

Constitution of Main Street Baptist Church

Revised 5/19/2010

Our Name

This church shall be known as the Main Street Baptist Church, Oneonta, New York.

Our Purpose

The purpose of this church is to glorify God by worshiping him alone, by winning people to Christ, by building them to Christlike maturity, and by equipping them for ministry in the church and mission in the world.

Our Core Values

Christ as Lord of all
fervent in prayer
vibrant in worship
proclaiming God's word
growing toward maturity
unity in fellowship
equipping believers to use their gifts
serving the world

Our Affiliation

Main Street Baptist Church is affiliated with the Conservative Baptist Mission Northeast, CBAmerica and the National Association of Evangelicals.

Our Convictions

We believe in one God, Creator and Ruler of all things, who is all-knowing, all-powerful, ever-present, and changeless in his perfection. He is holy, righteous, faithful, merciful, loving, just and forgiving.

Gen. 1-2; Psalm 139:1-12; Mal. 3:6; James 1:17; Isa. 5:16; 6:3; Lam. 3:22-23; 1 Jn. 4:8; Ps. 130:3-4

The one God exists from all eternity in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection. God the Father, an infinite personal Spirit, is a God of holy love, who hears and answers prayer and mercifully saves all who come to him through faith in Christ his Son. Deut. 6:4; Matt.

28:19; 2 Cor. 13:12; John 4:24; Ps. 90:2; Jer. 33:2-3; Matt. 7:7-11; John 3:16;

Rom. 10:9-13.

We believe in Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, miraculously born of a virgin, true God and true man.

We believe in his sinless life and in his miraculous works, demonstrating his power. Jesus died for our sins as an atoning sacrifice, bearing the wrath of God in our place. He was buried and was raised again the third day, the Victor over sin, death and Satan. He was seen by many eyewitnesses, and then ascended into heaven, where he now intercedes for us.

Lk. 1:31-35; Jn. 1:1,14,18; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; Jn. 20:30-31; Rom. 3:25; 1 Pet. 3:18;

1 Cor. 15:3-8; Col. 2:15; Acts 1:3-11; Rom. 8:34.

We believe in the Holy Spirit who indwells all who believe. The Holy Spirit opens sinners' hearts so they repent and confess, "Jesus is Lord;"

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all believers are baptized by one Spirit into one body, Christ's church. The Spirit gifts and empowers Christians for manifold ministries, so that the unity and the diversity of the church are both the work of the one and the same Spirit. The Spirit seals believers for the day of redemption.

Jn. 14:16-17; Rom. 8:9; 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:3-28; Eph. 1:13; 4:30.

We believe the Bible to be the Word of God written, completely and verbally inspired by God, inerrant in the original manuscripts, and of supreme authority in the church and the life of the believer in all matters of faith and conduct. The Scriptures lead us to Christ for salvation.

Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4; 5:17-18; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Pet. 1:21; Lk. 24:27,44; Jn. 6:39,45-47; 10:35.

We believe that God created the universe out of nothing by his powerful word. He created Adam and Eve in the image of God as the pinnacle of his creative work, but man rebelled against his Creator, thus bringing upon himself the just wrath of God. All descendants of Adam are born in sin, with a sinful nature, and need to be saved from sin. God calls all people everywhere to repent and trust in Christ.

Gen. 1:1-2:4; 3:1-19; Heb. 11:3; Ps. 51:5; Eph. 2:3; Rom. 1:18-3:20; 5:12-21; Acts 17:30.

Salvation, the gift of God, is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Faith expresses itself through love, and results in a changed life, righteous living, and proper social concern. All who trust Christ will be kept by his power and in his love forever.

Rom. 1:16-17; Eph. 2:8-10; Gal. 5:6; Tit. 3:5-8; James 2:14-26; Rom. 8:28-39.

