

# Immanuel Bible Church of Saginaw

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## Constitution

### **Preamble**

The Bible is our source of truth and is our authority on faith, doctrine and practice. Therefore, we submit ourselves to the study of the Word of God and to the leading and the filling of the Holy Spirit in understanding and applying God's Word. Our constitution provides simple clarity to our structure as an organization and is designed as an instrument to regulate and govern the affairs and business of this New Testament Church. We believe that the principles of our constitution are drawn from God's Word, therefore, we willingly and gladly submit ourselves to its principles of government.

### **Article I** **Name**

The name of this organization shall be *Immanuel Bible Church of Saginaw, Michigan*. It is incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan as a non-profit organization.

### **Article II** **Mission, Vision, Values, Priorities**

#### **Section 1 - Mission Statement**

Our purpose and passion is to bring God pleasure by believing His Word and doing His will in the power that He provides for the praise of His glory, on earth and in heaven.

#### **Section 2 - Vision Statement**

We are disciples of Jesus Christ, growing in knowledge, faith, grace and obedience, who are committed to making disciples, who go into all the world and make disciples, for the advancement of the glory of God and for the joy of all people.

#### **Section 3 - Core Values**

The *sovereignty* of God. (Romans 11:33-36; Ephesians 1:3-14; 2:4-10)

The *supremacy* of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 2:9-11; Colossians 1:15-20; 1 Peter 1:18-21)

The *sufficiency* of the Holy Spirit. (John 14:25; 16:5-15; Acts 1:8; Romans 8; Galatians 3)

The *standard* of the Holy Scriptures. (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21)  
The *sanctity* of God's creation and the value of every person made in God's image. (Matthew 22:38-40; John 3:16; Galatians 5:14)  
The *salvation* and *sanctification* of mankind by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. (Romans 3; Galatians 3; Ephesians 2)  
The *sacrifice* and *service* of God's people to advance His fame in word and deed. (Acts 20:24; Philippians 1:20-26; 1 Peter 4:19)

#### **Section 4 - Corporate Priorities**

Preaching / Teaching / Christian Education (2 Timothy 4:2)  
Bible Study (2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17)  
Prayer (Acts 2:42-47; Colossians 4:2; 1 Timothy 2:1; 1 Peter 4:7)  
Evangelism / Missions (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8)  
Discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2, 15)  
Fellowship / Edification (Acts 2:42; Ephesians 4:12, 29)  
Corporate Worship / Praise (Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 5:19; 1 Timothy 2)  
Spiritual Growth (Ephesians 4:11-13; 2 Peter 3:18)  
Caring for Members (Romans 12:13; Galatians 6:10; 1 Timothy 5; James 1:27)  
Celebrating the Ordinances (Acts 2:42-47; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32)  
Good Works (Ephesians 2:10; Titus 3:8; Hebrews 10:24-25)  
Holiness / Purity (2 Timothy 2:22; 1 Peter 1:15; 1 John 3:3; Revelation 21:2)  
Walking by faith in step with the Holy Spirit (Galatians 2:20; 5:16; Ephesians 5:18)

### **Article III** **Statement of Faith**

#### **1. The Word of God**

We believe the Scripture, both the Old and the New Testament, to be authored by God, written by chosen men, and to be the verbally (*word-by-word*) inspired (*God breathed*) and infallible Word of God.<sup>(1)</sup> The Bible is our sole and final authority for belief and practice.<sup>(2)</sup> The Bible is to be studied diligently,<sup>(3)</sup> preached accurately<sup>(4)</sup> and obeyed faithfully.<sup>(5)</sup> The Word of God was written so that we might know God and respond in faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>(6)</sup> God authored His Word and is active in the preservation of His Word.<sup>(7)</sup> The interpretation of Scripture is to be found by diligently applying the grammatical-historical method of interpretation, comparing scripture with scripture, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.<sup>(8)</sup> We believe the 66 books of the Bible are to be accepted as canonical.

#### **2. The Doctrine of God**

We believe in one living and true God<sup>(1)</sup> Who is self-existent,<sup>(2)</sup> eternal,<sup>(3)</sup> unchanging,<sup>(4)</sup> infinite,<sup>(5)</sup> omnipresent,<sup>(6)</sup> omnipotent,<sup>(7)</sup> omniscient,<sup>(8)</sup> the creator and sustainer of all things,<sup>(9)</sup> and eternally exists in three persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one in essence, yet distinct in person and function - a Trinity in unity.<sup>(10)</sup> These three are one God,<sup>(11)</sup> having the same attributes, perfections and commanding the same worship, confidence, and obedience.<sup>(12)</sup>

God has revealed Himself to mankind through creation,<sup>(13)</sup> history,<sup>(14)</sup> conscience,<sup>(15)</sup> the Holy

Scriptures,<sup>(16)</sup> and God has perfectly revealed Himself to mankind through the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>(17)</sup>

### **3. God, the Father**

We believe that God, the Father, is the First Person of the Trinity and the source of all that God is and does.<sup>(1)</sup> He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass, and He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events.<sup>(2)</sup> He is in no way the author or approver of sin.<sup>(3)</sup> God has graciously chosen from all eternity those whom He would have as His own;<sup>(4)</sup> He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ, and He relates to His own as Father.<sup>(5)</sup>

### **4. God, the Son**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Second Person of the Trinity. He was with God in the beginning and He is God.<sup>(1)</sup> Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lives forever as fully God<sup>(2)</sup> and fully man.<sup>(3)</sup>

Jesus lived a sinless life.<sup>(4)</sup> He died on the cross for our sins as a voluntary substitutionary sacrifice.<sup>(5)</sup> He was buried.<sup>(6)</sup> He arose bodily from the dead,<sup>(7)</sup> was seen by many reliable witnesses,<sup>(8)</sup> ascended into Heaven,<sup>(9)</sup> and is presently ministering at the right hand of the Father as our faithful High Priest and Advocate.<sup>(10)</sup> His death, shed blood, and resurrection have provided for our salvation.<sup>(11)</sup> He is the one and only Savior and mediator between God and man.<sup>(12)</sup>

