent with the principle of shared leadership. Sameness of office is not synonymous with equality of influence. The pastor-teacher, by virtue of his gifts and responsibilities, is a leader among leaders, though his authority does not extend beyond his singleness among the Elders. All Elders should recognize this as a spirit of mutual submission (Eph 5:21).

Deacons

Deacons are servants and leaders of ministries who support the work of the church and the Elders (Acts 6:1-6; 1Tim 3:8-13). Although Deacons’ primary function is not teaching, they are no less spiritually qualified, honored, or respected. It is essential to recognize that Deacons are equally qualified with Elders in terms of character and spiritual life. The one difference between their qualifications is the Elder’s ability to teach the Word of God. Their contribution to the ministry and their spiritual character are the same. Elders should be given the primary responsibility of teaching the Word, and the best way for that to be accomplished is when Deacons share in the work of the ministry.

The Deacons’ tasks sum up the essence of spiritual greatness. Jesus said: *“Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”* (Matt 20:26-28)

Duties of Deacons

- Assist in the services of worship ushering, greeting, communion preparation, and in the safety/security needs of the church

- To provide administrative and ministry support as needed to the Elders and staff.
- To assist the Elders in the care of the flock, care of widows and orphans, care of the elderly, and overall spiritual nurture of the church membership.
- Be actively involved in the weekly attendance of all services.
- Maintain, repair, and expand the building and grounds of the church as needed.
- Oversight of the maintenance of the church equipment.
- Planning so that the physical church facilities meet the needs and mission of the congregation.
- Insuring that the facility is in good working order and maintained well for the honor and glory of God and the good of His people.
- Oversight of the grounds including the mowing of the grass and removal of snow.
- Making sure that the HVAC units are properly maintained and monitored for all services.
- Making sure that the facility is secure at the end of each activity.

Article 7 **Business Meetings**

Annual Business Meeting

A meeting will be held on the second Sunday of December for the following purposes:

- Discussion and approval of the church budget
- Annual election of deacons
- Ministry reports
- Discussion of any other item of business brought to the floor by members of the church body or officers.

Semi-annual Business Meeting

A meeting will be held on the second Sunday of June for the following purposes:

- review of the annual budget
- discussion of any other item of business brought to the floor by members of the church body or officers

Special Business Meetings

A special business meeting may be called by a simple majority of the Elders or by a petition to the Elders signed by at least 10% of the eligible voting members of the church for the purpose of discussing any item of business deemed significant. When in the case of adoption, repeal, or amendment of the by-laws or constitution, this specially called meeting shall take place within three weeks of the request and shall be announced in at least two of the regularly scheduled worship services prior to the meeting.

Moderator

- The pastor shall serve as the moderator at all church business meetings.
- The pastor may also ask, or be asked to step aside as a moderator for a particular meeting and in that case he may appoint another Elder to serve as the moderator.
- In the temporary absence of the pastor, or if the office of pastor is vacant, the Elder chairman or his designee shall serve as moderator. In the event of a conflict of interest, the Elders may substitute a moderator.

- The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling.
- For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require nonmembers (or children, if circumstances so warrant) to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence.
- If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, he may, in his sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises and treat the person as a trespasser.

Quorum

- A quorum shall consist of 25% of the eligible voting members ages 18 and older.
- A quorum is required to conduct business at all business meetings.

Methods of Voting

All voting shall be done by one of the following two methods

1. Signed Ballot

- election of elders and deacons
- calling of a pastor
- dismissal of a member
- dissolution of the pastoral relationship or eldership

2. Show of Hands

- all matters of business not previously mentioned
- a signed ballot may be requested by any member on any question to come before a business meeting. Such request shall be honored.

Voting at Meetings

- All persons 18 years of age and older whose names appear on the membership roll and who are in good standing shall be considered eligible voting members of this church.

- Absentee voting is not permitted, and any member who is undergoing church discipline at the time of a vote is not permitted to vote.
- A three-fourths majority vote will constitute the requisite number of votes for passage of amendments and motions.