We believe in the church, created and ruled by Christ. All who believe are members of the church universal. The local church, the local expression of Christ's body, exists to bring glory to God by worshiping him in spirit and in truth, edifying its membership to maturity and ministry, and preaching Christ to the lost. According to the command of Christ there are two gospel ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the immersion of the believer in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit upon confession of faith. The Lord's Supper, the sharing of bread and cup as symbols of his body and blood, is a worshipful proclamation of Christ's death until he returns for his own. We believe each local church is a self-governing body under the authority of Christ and must be free to serve Christ without external compulsion or interference. We also believe in the interdependence of local churches and the mutual submission of believers to each other in love.

Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27; Jn. 4:24; Eph. 4:11-13; Matt. 28:18-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Acts 5:29; 1 Pet. 2:9; Acts 15:1-35; Eph. 5:21.

We believe in Christ's personal return in power and glory and in his future kingdom. All people will be raised bodily from the grave, the righteous to the resurrection of life, the unrighteous to the resurrection of wrath. Those saved by Christ will live with God eternally; those who rejected Christ will suffer eternal torment, the consequence of their self-chosen way.

Matt. 24:29-31; Rev. 19:11-20:6; Dan. 12:2; John 5:27-29; Rev. 14:9-12; 20:11-15; 21:1-22:6.

Our Covenant

As disciples of Jesus Christ our Lord, we agree to follow him in reverent obedience. We shall love one another, pray for each other, share in one another's joys and support each other in sorrow.

Acknowledging that each has received spiritual gifts from God, we shall seek to serve one another accordingly. We shall strive to be responsible members of this church in meeting together, studying the Scriptures, giving, submitting to the leadership, sharing the good news of Christ with others, and giving and praying for missionaries at home and abroad. We shall make every effort to maintain the unity of the body. We accept responsibility to correct one another, and to submit to correction. Remembering that God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble, we shall do nothing out of ambition or conceit, but

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shall seek always to consider others' needs. In our daily living we shall seek to so yield to the Spirit that his presence will be manifest in our lives.

Bound together in a fellowship of faith with all who confess Jesus Christ as Lord, we shall pray and labor for a spirit of unity among all Christians. Believing that our call to be a church is a call to witness to the world, we commit ourselves to the proclamation of the gospel and to the support of our co-laborers everywhere.

Admitting our weaknesses, we recognize that the Christian life is a life of repentance. We confess our need for the Scriptures, for the Holy Spirit, for the encouragement and help of the church family. We commit our lives, our families and our church to Jesus Christ and to the care and mercy of Almighty God.

Our Membership

1. The membership of this church shall consist of those who (1) trust personally in Christ for salvation, having received him as Lord and Savior, (2) have been baptized by immersion upon profession of faith, and (3) are in agreement with the church's doctrinal convictions and covenant.

Becoming a member:

a. Those seeking membership shall be examined by the Elders to determine whether they are ready for membership and willing to accept the responsibilities. Those the Elders accept shall be received into membership and the Church Clerk shall record their names in the official record.

b. If necessary, the Elders shall instruct the Church Clerk to send for letters of transfer from churches of like faith and practice.

c. On behalf of the church family the Elders shall extend the right hand of fellowship at Sunday morning worship.

2. All members sixteen (16) years of age or older shall have voting rights in decisions made by the church.

3. Termination of membership.

a. By personal request. Any member, upon written request, may have his name removed from the membership roll by action of the Elders.

b. By transfer. A request for a letter of transfer to another church of like faith and practice shall be made to the Board of Elders. Upon their approval, the letter shall be written by the Church Clerk. The Church Clerk shall inform the church of such changes in the membership roll at regular church meetings.

c. By church action. Members who persist in flagrant sin against Christ shall be removed from membership by church action.

(1) Each Christian is responsible to handle matters of personal hurt and offense, following the guidance of Jesus (Matt. 18:15-17). The Elders of the church shall protect the peace and purity

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of the church against anyone who is (a) obstructing the work of the church, (b) disturbing the peace through slander, falsehood or other ungodly means or (c) persisting in sin.