Jesus Christ will return personally, bodily, and visibly, first to receive believers unto Himself<sup>(13)</sup> and then to establish His kingdom on earth.<sup>(14)</sup> Jesus will ultimately judge unbelievers and Satan, and reign forever as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.<sup>(15)</sup>

### **5. God, the Holy Spirit**

We believe the Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity, proceeding from the Father and the Son and equal in deity.<sup>(1)</sup> He is God.<sup>(2)</sup> The primary ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify and testify about the Son.<sup>(3)</sup> The Holy Spirit was active in creation,<sup>(4)</sup> the inspiration of Scripture,<sup>(5)</sup> the incarnation of Jesus Christ,<sup>(6)</sup> and the regeneration of those who are saved.<sup>(7)</sup>

The Holy Spirit was sent from the Father after Christ was glorified<sup>(8)</sup> to indwell,<sup>(9)</sup> baptize,<sup>(10)</sup> and seal<sup>(11)</sup> believers. His ministry to the believers involves guidance, instruction, giftedness, and power, in order for the believer to witness of Jesus and live a holy and godly life.<sup>(12)</sup>

The Holy Spirit is the source and power of all acceptable worship and service.<sup>(13)</sup> The Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to each Christian for building up the body of Christ.<sup>(14)</sup> His present ministry also includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness through Christ, and of judgment to come.<sup>(15)</sup>

### **6. The Doctrine of Angels**

We believe angels were created by God prior to the creation of the universe to be ministering servants of God.<sup>(1)</sup> They are spiritual, immortal, personal beings.<sup>(2)</sup> The number of angels is

unknown, although they are described as numerous.<sup>(3)</sup> They are to be involved in the worship and service of God and are not to be worshipped themselves.<sup>(4)</sup> They are limited by space and time.<sup>(5)</sup> They were originally created good, yet some (*one third*) joined Lucifer (*a created angel of high position*) in his rebellion against God and were cast out of heaven.

The angels in heaven minister to God in continual praise, worship, and service.<sup>(6)</sup> They ministered to Christ and they minister to believers.<sup>(7)</sup> They are engaged in warfare against the spiritual forces of evil. They will attend Christ's second-coming.<sup>(8)</sup> They will assist in the judgment of the earth, Satan (*Lucifer*), and demons (*fallen angels*).<sup>(9)</sup>

## **7. The Doctrine of Satan**

Satan (*Lucifer*) led a rebellion against God in heaven and was cast out with one-third of the angels who followed him.<sup>(1)</sup> Earth is now the realm of Satan's operations. He continues to resist the work of God by tempting men to sin,<sup>(2)</sup> blinding the spiritual eyes of men,<sup>(3)</sup> influencing men for his purposes,<sup>(4)</sup> hindering God's servants,<sup>(5)</sup> causing affliction and suffering,<sup>(6)</sup> fighting good angels,<sup>(7)</sup> performing counterfeit miraculous signs,<sup>(8)</sup> and spreading false teachings.<sup>(9)</sup>

Satan's judgment was sealed at the cross and the resurrection.<sup>(10)</sup> Satan and the fallen angels will continue to resist the work of God until they are cast into the lake of fire at the end of the age.<sup>(11)</sup>

## **8. The Doctrine of Man**

We believe man was created by God, in the image and likeness of God, on the sixth day of creation.<sup>(1)</sup> The first woman (Eve) was formed by God from the rib of the first man (Adam) and was brought to him to be his wife.<sup>(2)</sup> God created man in His own image, male and female he created them – equal in personhood and importance, differing in role and authority.<sup>(3)</sup> Marriage originated and was instituted by God Himself and is a holy union. In the very beginning, God ordained and established marriage (between a male and a female) to reflect the relationship within the Godhead, the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Church, and also for the welfare, happiness and perpetuation of mankind. God has designed the man and the woman for one another – their natures being complementary, and brought into oneness in marriage.

Mankind was created to glorify and enjoy fellowship with God.<sup>(4)</sup> Through the sin of disobedience to the revealed will of God, man lost his innocence, incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death, became subject to the wrath of God, and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing what is acceptable to God apart from Divine grace.<sup>(5)</sup> All men are in Adam and the consequences of that sin have been imputed to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the one unique exception.<sup>(6)</sup> All men are sinners by divine declaration, by nature, and by choice. Man, therefore, in his natural state is condemned to an eternal death.<sup>(7)</sup> Only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation and spiritual life be obtained.<sup>(8)</sup>

## **9. The Doctrine of Sin**

We believe sin is the willful opposition of the fallen heart toward God, and it is revealed in mankind's disobedience to God's directives, offending God's purity, and falling short of God's perfection.<sup>(1)</sup> Sin came into existence through the rebellion of Lucifer and those angels who followed him. Sin entered the human race through Adam's sin. Adam's sin is imputed to all

mankind and is, therefore, universally present in every human conceived.<sup>(2)</sup> Sin results in condemnation<sup>(3)</sup> and physical and spiritual death.<sup>(4)</sup> In this sinful condition, there is nothing man can do to merit God's favor.<sup>(5)</sup> He is totally dependent upon God's grace. Those who die in their sin will spend eternity separated from God in Hell, a place of everlasting punishment.<sup>(6)</sup>

## **10. The Doctrine of Salvation**

We believe that, before the creation of the world, Jesus Christ submitted Himself to be the perfect sacrifice and payment for the sins of all mankind and that God chose to extend salvation to mankind through Jesus Christ.<sup>(1)</sup> We believe that God alone saves those He calls by His grace and that all who are saved glorify and praise God alone for their salvation.<sup>(2)</sup> Salvation is by grace through faith, because of Jesus Christ.<sup>(3)</sup>