Motions

- Church members, who desire that a certain motion and/or subject to be discussed during an annual, regular, or special business meeting must file a written recommendation with the Board of Elders. This request must be submitted two weeks prior to the set meeting.
- The Board of Elders will then consider the proposal and proceed according to their conscience and what they understand to be in the best interests of the church.
- All other motions will be presented by the Lead Pastor and/or chairman of the Elders (or other moderator if the office of Lead Pastor is vacant) unless the pastor and/or the Elders have delegated authority to another member and/or officer to raise certain motions. No motions will be made from the floor.

Article 8 **Church Officers**

Summary

The “church officers” are designated as the Lead Pastor, members of the Board of Elders, and members of the Board of Deacons. This may also include a Board Secretary, Church Treasurer, and any other officers the church officers deem necessary.

Designation of Corporate Officers

As an accommodation to the legal relationships outside the church, the Lead Pastor shall serve as president of the corporation; the chairman of the Board of Elders shall serve as vice president of the corporation; the church Board secretary shall serve as secretary of the corporation; and the church treasurer shall serve as treasurer of the corporation.

Article 9 Selection and Termination of Elders and Deacons

The Senior Pastor

- When the Senior pastorate of this church becomes vacant, it shall be the duty of the Board of Elders after prayerful consideration to provide for the filling of the pulpit ad interim, and to nominate for Senior Pastor one who possesses the requirements set forth in these articles. In carrying out this process, the Board of Elders shall directly, or through a search committee, communicate to the congregation regularly, and at reasonable intervals. We encourage that all church members who desire to suggest the name of an individual for consideration as Senior Pastor do so in writing to the Board of Elders.
- When the Board of Elders intends to nominate a Senior Pastor they shall notify the membership at least ten business days in advance. The notice shall include the name of the individual being considered for nomination. We encourage all church members desiring to submit questions, comments or suggestions concerning the individual being considered for nomination to do so in writing at least three business days before the meeting of the Board of Elders at which they intend to nominate an individual as Senior Pastor for the church.
- The Board of Elders shall then call a church meeting which shall be announced at least two Sundays in advance from the pulpit, and which shall be announced to each member at least ten business days in advance of said meeting. We encourage all comments be given to the Board of Elders, signed and in writing, at least three business days prior to this meeting for the election. Voting shall be by ballot. This meeting shall, if possible, be presided over by the chairman of the Board of Elders. Only one person eligible to become Senior Pastor shall be considered or voted upon at a meeting. The election and its returns shall be conducted and announced publicly at the election meeting. A three-fourths majority of all votes cast shall be required for an election.
- After the Senior Pastor has been duly elected a written call shall be tendered to him, signed by the Board of Elders. In this written call the Elders shall specify the financial support. A copy of this Constitution shall accompany the letter of call.

The Elders

- The congregation will be informed of the need of additional Elders and given at least two weeks advance notice in order to prayerfully consider names of the man/men recommended by the Board of Elders.
- The Elders may at any time during the year nominate a candidate or candidates to the Eldership and call a special congregational business meeting for their consideration. In no case should a man be nominated without his knowledge and prior consent. Any questions concerning the nominees shall be addressed to the Elders in writing no later than one week prior to the business meeting.
- These candidates will be interviewed by both the Lead Pastor and the Board of Elders. If the candidate(s) show both willingness and spiritual fitness for the office, their names will be brought to the congregation for final confirmation by the membership of NWBC.
- The members shall vote on the final list of nominations at the business meeting by ballot. It is hoped that the vote of the congregation will in such matters always be unanimous, but if unanimity is not realized, no less than three-fourths majority of those members voting shall be required for the election of an Elder.
- Following recognition of an Elder by vote of the congregation, he shall be publicly installed in his office at a regular worship service by the prayer of the whole church and the laying on of hands by the existing Elders.
- The Board of Elders shall elect a chairman, president, treasurer and a secretary from its members and may elect additional officers from the church membership. Two or more offices may be held by the same person. The chairman of the Board of Elders shall preside over the meetings of the Board of Elders and shall insure that the Board serves the congregation in a balanced manner addressing each area of responsibility as outlined in the duties. The term of chairman shall be for one or no more than two consecutive years. Thereafter a break of one year shall occur before assuming chairmanship again.
- Every three years the church shall reconfirm (or express the withdrawal of) its confidence in each of its Elders at its Annual Meeting in the manner designated above. An Elder may, however, resign his office without prejudice if for good and valid reasons he finds he is no longer able to discharge the duties required.