(2) Since the goal is always repentance and restoration, the Elders shall make every effort to bring this about. In cases where repentance and restoration cannot be achieved, the Elders shall present their report to the church at a regular or special meeting. The church shall appeal for repentance. If rebuffed, the church shall expel the person from membership (Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13). A three-quarters majority of members present and voting is required for dismissal.

(3) In response to public repentance, church membership will be restored by the regular procedures for approval of membership.

Our Government

1. The Head of the church

The Head of this body of believers is the Lord Jesus Christ, whose presence among us makes this fellowship a church. He is the Lord who bought us at the cost of his own blood, was raised again and is seated at the right hand of God. He has supremacy in all things and rules in this church through his Word, the Bible.

2. The Board of Elders

a. As the governing body of the church, the Elders are shepherds who lead, protect, and teach the people of God. They take oversight of its life and ministry, "keeping watch over themselves and over the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made them overseers" (Acts 20:28).

b. The Pastor

(1) The Pastor shall subscribe fully to the doctrinal convictions stated in this constitution. The Pastor (teaching elder) shall preach and teach the Scriptures, proclaim the gospel and, earnestly seeking God's leading, with the assistance of the Board of Elders, direct the church's life and ministry. He will be one of the Elders and an *ex officio* member and counselor of all committees and ministry teams.

(2) The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period. He and his wife shall be members of the church, received like all others, by vote of the church.

(3) Other pastoral staff may be called by the recommendation of the Elders and a three-quarters vote of those present and voting. They shall come under the authority of the Senior Pastor for supervision and direction.

(4) The Pastors are to labor to edify and equip God's people toward ministry and maturity according to their spiritual gifts and calling (Eph. 4:11-13).

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(5) The Pastors shall be full voting members of the Board of Elders; they shall not have a vote in budgetary matters or in any matter that is the province of the trustees as defined by the religious corporation law of New York.

(6) Should a member of the pastoral staff feel led to another position, he shall give the church three months notice of his intention to leave. Should the church ask him to leave, they shall likewise give him three months notice. To remove a Pastor, a recommendation shall be presented by the Board of Elders to the church at a special business meeting called for this action. A three-fourths vote of the members present and voting is required.

c. Qualifications of Elders are those indicated in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).

d. Duties of Elders:

(1) They are to set an example of godly living for God's people to follow (1 Peter 5:3; 1 Timothy 4:12; Hebrews 13:7).

(2) Seeking God's leading in all things, they shall provide spiritual direction to the church, oversight of its work, and cast the vision and direction for the future. They shall communicate with the church family what God has done and is doing in and through the church body.

(3) The Elders shall shepherd the church, striving to present everyone perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28). They shall have oversight of the ministries, programs and committees of the church, maintaining unity and reconciling differences between members.

(4) They shall have oversight of the ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, and shall maintain order in the meetings of the church.

(5) The Elders shall be in charge of pulpit supply when the pastor is absent--whether by arranging for guest speakers or by leading the services themselves.

(6) The Elders shall arrange for regular supervision of and communication with the Ministry Teams and Committees as they deem necessary and appropriate.

(7) They shall determine personnel needs and authorize the hiring of and oversight of personnel.

(8) The Elders shall serve as trustees, representing the Main Street Church in its legal responsibilities to the state. Pastoral staff shall not serve as trustees.

(9) The Elders shall consider all applications for church membership and termination of membership.

(10) Where there is question, the Elders will interpret the constitution.

Since the church is a gifted body, with both its unity and its diversity the product of the Holy Spirit's work (1 Cor. 12:1-31), the Elders may delegate responsibilities to appropriate Committees and Ministry Teams as they deem necessary and appropriate. Ministry Teams may be created or dissolved by the Elders for specific ministries as need arises.

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e. Number and term of office. Nine Elders shall be chosen from the church membership. Three shall be elected by the church at each annual meeting for a three year term that begins and ends on the date of an annual meeting. They may serve three consecutive terms, after which they may not succeed themselves without an interval of one year. Vacancies may be filled by the remaining members of the Board. Those so appointed shall serve until the next annual meeting at which time the unexpired term will be filled by a person elected by the church. The Elders shall serve as nominating committee for the Board of Elders. A majority of Elders shall constitute a quorum.