We believe that Jesus' death on the cross was sufficient payment for the sins of the world and that there is a divine invitation for all to come to Jesus and receive salvation.<sup>(4)</sup>

Those who come in faith to Jesus are saved and are placed in God's spiritual building, the Church,<sup>(5)</sup> which is the body of Christ.<sup>(6)</sup> Those who come to Jesus are spiritually reborn into God's family and are, therefore, eternally His.<sup>(7)</sup> Authentic believers are sealed by the Holy Spirit,<sup>(8)</sup> kept by the power of God, and secure in Christ forever.<sup>(9)</sup> The believer's faith is in Jesus Christ alone, and it is the high privilege of the believer to have a present and continuing assurance that he possesses salvation.<sup>(10)</sup>

We believe that Jesus Christ calls all those who are reborn into his family to communicate God's grace to others by verbal witness and by godly living.<sup>(11)</sup>

## **11. The Doctrine of the Church**

We believe that all people who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately baptized by the Holy Spirit into one united, universal and spiritual body - the Church.<sup>(1)</sup> Christ is the Head of the Church,<sup>(2)</sup> and the Church is His espoused bride.<sup>(3)</sup> The Church began on the day of Pentecost and will be completed at the rapture.<sup>(4)</sup> The Church is a spiritual organism made up of born again believers in this present age.<sup>(5)</sup>

The Church universal is made visible by the establishment and continuity of local churches. The members of this one united spiritual body of Christ are commanded to associate themselves together in local assemblies to encourage and motivate one another to love and good deeds.<sup>(6)</sup> The local church is an organized body of believers where the gospel is preached, believers are encouraged and built up, where the ordinances are observed regularly, and where church government is functioning biblically.<sup>(7)</sup>

## **12. The Doctrine of Ordinances**

The ordinances of the Church are water baptism and the Lord's Supper.<sup>(1)</sup> Christian baptism is the testimony of a believer expressing his faith in Jesus Christ and his union with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.<sup>(2)</sup> Therefore, we practice baptism of believers by immersion.

The Lord's Supper is the commemoration, celebration, and proclamation of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection until He returns and should always be preceded by vigorous self examination.<sup>(3)</sup>

### **13. The Doctrine of the Last Things**

We believe in the unending life of the saved with the Lord and the unending punishment of the unsaved apart from the Lord.<sup>(1)</sup> We believe Jesus Christ is coming again to reward the righteous and punish the unbelieving and unrepentant. Christ's return for the Church motivates holy and godly living in the present age.<sup>(2)</sup> Jesus' return will be unexpected<sup>(3)</sup> and sudden,<sup>(4)</sup> and the Church is to live in expectation of that imminent return.<sup>(5)</sup>

Note: We acknowledge that believers differ over the chronology of the end times and have purposed not to make this a test of fellowship.

#### **Key Scripture References for Statement of Faith:**

##### 1 - The Word of God

1. 2 Timothy 3:15-16; 2 Peter 1:20-21
2. 1 Timothy 4:16
3. 2 Timothy 2:15
4. 2 Timothy 4:2
5. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
6. Luke 24:27; John 5:39-40; 20:31; Romans 10:19; 2 Timothy 3:15
7. Matthew 5:18
8. John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 1 Peter 1:12; 1 John 2:20; Psalms 119:18

##### 2 - The Doctrine of God

1. Joshua 3:10; 1 Samuel 17:26; Psalms 84:2; Matthew 16:16; Revelation 7:2
2. Exodus 3:14; John 5:26
3. Psalms 90:2; John 17:5, 24
4. Psalms 102: 26-27; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17
5. John 4:24; Acts 7:48-50
6. 1 Kings 8:27; Psalms 113:4-6; Isaiah 66:1; Acts 17:24-28
7. Job 42:2; Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 19:26
8. Psalms 139:10; Jeremiah 23:23-25; Matthew 11:21
9. Genesis 1 - 2:2; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16-17
10. Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29; Genesis 1:26; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19-20; Mark 1:10-11; John 10:30; 1 Corinthians 8:6
11. John 10:30
12. 2 Corinthians 13:14
13. Psalms 19:1-4; Romans 1:20
14. Daniel 2:20-21; 1 Corinthians 10:6
15. Romans 2:14-15
16. John 20:30; 21:25
17. John 1:1-18; 17:6; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:1-4

##### 3 - God, the Father

1. John 14:28
2. Isaiah 44:24-27; Ephesians 1:9-11
3. John 8:34-44
4. Ephesians 1:3-6; 1 Peter 1:1-2
5. John 1:12; 6:37-40; Hebrews 12:5-9

#### 4 - God, the Son

1. John 1:1-2; 3:16
2. John 8:58, 9:38
3. John 4:6-14; 5:18; 11:35
4. Hebrew 4:15
5. Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3
6. John 19:38-42; 1 Corinthians 15:4
7. John 20:20; 1 Corinthians 15
8. 1 Corinthians 15:5-8
9. Acts 1:9
10. Acts 7:55-56; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 2:1-2
11. 1 Peter 1:19; 2:24; 3:18
12. John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:3-6
13. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
14. Matthew 25:31-32; Revelation 20:4
15. Revelation 19:11-21

#### 5 - God, the Holy Spirit

1. John 14:11-21
2. Acts 5:3-4
3. John 16:14; John 15:26
4. Genesis 1:2
5. 2 Peter 1:21
6. Luke 1:35
7. John 3:1-8; Titus 3:5
8. John 7:39
9. John 14:16; 16:7; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19
10. 1 Corinthians 12:13
11. Ephesians 1:13
12. John 14:16, 25; 16:13; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:16, 22; 2 Peter 1:3
13. John 4:23-24; 15:26-27
14. Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; 1 Peter 4:10
15. John 14:16-18; 16:7-15; Ephesians 4:30; 2 Thessalonians 2:7; 1 John 2:20