- In recognition that the task of Eldership is significant and is accomplished while continuing care of family and work responsibilities, we understand that individual Elders may need to take leave of some of the responsibilities of Eldership for periods of time. Such sabbatical times will be arranged through mutual consent of the Elders.
- A process of mutual accountability among the Elders safeguards against the continuation in office of an Elder who has rendered himself unqualified for future participation.

The Deacons

- The congregation will be informed of the need of additional Deacons and given at least two weeks advance notice in order to prayerfully consider names of the man/men recommended by the Board of Elders and the Board of Deacons.
- These candidates will be interviewed by the Lead Pastor, the Board of Elders, and the Board of Deacons. If the candidate(s) show both willingness and spiritual fitness for the office, their names will be brought to the congregation for final confirmation by the membership of NWBC.
- The candidate must be affirmed as a deacon by a three-fourths majority vote of members present and qualified to vote. This vote shall be taken by ballot.
- Upon the recommendation of the Board of Elders and the vote of the church, a Special Business Meeting can be called to dismiss a Deacon at any time.

Termination of the Senior Pastor

- The Senior Pastor shall serve until removed by the Lord; by two thirds of all votes cast at a church meeting called for the exclusive purpose of removing the Senior Pastor from the church pulpit; or by resignation. In the event a church meeting is called for the exclusive purpose of removing the Senior Pastor from the pulpit, the Board of Elders shall notify all members of the church at least ten business days in advance of said meeting. We encourage all members desiring to make a comment or suggestion concerning the removal of the Senior Pastor from the pulpit of the church to do so in writing to the Board of Elders at least three business days in advance of said meeting.

- When the Senior Pastor resigns to accept another call, or for reasons of his own choosing, he shall give the church three months' notice in writing of his intention to do so.

Article 10 **Committees**

Committees

The Lead Pastor, the Board of Elders, and/or the Board of Deacons, on behalf of the church, may designate or form any committees and may appoint members and/or chairpersons of said committees as considered by the Board to be in the best interests of the church. These committees may be standing or temporary (special) committees.

Actions of Committees

- Committees, whether standing or special, have no authority to act on behalf of the corporation. Their primary function is to research and recommend.
- Committees shall make available upon request all records and materials to the Board, who shall have the right to overrule any plans or decisions made by the committee.
- Each committee shall have a secretary that keeps minutes of each meeting and shall timely submit the minutes to the Board and church secretary to be filed with church records.
- If deemed appropriate by the Board, the committee secretary, in conjunction with the chairman, shall submit an annual report to the church of the decisions and plans of the committee.

Article 11

Designated Contributions

- From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. If the church receives a designated contribution for these funds or for any other designated purpose, the church will attempt to honor the designation, however, all designated contributions shall not be legally mandatory in nature.
- Contributions are subject to the discretion of the Lead Pastor and the Board of Elders. If a contribution needs to be re-designated, then the contributor would be notified. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Article 1.

Article 12

Property and Assets

- In case of division of the church caused by conflict (from which we pray God by His mercy to preserve us), all property and assets of the church shall belong to those who abide by its Constitution.
- In case of dissolution of the church organization, the property and all assets shall be sold, either through private or public sale. From the proceeds, firstly all current and long term obligations of the church shall be paid. Secondly, all remaining funds shall be directed to such one or more Christian organizations qualified under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, for the benefit of the church's supported missionaries and/or such other Christian endeavors as the congregation shall determine. The church shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the congregation, or when the church has not held an annual meeting for three years, or when less than six members remain.
- Any Sale or other disposition of the main NWBC facility at 5430 N. Big Hollow Road, Peoria, IL. shall be approved by majority vote of voting members of the Congregation. All other real estate transactions shall be approved by majority vote of the joint Board of Elders and Deacons.

Article 13 **Amendments**

The Constitution or Articles of Incorporation of this church may be amended at any business meeting by a two-thirds majority of the members voting, provided that both the text of such an amendment and the basis for its consideration have been mailed to all members at least thirty days in advance of any meeting at which such a proposal will be considered or voted upon, except that no mailing shall be required to those members who have picked up their written notices at NWBC at least thirty days in advance of the meeting.