3. The Deacons and Deaconesses

a. Definition: the Deacons and Deaconesses are servants of the church who facilitate the care for physical needs and temporal concerns of the people (Acts 6:1-6). 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Romans 16:1-2 point to both men and women serving as "church servants."

b. Qualifications of Deacons / Deaconesses are those of the New Testament (1 Tim. 3:8-13).

c. Duties of Deacons and Deaconesses:

(1) They shall care for the elderly and needy members of the church with physical needs and temporal concerns. They shall give special attention to those who are sick, aged, infirm, etc.

(2) They shall supervise the distribution of benevolence funds for special needs. They shall keep records of money received and money disbursed for this purpose.

(3) They shall coordinate provision of meals for families in special need, arrange for flowers and decorations for worship services, and arrange for expressions of sympathy in case of bereavement.

(4) They shall assist with other ministries, including baptism and the Lord's Supper, as requested by the Elders.

d. Number and term of office. The Deacons / Deaconesses shall be at least twelve (12) in number. It is encouraged that, where appropriate and possible, husband-wife teams serve in this ministry. They shall be elected by the church for a three year term and may succeed themselves.

4. Other officers. All officers shall be members of the church unless otherwise approved by the Board of Elders. All officers are under the oversight and authority of the Board of Elders.

a. Church Clerk and Assistant

The church clerk shall maintain and preserve official church records including baptisms and the membership register. The clerk shall issue letters as directed by the church or by the elders and keep records of all church business meetings. Upon completion of his tenure, all records shall be stored in the church. The assistant shall perform these duties when he cannot. The Church Clerk and Assistant shall be elected by the church for a one year term.

b. Church Treasurer

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The Church Treasurer shall be appointed by the Board of Elders, in consultation with the Stewardship Committee, to a three-year term of office that begins and ends on the date of an annual meeting. He may succeed himself in office. He shall be a voting member of the Stewardship Committee and work under its supervision.

He shall administer the Church Fund, which shall be maintained as a single account at a bank designated for that purpose by the Board of Elders. He shall keep accurate records of income to the Church Fund from all sources. The Church Treasurer shall transfer monies from the Church Fund to such sub-accounts (for example, Missions, Education Committee, and the Building and Memorial Fund) as may be designated by the Board of Elders and as directed by them. Each sub-account shall be under the supervision of its own treasurer, if there is one, or the Church Treasurer. He shall keep accurate and current records of all disbursements and transfers from the Church Fund. He shall supervise the church payroll. He shall submit to the Stewardship Committee and to the Board of Elders a monthly report of income and disbursements for the Church Fund and for each sub-account under his supervision. At the Annual Meeting he shall submit an annual report for the Church Fund and for each sub-account under his supervision for the fiscal year just ended.

c. Financial secretary

The financial secretary shall be appointed for a three year term of service by the Stewardship Committee and approved by the Board of Elders. He shall, under the oversight of the Stewardship Committee, receive all offerings of the church, keeping records of such, and deposit them in the church bank account. He shall also keep records of personal giving, issuing receipts to individuals which reflect their annual giving.

d. Head Usher

The Head Usher shall be appointed by the Elders for a three year term. He shall provide ushers for church services and be responsible for receiving the offering at all church services. He shall also keep a record of the number of persons attending the services of the church.

5. Committees. Committee and Ministry Team members shall be members of the church unless otherwise approved by the Board of Elders. All Committees and Ministry Teams are under the oversight and authority of the Board of Elders. In each committee a majority of members shall constitute a quorum.

a. Stewardship Committee

(1) "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income . . ." (1 Cor. 16:2). "We will not neglect the house of our God" (Neh. 10:39). The Stewards shall manage (a) the church's property, including buildings, grounds, furnishings, and equipment, overseeing their care, protection, and maintenance, and (b) the church's financial affairs, including administration of the general budget, payment of financial obligations, and supervision of the church's endowment and all other investments. The Stewards may not authorize major non-budgeted expenditures from the General Fund without the approval of the church, but they may authorize emergency repairs. They shall keep the Elders and the church advised as to long-term property management concerns. The Stewards shall prepare an annual budget, present it to the Board of Elders for approval, and submit it to the church for a vote at the Annual Budget Meeting.