#### 6 - Angels

1. Job 38:4-7; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:14
2. Psalms 8:5; Luke 20:35-36; Hebrews 1:7; 2:7
3. Hebrews 12:22
4. Psalms 148:2-5; Revelation 19:10
5. Daniel 10:10-14
6. Revelation 4:8
7. Matthew 4; Hebrews 1:14
8. Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 2:13, 20; 4:11; 28:2-7; 25:31; Luke 1:11-20, 26-28;  
Acts 1:10; Hebrew 1:6, 14; Revelation 12:7; 20:1-3
9. Revelation 19

#### 7 - Satan

1. Isaiah 14; Ezekiel 28, Revelation 12
2. 1 Corinthians 7:5
3. 2 Corinthians 4:4; 11:3; Revelation 12:9
4. John 13:2

5. 1 Thessalonians 2:18
6. Acts 10:38; 2 Corinthians 12:7
7. Daniel 10:13
8. Revelation 16:14
9. 1 Timothy 4:1
10. Matthew 25:41; John 12:31; 19:30; Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14-15;  
Revelation 20:10
11. Matthew 25:41

#### 8 - Man

1. Genesis 1:26
2. Genesis 2:22
3. Genesis 1:27
4. Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; Isaiah 43:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:23
5. Genesis 3; Romans 3:10-24
6. Romans 4:12-21
7. John 3:16-21; Romans 8:1
8. John 3:3-16

#### 9 - Sin

1. Romans 3:23; 8:7; 1 John 3:4
2. Genesis 3; Romans 3:23; 5:12-19; Hebrews 7:9-10
3. John 3:18; Romans 8:1
4. Romans 5:12; 6:23; 8:10
5. Romans 8:8
6. Matthew 25:46

#### 10 - Salvation

1. Romans 8:28-39; Ephesians 1:1-14; 2 Timothy 1:9-10; 1 Peter 1:1-2; 20-21; 2:4-9
2. 1 Peter 2:9
3. Ephesians 2:1-10; Titus 3:5
4. John 3:16; 6:35-40; Romans 10:13; 1 Timothy 2:6; Hebrews 2:9; 1 John 2:2;  
Revelation 22:17
5. 1 Peter 2:1-10
6. 1 Corinthians 12:12-25; Romans 12:4
7. John 3:1-21; 10:1-18; 1 Peter 1:1-9
8. Ephesians 1:13
9. John 5:24; 6:37-50; Romans 8:38-39; 1 Peter 5:5
10. John 10:28-30; 1 John 5:13
11. Matthew 28:16-19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8; Romans 12-15;  
Ephesians 2:10; 4-6; 1 Peter 2:11-12

#### 11 - Church

1. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13
2. Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18
3. 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:22-32; Revelation 19:7-8
4. 1 Corinthians 15:15-47; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
5. Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:11-22; 3:1-6
6. Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 11:18-20;  
Hebrews 10:24-25
7. Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2; Hebrews 10:24-25; Romans 1:12



## 12 - Ordinances

1. Matthew 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:23-26
2. Romans 6:1-11; Acts 8:36-39; Mark 10:33-45; 1 Peter 3:18-22
3. 1 Corinthians 11:23-34

## 13 - Last Things

1. John 3:16-18, 26; Luke 16:23-28
2. Matthew 24; 25; Mark 13; Luke 21; John 14:1-3; 2 Peter 3:10-15
3. Matthew 24:32-51; 25:1-13
4. Matthew 24:26-28
5. Corinthians 15:51-57; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-17; James 5:8-9; Philippians 3:20; 2 Peter 3:10-15; Revelation 22:12

## Article IV

### **Membership**

Church Members / Disciples (*saints, believers, disciples, Christians*)

#### **Section 1 - Role / Responsibility**

Active members are Spirit-reborn disciples of Jesus Christ who serve Him and His Church by exercising their spiritual gifts and doing the work of the ministry <sup>(1)</sup>. Spiritual rebirth resulting in spiritual life is essential for membership, as spiritually qualified leadership will be recognized from membership <sup>(2)</sup>.

#### **Section 2 - Qualifications**

- A. Spirit rebirth resulting in spiritual life <sup>(3)</sup>.
- B. Participation in the fellowship of the church giving evidence of spiritual life <sup>(4)</sup>. (Non-members are excluded from primary Bible teaching ministries in the church.)
- C. Submission to and participation in water baptism by immersion to be a sign of salvation and first step of obedience in spiritual life.
- D. Agreement with our Mission, Vision, Values, Priorities, Doctrinal Statement and Constitution.
- E. Submission to the principles derived from God's Word and the policies and provisions of this constitution.

#### **Section 3 - Recognition Procedure**

- A. Consistent attendance, involvement and encouragement to the body <sup>(6)</sup>.
- B. Expressed personal request for membership; a desire to join evidenced by a completed membership application <sup>(7)</sup>.
- C. Complete a church membership class taught by an elder (or an appointed leader/teacher chosen by the elders) to cover: <sup>(8)</sup>
  1. Doctrinal Statement.
  2. Constitution.
  3. Personal salvation testimony, spiritual growth, and spiritual gifts.
- D. Elders' unanimous agreement regarding recommending candidate for membership following the successful completion of the above. Candidates approved by the elders are recommended to the active membership for final approval and recognition.

- E. The names of recommended candidates are to be published and presented to the active membership for review two weeks prior to approving and granting membership to candidates.
- F. If a member has a question about a candidate, they should contact an elder privately to address the concern. If necessary, follow up meeting(s) with the candidate will be scheduled to address concerns raised by the active member's review. If concerns raised are successfully addressed, or no valid objection is found, the candidate process continues.
- G. If candidates are in agreement with our Mission, Vision, Values, Priorities, Doctrinal Statement and Constitution, and are in fellowship with the active members of the church, membership is publicly granted to the approved candidates by a simple majority vote of affirmation. This vote may take place at a regular or special business meeting scheduled according to the provisions of this Constitution.

