

CONSTITUTION OF THE CHAPEL

ARTICLE I NAME, INCORPORATION and PURPOSE

NAME: The name of this church shall be The Chapel.

INCORPORATION: Founded on January 15, 1934, this church is incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio.

PURPOSE: The Chapel is to provide and maintain a place of worship, spiritual growth and ministry for its members and attenders, to own and maintain suitable real estate and buildings for a place of worship; to receive, hold, and disburse gifts, bequests and funds arising from other sources; and do all the things necessary to carrying on such purposes. Its mission is to glorify Christ and do what He would do, obeying His Great Command to love and His Great Commission toward the world.

ARTICLE II DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

We accept the Scriptures as our authority in matters of faith and practice, and adopt the following Doctrinal Statement as our interpretation of Bible doctrine.

1. We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired of God and inerrant in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority.
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three in one, co-equal, which is the Trinity.
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of God, conceived of the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary.
4. We believe in the Holy Spirit, one of the three persons of the Trinity, who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He is the life of every believer, and He empowers the preaching and teaching of the gospel.
5. We believe that man was created in the image of God, that he sinned, and thereby incurred not only physical death, but spiritual death, which is separation from God, and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature and are sinners in thought, word, and deed.
6. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood.

Adopted by the membership, January 7, 2009.

7. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, His ascension into heaven and His present life there as High Priest and Advocate for all believers.
8. We believe in that "blessed hope," the personal, premillennial, and imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
9. We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit, and thereby they become children of God, and heirs of eternal life. This is a relationship in which they are eternally secure.
10. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost, and the felicity of the saved, which demand heaven and hell.
11. We believe in the existence of a personal devil, who is working in the world to destroy the souls of men and that he and all his angels and all who receive not Christ as their Saviour will eternally perish in the lake of fire.
12. We believe in the Church, the Body of Christ, whose mission it is to preach the gospel to all the world with its endeavors being supported by the freewill gifts and offerings of the people.
13. We believe that the ordinances of the Church, given by our Lord, are Baptism (by immersion following conversion) and the Lord's Table (communion).

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

Member: Any person may be received into membership upon professing saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Persons presenting themselves for membership in this church shall attend established instruction sessions provided for prospective members. They shall acknowledge their faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior and acceptance of the Covenant of Membership.

Associate Member: Associate memberships are reserved for college students and Christian workers in this area who wish to retain primary membership in their home church but who wish to give an expression of allegiance to The Chapel and to serve here in ministry.

ARTICLE IV COVENANT OF MEMBERSHIP

Having received the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, we commit ourselves as members of The Chapel to the following attitudes and practices:

1. We will be supportive of the doctrinal statement of The Chapel, being careful not to be divisive about any area of disagreement.

Adopted by the membership, January 7, 2009.

2. We will treat other members as brothers and sisters in Christ, fellowshiping with them in Christian love.
3. We will pursue the peace and unity of the Body, refusing to involve ourselves in gossip and slander.
4. We will support the church by giving regularly of our time, spiritual gifts, and finances.
5. We will pray for the ministries of The Chapel on a regular basis.
6. We will seek to develop in our own personal relationship with Christ so that, as we grow in maturity, we may be able to help others spiritually and be examples of righteousness to them.
7. We have read The Chapel's policy paper on church discipline and agree to abide by the procedures it prescribes.

ARTICLE V ORDINANCES

The Lord Jesus Christ gave the church two ordinances: baptism (by immersion following conversion) and communion. In this church these two ordinances shall be conducted in their scriptural order and manner.

ARTICLE VI LEADERSHIP AND BOARDS

Trustees, care deacons/deaconesses, and pastoral staff are the standing boards at The Chapel. These shall be comprised of those "who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" (Acts 6:3; I Tim 3). Pastors, Trustees, and the Chair and Vice Chair of Care Deacons/Deaconesses shall be men, since they serve in an elder role.

SECTION 1: PASTORAL STAFF

SENIOR PASTOR

- A. CALL:** After recommendation by a search committee with approval of the board of trustees, a person will be presented to the membership with a recommendation to call as senior pastor of The Chapel. A two-thirds vote of members voting at a meeting called for this purpose is required.
- B. DUTIES:** The senior pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the congregation and moderator of members' meetings. He shall oversee all church ministries, boards, and all staff. He shall be a voting ex-officio member of all boards and committees of the church.
- C. DISSOLUTION:** The senior pastor shall give a written two-months notice of resignation to the trustees and staff leadership team. Involuntary termination related to inability to fulfill duties of the office, immorality, or infidelity to the Chapel doctrinal statement requires a two-thirds vote of the constitution committee (Article VII, Sec. 2). A two-thirds vote of the board of trustees, and a two-thirds vote of the members voting at a members' meeting called for this purpose shall also be required. The policy papers describe causes and procedures for suspension and succession.