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(2) The Stewardship Committee shall consist of eight members, including six elected members, one Elder, and the Church Treasurer. The elected members shall serve three-year terms, two being elected at each Annual Meeting. Elected members of the Committee may serve two consecutive terms, after which they may not succeed themselves without an interval of one year. As a fully participating member of the committee, the Elder shall serve an uninterrupted term of at least two years.

b. The Education Committee

(1) "Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19). The Education Committee shall unify and promote Christian education in the church with the goal of Christian maturity. The Committee shall encourage and enable education ministries in the church. The Committee shall be a Sunday School Committee that oversees, plans, and directs the Sunday School ministry. Under the leadership of the Sunday School Superintendent, the Committee will actively engage in the operation of the Sunday School.

(2) The Sunday School Superintendent will be elected annually for a one year term, but may not serve continuously for more than five years. Teachers in the Sunday School shall be members of the church. If non-members are asked to serve, they must be approved by the Elders.

(3) The Education Committee shall also be responsible for Vacation Bible School, evening nursery and other ministries as deemed appropriate by the Elders. The Christian Service Brigade and Pioneer Girls Committees may turn to the Education Committee for help and guidance as needed. The Education Committee shall appoint a librarian to operate the church's lending library.

(4) The Education Committee shall administer an education budget and shall appoint a treasurer to disburse funds for educational purposes. Annually, the Committee shall present a budget to the Stewards for inclusion in the church budget.

(5) The members of the Education Committee are eight in number--six elected members, the Sunday School Superintendent, and one Elder. The elected members shall serve three year terms, two to be elected at each annual meeting. The elected members may serve two consecutive terms, after which they may not succeed themselves without an interval of one year.

The Christian Service Brigade Committee shall direct the Brigade program. The Committee shall consist of three members, serving three year terms, one to be elected at each annual meeting. They may serve two consecutive terms, after which they may not succeed themselves without an interval of one year.

The Pioneer Girls Committee shall direct the Pioneer Girls program. The Committee shall consist of three members, serving three year terms, one to be elected at each annual meeting. They may serve two consecutive terms, after which they may not succeed themselves without an interval of one year.

c. Missions Committee

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(1) "Make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). The Missions Committee shall develop and administer the home and foreign missions involvement of the church. They shall seek to inform and inspire the church's commitment to world evangelization.

(2) The Missions Committee shall administer a missions budget; the missions treasurer shall disburse funds for mission purposes and keep receipts and accounts of expenditures. Each year the Committee shall present a budget to the Stewards for inclusion in the annual budget.

(3) The committee shall consist of eight members including six elected members, one Elder and the missions treasurer. The elected members shall serve three year terms, two to be elected at each annual meeting. The elected members may serve two consecutive terms, after which they may not succeed themselves without an interval of one year. The treasurer, also a voting member, shall be appointed annually by the Committee and approved by the Elders.

d. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall submit nominees for the officers and committees and other positions as requested by the Elders, to the annual meeting. The committee shall post nominations two Sundays prior to the meeting. The Nominating Committee shall consist of five members, including one Elder and four members elected by the church for a two year term, two to be elected at each annual meeting. The elected members may serve two consecutive terms, after which they may not succeed themselves without an interval of one year.

e. Historical Committee

Throughout the Scriptures, God's people are enriched when they remember what God has done and impoverished if they forget. This committee shall maintain the archives of the church and work together with the Elders in planning special historical remembrances. The Historical Committee shall consist of three members, elected for three year terms, one to be elected at each annual meeting.

f. Auditing Committee

The Auditing Committee shall insure an annual audit of the records of the Treasurer. The Committee shall audit the records of the Financial Secretary, and all records of organizations receiving funds in connection with the ministry of Main Street Baptist Church. This shall include audits of:

- the Benevolence fund
- the Christian Service Brigade fund
- the Education fund
- the Missions fund
- the Main Street Children's Center fund
- the MOPS fund
- the Men's Ministry fund
- the Pioneer Girls fund
- the Women's Ministry fund

The report of the auditors shall be presented first to the Elders and then to the church at the semiannual meeting in October.