#### **Section 4 - Fellowship / Discipline**

The spiritual life of the church will be determined by the spiritual life of the active members. Walking in agreement with God and with one another is vital for spiritual life and corporate co-operation<sup>(9)</sup>. At times discipline will be necessary for spiritual restoration, continued fellowship, and the purity and progress of the Church<sup>(10)</sup>. Disciplinary action should follow the Biblical principles laid out in Matthew 18, Galatians 6:1-5, and 1 Timothy 5:19-20 for those in leadership/oversight positions. Discipline shall be for doctrinal deviation (disagreement with our Statement of Faith), direct disobedience to the Word of God, refusing to comply with the terms of this Constitution and for that which causes discord or division. The Elders shall act as the discipline committee for the church; and make recommendations to the active membership as it relates to matters of discipline. Discipline shall be carried out with the attitude and intention of restoration to fellowship. Discipline that does not lead to repentance and restoration shall result in the unrepentant individual being removed from membership and treated as a non-member<sup>(11)</sup>. Removal from membership shall be carried out by a simple majority vote of the active membership at a regular or a special business meeting. Restoration will follow the principles laid out in Galatians 6:1-10 and restoration to active membership, after due repentance and the recommendation of the elders, shall be carried out by a simple majority vote of active members at a regular or special business meeting. By joining this church, all members agree that these methods shall provide the sole remedy for any dispute arising against the church and its members, and they waive the right to file any legal action against the church in a civil court or agency. 1 Corinthians 6:1-11

#### **Section 5 - Term**

Active members shall exercise their spiritual gifts and serve the church as long as they are qualified (according to the standards of this Constitution), willing and able. The expectation is that active members will participate in the life of the church to the fullest of their potential<sup>(6)</sup>. Active members who have reached the age of eighteen have the right to vote. Those inactive in the life and activity of the church will be sought for restoration and continuance in the fellowship of the church. Church members will be removed from membership at death, when under discipline, when membership is established at another church, or at the member's written request.

## **Section 6 - Members in Need of Special Care**

The Members in Need of Special Care shall consist of those members:

- who for health reasons, or other circumstances, are unable to actively participate in the life of IBC.

The elders have the responsibility of identifying these members in need of special care. In addition, the elders of the church shall review the Special Care roll at least semi-annually. Decisions to remove a member from the Special Care roll will be determined by the elders, and will be primarily influenced by a member returning to active church life.

The purpose of the Special Care list is to ensure that those members who are unable to actively participate in the life of the church are still cared for and given opportunities to engage with IBC through other various means.

### **Key Scripture References on Church Membership:**

1. John 1:12-13; 3:1-21; 15:1-8; Acts 2:38-41; Romans 8:16; 12:3-8; Acts 6:1-7; I Corinthians 12; Galatians 3:26; 5:22
2. Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1; Titus 1:5
3. John 1:12-13; 3:3-21; Acts 2:38-41; Romans 8:9-17
4. John 15:1-17; Galatians 5:16-25
5. Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:1-16
6. Hebrews 10:24-25
7. Acts 5:13-14
8. 1 Timothy 4:16; 5:22; Titus 1:9
9. 1 John 1:6-7; Acts 5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6
10. Matthew 18:15-35; 1 Corinthians 5; 6; Galatians 2:11-14
11. Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:2

## **Article V Government and Leadership**

### **Section 1 - Government**

Immanuel Bible Church is under God, the headship of Jesus Christ, the authority of the Word of God and the teaching and administrating ministry of the Holy Spirit. The members of this church submit themselves to the provision of this constitution for matters of corporate policy and practice. Immanuel Bible Church is an independent and self-governing body, free from the authority of any denomination, association, or church conference. The government of this church shall be vested in the active membership and executed according to the provision of this constitution.

### **Section 2 – Elders (*Overseers, Pastor, Shepherd*)**

#### **A. Role & Responsibility**

Elders are spiritually qualified men who serve the church by exercising servant-leadership,

providing oversight and directing the affairs of the church <sup>(1)</sup>. They are respected, spiritually qualified and approved servant-leaders who are recognized and approved by the active membership as spiritual men and are therefore voluntarily submitted to and followed by the church members <sup>(2)</sup>. They are humble examples and respected servant leaders <sup>(3)</sup>. Elders devote themselves to prayer, providing oversight for the church, preparing the members of the church for works of service, preparing reliable men who will be able to serve as elders, and the preaching and teaching of the Word of God <sup>(4)</sup>. Elders must be able to communicate the Word of God in an understandable way to build up believers and refute false doctrine and false teachers <sup>(5)</sup>. Elders are responsible for preparing and recommending new members. The elders shall serve as the pastoral search team when necessary. Elders are held accountable to the Word of God by the active membership of the church <sup>(6)</sup>.

The pastoral staff must meet the Biblical qualifications of elders and are therefore recognized as elders of the church. The New Testament norm is a plurality of elders for the local church. The elder board will consist of both compensated and non-compensated men <sup>(7)</sup>. The senior pastor is the compensated preaching/teaching elder <sup>(8)</sup> and serves as the primary leader of the elders and pastoral staff.

The elders shall meet regularly and shall have a schedule of meetings of no less than one a month. Special meetings of the elders may be made by the request of the pastor or upon request of two or more elders. The elders shall serve as trustees in all legal and contractual transactions.