Adopted by the membership, January 7, 2009.

If the senior pastor leaves or is incapacitated, a staff pastor previously designated by the senior pastor with approval of trustees will assume the responsibilities of leading staff and serving on the Trustee Board for the interim period.

The trustees shall select the members of the search committee. This committee must consist of at least two trustees, two deacons/deaconesses, two church members, and one member of the pastoral staff who cannot be a candidate.

PASTORS

- A. CALL:** The Senior Pastor, in accord with budget provisions approved by the Board of Trustees, shall have hiring authority for all pastoral and other church staff. Members of the Pastoral Staff and spouses shall automatically become members at the time they begin their ministry at The Chapel.
- B. DUTIES:** Pastors and staff have duties as assigned by the senior pastor or others that he designates. They shall be responsible for the ministries of the church.
- C. DISSOLUTION:** Resignation or reasons for termination shall be in line with policy papers approved by pastoral staff leadership and trustees.

SECTION 2: TRUSTEES

- A. CALL:** Twelve trustees shall be selected from the membership for three-year terms beginning in January, with four ratified by the church at a members' meeting each year. Trustees shall not serve consecutive terms. Names are presented by the nominating committee to be ratified by the church at a members' meeting each year. Members may suggest names to the nominating committee prior to the members' meeting.
- B. DUTIES:** Trustees are the fiduciary representatives of the church and are responsible for the finances and properties of The Chapel. They shall approve the appointment of the church treasurer. On certain issues, trustee recommendations must be approved by the membership: call or termination of the senior pastor, purchase or sale of real property, new building programs, and the annual audit of the financial records.
- C. OFFICERS:** Trustees shall select a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary each year.

SECTION 3: CARE DEACONS/DEACONESES

- A. CALL:** Care deacons/deaconesses are to be selected from the membership for three-year terms, with approximately one-third selected or ratified by the church at a members' meeting each year. Deacons/deaconesses shall not serve consecutive terms. Names are presented by the nominating committee to be ratified by the church at a members' meeting each year. Members may suggest names to the nominating committee prior to the members' meeting.
- B. DUTIES:** As defined in church policy papers, care deacons/deaconesses are responsible for care of the congregation and administration of the church ordinances of baptism and communion.
- C. OFFICERS:** Deacons/deaconesses shall select a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary each year.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A nominating committee of at least five members shall be appointed by the senior pastor and approved by trustees at least thirty days before the annual election. At the annual election the nominating committee shall submit names for the various offices becoming vacant.

SECTION 2: CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

Members of this committee are the senior pastor, two associate pastors (defined in a policy paper), the chairman and vice chairman of trustees, the chairman and vice-chairman of deacons.

This committee meets at the call of the senior pastor to interpret and/or recommend changes to this constitution. They shall also recommend steps for restoration and discipline of members or staff involved in overt sin as described in policy papers on church discipline and staff standards. This committee will meet prior to the membership removal of any Chapel member.

If a potentially disqualifying theology, or immorality, or an inability to fulfill duties relates to the senior pastor, the chairman of the trustees will call and chair the committee. A member of the committee must abstain from voting if he is the subject of the accusation.

ARTICLE VIII SUBORDINATE PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES

The Pastoral Staff shall have the authority of general oversight of all programs and ministries. These do not act as independent ministries but are part of the church. The primary leaders of these programs and ministries must be members of this church in good standing.

ARTICLE IX MEMBERS' MEETINGS

Only Chapel members and associate members who are age 18 and older shall have the right to vote in any members' meeting.

There must be at least 100 members present at a meeting to constitute a quorum. Notice of the time and purpose of any members' meeting shall be given publicly at least two Sunday mornings previous to the meeting.

The senior pastor or trustees or the constitution committee may call a members' meeting. There shall be a minimum of one members' meeting each year.

Unless otherwise noted in the constitution and policy papers, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern procedures at a members' meeting.

ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION

This constitution may be amended by the members. Any proposed changes shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of the constitution committee and a two-thirds vote of the trustees. A copy of the proposed changes must be made available to the membership 90 days prior to a members' meeting properly called for this purpose. A two-thirds vote of the members voting shall be required for approval. It shall be understood that the Doctrinal Statement (Article II) may not be changed in substance.

ARTICLE XI POLICY PAPERS

The policy papers of The Chapel are the written, specific procedures for ministries which must not contradict this constitution, and must be approved in the following ways:

1. By trustees, when they relate to finances in any way.
2. By pastoral staff leadership when they relate to ministries and staff procedure.
3. By the constitution committee when they relate to discipline or restoration of members or staff.