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The Auditing Committee shall have three members elected for three year terms, one to be elected at each annual meeting; they may serve two terms, after which they may not succeed themselves without an interval of one year.

g. Pastoral Search Committee

The Pastoral Search Committee shall consist of three appointed Elders, three appointed Deacons or Deaconesses, and three members elected by the church for three year terms, one to be elected at each annual meeting. One of the Elders shall serve as chairman. The Committee shall present candidates for the office of Senior Pastor to the Elders for approval, and then to the church for a vote. Only one candidate at a time shall be presented. A three-quarters (3/4) majority of members present and voting is required to call a Pastor.

6. Ministry Teams. Ministry Teams may be created or dissolved by the Elders for specific ministries as need arises. Each Ministry Team shall choose a coordinator who will be responsible to organize and lead meetings and serve as a liaison to the Board of Elders. Each team shall submit its purpose, strategies and objectives to the Elders annually.

Ministry team members shall be appointed by the Elders. Members of the teams may enlist others, according to their spiritual gifts and burdens for the work, to assist in their ministry. Others may volunteer to work with and under the authority of the appointed team members. Ministry Teams shall project annual costs for inclusion in the church budget. Requests to go beyond the budget shall be presented to the Elders. Representative teams expressive of the purposes of the church include:

a. Worship Team

"God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). The living God meets with his people when they gather together in faith in Christ's name. The Worship Team shall plan worship services, seeking to lead God's people in meaningful, joyous celebration of his presence.

b. Outreach Team

"You will be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). The Outreach Team shall bring together those who have a special burden for those outside Christ. They shall make personal contact with those who visit the church. The Team shall enlist greeters and welcomees and plan ways and means to make newcomers feel comfortable, accepted and wanted. They shall make available tracts and evangelistic literature for distribution, and provide (with the help of the Elders) evangelism training for members. In cooperation with the Elders, they shall plan evangelistic efforts and events to build relationships and present Christ to those outside the church. The Outreach Team shall plan an initial follow-up course for new believers.

c. Hospitality Team

"Practice hospitality" (Rom. 12:13). The Hospitality Team shall provide hospitality arrangements for social events of the church. They will coordinate hospitality for people coming to minister at MSBC and be responsible for the care of the kitchen facilities.

d. Prayer Team

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"Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying" (Ephesians 6:18). We recognize that God's work goes forward only through prayer. The prayer team shall consist of those whose special burden is prayer for fellow believers, for the lost, for those in authority, for missionaries, for the coming of the kingdom. The prayer team shall seek to inspire, educate and provide meaningful opportunities for God's people to pray together. They shall seek to inform members of needs so we can unite together in praying to God for these needs.

e. Women's Ministry Team

"Teach the older women to be reverent . . . then they can train the younger women" (Titus 2:3-4). The Women's Ministry Team shall facilitate women ministering uniquely to the needs of other women. The team shall encourage spiritual maturity, healthy relationships and a life of service in the church and community. They shall supervise the Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) as well as design other opportunities and ministries to meet the needs of women.

f. Men's Ministry Team

"Stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong. Do everything in love" (1 Cor. 16:13-14). The Men's Ministry shall focus on men's needs and shall encourage and inspire men to follow Christ, be godly husbands and fathers, and faithful churchmen. The Team shall plan events and ministries to accomplish these goals.

g. Social Concern Team

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). "As we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially the household of believers" (Gal. 6:10). The Social Concern team shall inform the Elders and the church of social needs in the community. They shall investigate and implement ways we can respond and cooperate with other agencies to meet the needs.