## B. Qualifications

Because of the importance of the elder's role in the local church (serving as respected overseers) they must be spiritually qualified men. The qualifications are given to us in three passages of scripture emphasizing their importance <sup>(9)</sup>. The qualifications are as follows:

1. ***Above reproach, blameless.*** They are above accusation that would disqualify them for service.
2. ***The husband of one wife (a one-woman man).*** They are faithful as husbands and morally pure.
3. ***Temperate.*** Their life lines up with Biblical values, attitudes and actions.
4. ***Prudent, self-controlled.*** They give evidence of making good judgment decisions.
5. ***Respectable.*** They have the respect of the Christian community.
6. ***Hospitable.*** Their families are receptive to hospitality and generous living.
7. ***Able to teach.*** The church members learn under their teaching and leadership. They demonstrate the ability to teach "without quarreling" and "with patient and careful instruction". <sup>(10)</sup>
8. ***Not given to drunkenness.*** They are free from addictions.
9. ***Gentle.*** They respond appropriately and gently to others.
10. ***Not violent.*** They are not quick tempered. They are meek.
11. ***Not quarrelsome.*** They are not contentious, not fighters.
12. ***Free from the love of money.*** They are not greedy.
13. ***Manages his home well.*** They have the respect of their wives and children.
14. ***Good reputation with outsiders.*** They are known as a Christian in their neighborhood and workplace. They have a consistent testimony.
15. ***Not a recent convert.*** They have been saved long enough to exhibit the reality of their conversion and the depth of their spirituality.

16. **Disciplined.** They demonstrate disciplined lives and consistent spiritual growth.
17. **Fair.** They lead (provide oversight) without partiality.
18. **Refute false teachers.** They are knowledgeable of Scripture and are able to recognize and refute false doctrine. They are able to apply Scripture to life and lead others in the truth.
19. **Willing.** They serve willingly.
20. **Servant heart.** They are “eager to serve” and do not “lord it over” those under their care.

### C. Elder Nomination / Recognition

The Bible gives evidence of approved men (elders) preparing approved men and appointing them to positions of leadership<sup>(11)</sup>. The Bible also recognizes the church’s role in approving and recognizing qualified leaders<sup>(12)</sup>. The elders will be involved in preparing men to serve as elders and presenting them to the church membership for their approval. This process will not be done hastily<sup>(13)</sup>. The process for elder approval and recognition will be as follows:

1. The elders will be involved in a process of training reliable, qualified men<sup>(14)</sup>. As men become qualified, the elders will present them to the church members for approval and recognition.
2. The membership of the church will review the qualifications for elders<sup>(15)</sup> as candidates are being recommended by the elders for office.
3. The membership of the church will be given 30 days to prayerfully consider the Biblical qualifications and the candidate(s) being recommended. During the same period of time, the candidate(s) will prayerfully consider whether God would have them serve as elders and whether or not they are willing and able to serve in this capacity.
4. The candidates who have met the Biblical qualifications, as recognized by the elders and the congregation, and who are personally willing and able to serve, will be presented to the church for a final 30 days of prayer by the church prior to approval and recognition.
5. The men willing, qualified and approved by the elders and the active membership will be presented to the church membership for a vote of affirmation. A three-fourths vote of affirmation is required (See “Quorum,” Article 6, Section 4). Those who are unwilling or are deemed unqualified by the active members will not be recognized as elders.

### D. Terms of Office

The Bible does not give “terms of office” which heightens the importance of qualified leadership and the necessity of the membership of the church to hold one another accountable to the innerrant and infallible Word of God. For disqualified elders to continue in their position(s) of leadership will result in spiritual discord and destructive God-dishonoring activity<sup>(16)</sup>. The elders shall exercise their spiritual gift(s) of servant-leadership as long as they are spiritually and Biblically qualified, recognized and approved by the active membership, willing and able. Elders shall be removed by the unanimous agreement of the other serving elders or a three-fourths vote (See “Quorum,” Article 6, Section 4). Non-compensated elders shall be asked to serve a three year term. Additional terms may be served upon the three-fourths approval (See “Quorum,” Article 6, Section 4). Elders’ terms shall be staggered for continuity. An el-

der may remove himself from office by written request submitted to the elders. If disciplinary action toward an elder should be required the process should be followed according to Matthew 18:15-35 with the added principle of 1 Timothy 5:19-20. (Outside elders, approved and recognized as such by the active membership, may be called in to mediate as the apostles did during the time of the early church. recorded in Scripture 3 John 1:9,10).

### **Key Scripture References on Elders:**

1. Acts 20:28; I Timothy 5:17
2. Hebrews 13:17
3. I Peter 5:1-4
4. Acts 6:1-4; 20:28; I Peter 5:1-4; Hebrews 13:17; Ephesians 4:12-13; I Timothy 3:2; II Timothy 2:2; James 5:14-15
5. I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9
6. Galatians 2:11-14; 1 Timothy 4:16; 3 John 9
7. 1 Timothy 5:17-18
8. I Timothy 5:17-18; I Corinthians 9:14
9. I Timothy 3; Titus 1; I Peter 5
10. II Timothy 2:24; 4:2
11. 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 5:5
12. Acts 6:1-7
13. 1 Timothy 5:22
14. Timothy 2:2
15. I Timothy 3; Titus 2; I Peter 5
16. Galatians 2:11-14; 1 Timothy 4:16; 3 John 9

## **Section 3 – Pastor & Pastoral Staff**

### **A. Role & Responsibility**

The senior preaching pastor is the primary leader of the elders. The senior pastor serves with the elders in overseeing the affairs of the church. The responsibilities of the pastor shall be those generally associated with his office – preaching/teaching the Word of God, modeling Christ-like behavior, maintaining doctrinal purity, overseeing the spiritual needs of the church, and prayer.

Other pastoral positions may be developed and filled as needs arise or deleted as needs change. The elders shall make all such appointments with the approval of the active membership. Such action shall be taken at any regular or special business meeting.

The compensated pastoral staff serves with the elders in overseeing the affairs of the church. Each Pastoral position shall have qualifications and responsibilities put into a job description prior to the filling of said position. Compensated Pastoral staff must not out-number non-compensated elders on the elder board.