7. Conduct of church business meetings

a. The annual meeting of the church shall be held on the third Sunday of May, at a time to be fixed by the board of elders, for the presentation of annual reports, the annual election of officers, and such other business as may be brought before the meeting.

The semi-annual business meetings shall be held in October on a date and at a time to be fixed by the elders for the presentation of reports and such other business as may be brought before the meeting.

b. The Annual Budget Meeting shall be held in April on a date and at a time to be fixed by the Board of Elders. At this meeting the church budget shall be presented to the membership for discussion and voting.

c. All decisions made at business meetings shall be decided by majority vote of the members present and voting, (unless otherwise specified). A quorum of 36 members is required to conduct business.

d. The Elders shall designate one of their number to serve as Moderator for church meetings. A parliamentarian shall be appointed by the Elders to be present at each church meeting. *Robert's Rules of Order* will serve as a guide for church meetings.

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e. Other business meetings may be called by the Elders. All church meetings, regularly scheduled or specially called, shall be announced to the church at the regular morning worship services on the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting.

8. Vacancies

Vacancies that occur on elected committees shall be filled by the respective committee, with the approval of the Elders. Vacancies that occur in other church offices shall be filled by the Elders. All such appointees shall serve until the date of the following Annual Meeting, at which time any unexpired terms shall be filled by vote of the church.

9. Record keeping

Committees and Ministry Teams shall maintain complete and up-to-date records of their activities, income and expenditures. They shall report their activities and the use of their funds at each Annual Meeting and at other times if so directed by the Elders.

10. Financial policies.

a. The church business year shall begin May 1 and end April 30.

b. Offerings, gifts and bequests.

(1) Gifts to the church shall be deposited into a bank account for use in (a) funding the budget, or designated for (b) projects approved by the Elders or (c) a missions contributions fund for beyond budget gifts to be administered by the Missions Committee.

(2) All offerings, gifts, and bequests shall be deposited into the unified Church Fund. The Church Treasurer shall administer the Church Fund and make disbursements according to the annual budget approved by the church. Monies shall be transferred by the Treasurer to any separate accounts that are administered by their own treasurers according to the amounts approved in the annual budget. Monies designated for approved projects shall likewise be transferred to sub-accounts established for such purposes.

(3) All ministries of the church apart from approved projects shall be supported through the Church Fund and its budget. This requirement does not preclude the establishment of separate funds, with the approval of the Elders, and the appointment of respective treasurers, for the convenience of individual ministries that receive their support through the Church Fund. The Missions and Education Committees shall prepare their own budgets and submit them to the Stewardship Committee for inclusion in the annual budget.

c. Mandatory Indemnification of all Officers of the church in third-party actions:

The church shall indemnify each officer (including each former officer) who was or is made a party to or a witness in or is threatened to be made a party to or a witness in any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding or investigation, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative and whether external or internal to the church (other than judicial action or suit brought by or in the right of the church), by reason of the fact that he is or was an

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authorized representative of the church, against all expenses (including attorney's fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such action, suit or proceeding, or any appeal therein, if such person acted in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church, and with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe such conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding -- whether by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent -- shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner which he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, that such person had reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was lawful.

d. Mandatory Indemnification of all Officers of the church in derivative actions:

The church shall indemnify each officer (including each former officer) who was or is a party to or a witness in or is threatened to be made a party to or a witness in any threatened, pending, or completed judicial action or suit brought by or in the right of the church to procure a judgment in its favor by reason of the fact that he is or was an authorized representative of the church against expenses (including attorney's fees) actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the defense, settlement, or appeal of such action or suit if he acted in good faith, and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the church, except that no indemnification shall be made in respect of any claim, issue or matter as to which such person shall have been adjudged to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of duty to the church unless and only to the extent that the court in which such action or suit was brought shall determine upon application that, despite the adjudication of liability but in view of all the circumstances of the case, such person is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnity for such expenses which the court of common pleas or other court shall deem proper.

e. Determination of exception to the Right of Mandatory Indemnification:

Any indemnification shall be made by the church unless a determination is reasonably and promptly made (1) by the majority vote of the church at a special meeting called for the purpose after two week notification or (2) by independent legal counsel in a written opinion, that such person acted in bad faith and in a manner that such person did not believe to be in the best interest of the church, or that such person believed or had reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful.

f. Mandatory advancement of expenses to Officers:

The church shall pay all expenses (including attorney's fees and costs) incurred by an officer (including a former officer) in defending or appearing as a witness in any action or proceeding upon receipt of an action by such person. Such advances shall be repaid to the church if it is ultimately determined that he is not entitled to indemnification.