### **B. Qualifications**

The pastoral staff must meet the Biblical qualifications of church members and elders given above (Article IV, section 2; Article V, section 2B).

### C. Call

The elders shall serve as the pastoral search team when such need arises. The elders shall prayerfully consider all candidates and make a report to the active membership as to their progress. Led by the Holy Spirit, they shall present a candidate to the active membership. The active members must be informed of the candidate's appearance before the church by verbal announcement and by written letter at least two weeks prior to their coming. After the active membership has had opportunity to observe the pastoral candidate's person and ministry, a letter shall go out informing the active members of a special business meeting for the purpose of extending the pastoral call to the candidate. The active members shall have opportunity to act upon the elders recommendation by ballot vote. A three-fourths majority of the voting members present shall be required to call a pastor. A quorum shall consist of one-third of the active voting membership. The active members, through the elders, shall extend the call. Should the candidate fail to receive a three-fourths majority, or refuse the call, the elders shall seek out another acceptable candidate and repeat the above process.

The elders should present a member-approved contract to the new pastor including arrangements for relocation, salary / benefit package.

Pastoral positions may be developed and filled as needs arise or deleted as needs change. The elders shall make all such appointments with the approval of the active membership following the above outlined procedure. Such action must be taken at a regular or special business meeting.

### D. Term of Office

The pastor's term of office shall be indefinite. A notice of 60 days shall be given to terminate, with remuneration and services continuing through this period, unless otherwise agreed.

A vote may be taken by the active membership at any time to terminate the pastor's services subject to the following:

- A special meeting may be called for that purpose in accord with special business meeting policy and procedure.
- It may be placed on the agenda for a regular business meeting, provided that previous action has been taken by the elders, or by petition of twenty-five percent of the active membership has been presented to the elders.

In the event of doctrinal or moral defection, the pastor's services may be suspended immediately by action of the elders. The matter shall be brought to the active membership in a regular or special business meeting called in accordance with this Constitution.

## **Section 4. - Deacons & Deaconesses (*diakonos, servant*)**

### A. Role & Responsibility

Deacons and deaconesses are spiritually qualified men and women who serve the church by exercising their spiritual gift(s) and serving the needs of the church members by administrating

the various details of the ministry. They serve under the oversight of the elders <sup>(1)</sup>. The deacons/deaconesses serve the elders by administrating their leadership, freeing the elders up to continue to pray, provide oversight, preach, and prepare members for the work of the ministry. They serve the church members by administrating the ministries of the church, the business and maintenance of the church, and ministering to the members various needs so that they are freed up to do the work of the ministry <sup>(2)</sup>.

They are responsible for the general oversight of the temporal affairs of the church, such as physical plant, budget planning and administration, and related affairs.

The deacons/deaconesses shall meet regularly. Special meetings of the deacon/deaconesses may be made by the request of the Pastor or upon request of two or more elders or two or more deacon/deaconesses.

## B. Qualifications

Like elders, the deacons and deaconesses are qualified servants. Their qualifications are given in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and by example in Acts 6:1-7. The qualifications are as follows:

1. ***Worthy of respect.*** Like elders, they must be above reproach.
2. ***Not indulging in much wine.*** They are free from addictions.
3. ***Not pursuing dishonest gain.*** They are free from the love of money.
4. ***They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience.***  
They believe and live Biblical convictions.
5. ***They must be tested/approved.*** They have the proven confidence of the church members.
6. ***The husband of one wife.*** They are faithful and morally pure.
7. ***Must manage their children and household well.*** They have the respect of their immediate family.
8. ***Full of the Spirit and wisdom.*** They serve as wise and faithful administrators.

In the same way, Deaconesses (1 Timothy 3:11) are to be women who are:

1. ***Worthy of respect.*** They must be above reproach.
2. ***Not malicious talkers.*** They are not gossips.
3. ***Temperate.*** Their life lines up with Biblical values, attitudes and actions.
4. ***Trustworthy.*** They give evidence of making good judgment decisions.

## C. Recognition Procedure

Deacons and deaconesses are qualified servant administrators and are therefore respected by the church members. They are accountable to God's Word and to the oversight of the elders <sup>(3)</sup>. The Bible gives evidence of both the elders and church member's role in recognizing and approving deacons and deaconesses <sup>(4)</sup>. The elders will be involved in determining the service needs and, therefore, the number of deacons and deaconesses needed. The process for deacon/deaconess nomination and recognition will be as follows:

1. The elders will provide oversight and determine various positions of service needed.
2. The active membership of the church will review the qualifications for deacons/deaconess <sup>(5)</sup> as the current elders recommend deacons/deaconess for needed areas of service.



3. The membership will be given sufficient time to prayerfully consider the Biblical qualifications and the candidate(s) being recommended. The candidate(s) being presented will be given the same period to prayerfully consider whether God would have them serve as deacon / deaconess and whether they are willing and able to serve in this position. They will indicate their willingness to the elders.
4. The men and women willing, qualified and approved will be presented to the church to be recognized and approved as deacons / deaconesses. A simple majority vote of affirmation by the active membership is required at a regular or special business meeting.

#### D. Terms of Office

The Bible does not give “terms of office” for deacons and deaconesses. The deacons and deaconesses serve under the oversight of the elders in servicing the needs of the church. Therefore, the deacons and deaconesses shall exercise their spiritual gifts in specific ministry areas as they are spiritually and Biblically qualified, willing and able, or until the need is met. (The number of deacons/deaconesses is based on qualification and need). Deacon/deaconess, and a reaffirmation of commitment for service. (Additional terms may be served upon the recommendation of the elders and a simple majority vote of affirmation by the active membership.) Deacons must be removed by the unanimous agreement of the elders or a simple majority vote of the active membership at any regular or special business meeting.