No advance shall be made by the church if a determination is reasonably and promptly made (1) by the majority vote of the church at a special meeting called for the purpose after two week notification or (2) by independent legal counsel in a written opinion, that such person acted in bad faith and in a manner that such person did not believe to be in the best interest of the

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church, or with respect to a criminal proceeding, that such person believed or had reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. No advance shall be made in instance where the church or independent legal counsel reasonably determines that such person deliberately breached his duty to the church.

11. Licensure

If, in the judgment of the Elders, a member gives evidence that he is called and gifted for ministry, he shall be presented to the church as a candidate for licensure. The elders shall examine his character, calling, spiritual gifts and doctrinal convictions. They shall present the candidate to the church; licensure shall be granted upon a two-thirds majority of members present and voting. Licensure, conferred for a maximum of three years, may be renewed at the request of the licensee and concurrence of the church.

12. Ordination

If the church recognizes in one of its members the Christian character, calling and spiritual gifts that recommend a believer to ordination to the gospel ministry, it shall convene a council of churches of like doctrine and practice to examine the candidate. Upon completion of the examination, the Elders shall present the candidate to the church for approval. Upon a two-thirds majority of members present and voting, the church shall ordain him to the gospel ministry. Ordination is not restricted to pastoral ministry but includes many forms of full-time vocational service.

Should the candidate ever turn from orthodoxy or by ungodly behavior dishonor the Lord and his calling, he shall be responsible to surrender his ordination to the church.

13. Amendments

This constitution may be amended by two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at a church meeting called for the purpose. Such proposed amendments shall have been presented to the church at regular morning worship services on the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of this meeting.

14. Dissolution

We purpose, in the grace of God, to continue our ministry until the Lord returns in power and glory. Should the church dissolve its organization before then, after meeting all financial responsibilities and payment of all debts and obligations, the assets of the church will be turned over in equal shares to the Conservative Baptists of New York State, CB International and Mission to the Americas, or their successors.

15. Implementation

This document, when adopted by the church, shall become effective immediately. Until such time as all officers are presented to the congregation for election in accordance with the provisions of this constitution (which shall occur no later than six months from the date of its adoption); all currently elected church boards, officers and officials shall continue in their current capacities with their current powers.

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However, in accordance with the laws of the State of New York, the terms of trustees will continue until the annual meetings at which they normally expire. Trustees will be replaced at each subsequent annual meeting by the Elders then elected in such numbers as to effect a transition to the nine member Elder Board provided by this Constitution.

Ministry Positions

Elders	9
Deacons / Deaconesses	(at least) 12
Church Clerk	
Asst. Church Clerk	
Treasurer	
Financial Secretary	
Committees	
Stewardship Committee	8 (one being the Church Treasurer and one an Elder)
Education Committee	8 (one being the SS Superintendent and one an Elder)
Christian Service Brigade Committee	3
Pioneer Girls Committee	3
Missions Committee	8 (one being the Missions Treasurer and one an Elder)
Nominating Committee	5 (one being an Elder)
Historical Committee	3
Auditing Committee	3
Pastoral Search Committee	9 (three Elders, three Deacons / Deaconesses, and three elected by the church)
Ministry Teams (appointed by the Elders)	
Worship Team	(at least) 3
Outreach Team	(at least) 3
Hospitality Team	(at least) 3
Prayer Team	(at least) 3
Women's Ministry Team	
Men's Ministry Team	
Social Concern Team	(at least) 3