#### **Key Scripture References on Deacon/Deaconess Ministry:**

1. Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3:8-13
2. Acts 6:1-7; Ephesians 4:
3. Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3:8-9
4. Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3
5. 1 Timothy 3; Acts 6:1-7

#### **Section 5 - Required Officers**

##### A. Treasurer

1. The treasurer shall be responsible for accounting and disbursement of all church funds. He/she shall submit a monthly statement of receipts and disbursements to the elders, a written report at quarterly business meetings, and a written report to the active membership at the annual business meeting. The treasurer shall be responsible to have all financial records reviewed/audited to insure compliance with good accounting procedures at least annually. A report of the annual audit shall be submitted to the active membership upon completion.
2. The treasurer shall be appointed by the elders for a term of one year, effective January 1, subject to the approving majority vote of the active membership.
3. The treasurer shall be removed from office by the unanimous agreement of the elders or the majority vote of the active membership at any business or special meeting.

##### B. Financial Secretary

1. The financial secretary shall be responsible for all Church financial receipts and shall supervise the counting, depositing, and recording of all offerings. He/she shall also maintain records of all envelope giving and render a statement to each envelope contributor at least annually.

2. The Financial Secretary shall be appointed by the Elders for a term of one year, effective January 1, subject to the approving majority vote of the active membership.
3. The financial secretary shall be removed from office by the unanimous agreement of the elders or the majority vote of the active membership.

#### C. Clerk

1. The clerk shall be custodian of the membership records of the church, be responsible to record all minutes at business and special meetings, give notice of all Church business meetings, keep a roll of the membership of the church and perform such duties through the church office secretary. Copies of all correspondence will be kept in the church office file as well as in the clerk's file. The church clerk shall record constitutional amendments and significant property changes, and provide an annual report to membership.
2. The clerk shall be appointed by the elders for a term of one year, effective January 1, subject to the approving majority vote of the active membership.
3. The clerk shall be removed from office by the unanimous agreement of the elders or the majority vote of the active membership at any business or special meeting.

### Article VI Meetings

#### **Section 1 - Regular Meetings**

The members of Immanuel Bible church will meet on the first day of the week for worship, prayer, Bible study, fellowship, and celebrating the ordinances. Additional meetings shall be regularly scheduled for ministry in agreement with our Mission, Vision, Values, Priorities, Doctrinal Statement and Constitution.

#### **Section 2 - Business Meetings**

Regular business meetings for active members will be scheduled by the elders and published near the end of each quarter (January, April, July and October). The annual business meeting for financial and ministerial review will be held in January. The October business meeting agenda shall include the approval of the annual budget, necessary elder and deacon approvals, and officers for the next calendar year. Active members of Immanuel Bible Church must be notified two weeks in advance for all business meetings.

#### **Section 3 - Special Business Meetings**

Special business meetings of the active membership may be held at any time upon the call of the elders or by written request to the elders by twenty-five percent of the active members. The call of such a meeting and its purpose shall be made public to all active members two weeks in advance.

#### **Section 4 - Quorum**

A quorum for business meetings shall consist of one-quarter of the active membership on any matter of business except matters of pastoral-church relationship, elder-church relationship,

selling, buying or mortgaging church property, or constitutional amendments. These matters shall require one-third of the active membership to constitute a quorum. A simple majority vote is required for transacting business except for pastoral-church relationship, elder-church relationship, church property matters and constitutional amendments where a three-fourths majority of the votes cast is required.

### **Section 5 - Moderator**

The elders shall establish a moderator for all business meetings. The moderator shall establish the tone and courtesy of the meeting and shall have the power to maintain order.

## **Article VII Finances and Properties**

### **Section 1 – Financial Policy**

The finances of this church shall be received from the free-will offerings of Christians and the gifts of those interested in its ministry. The fiscal year shall be from January 1 – December 31. The budget of the church shall be adopted by a majority vote of the active membership at the third quarterly business meeting.

### **Section 2 – Financial Authority**

The elders, deacons and deaconesses shall have the authority to act on financial matters, authorized under the approved budget, in the normal course of operation. Any non-budgeted business or expenditure of \$15,000 or more must be brought before the active membership before action is taken. Items included in the budget are considered approved at the time of budget approval.

### **Section 3 – Acquisition and Sale of Properties**

The church shall have power to acquire and hold property, both real and personal, for the general purpose of the church. All properties so acquired shall be in the name of the church.

### **Section 4 – Use of Properties**

All properties belonging to the church shall be available to the membership for purposes consistent with the ministry of the church, subject to oversight by the deacons/deaconesses.

## **Article VIII Licensing & Ordaining**

### **Section 1 - Licensing**

Any member who, in the judgment of the elders and the active membership, gives evidence by his doctrine, life, and ability to teach indicates that he is called of God to the work of the ministry, may be licensed to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the approval of three-fourths of

the active members present at a regularly scheduled or special business meeting.

## **Section 2 - Ordaining**

If the elders desire to ordain a man to the full time work of the ministry, then the Church shall invite pastors and brethren from churches of like faith in order to sit in council with them to advise regarding ordination. This council, after due examination of the candidate and consultation, may advise the church to ordain or refrain from doing so, but the final decision shall rest with the membership, requiring the approval of three-fourths of the members present at a regularly scheduled or special business meeting.

## **Article IX Provision for Constitutional Amendment**

This constitution may be amended only at a regularly scheduled or special business meeting provided the proposed amendment has been placed on the published agenda and distributed to the active members two weeks in advance.

## **Article X Dissolution**

The elders may call a special business meeting for the purpose of dissolving Immanuel Bible Church of Saginaw, Michigan. Notice of the meeting shall be given at the two worship services immediately preceding the meeting and in writing mailed to the active membership at least two weeks prior to the meeting. A two-thirds majority of the voting members present at the meeting shall be required to dissolve the church and distribute the church assets. All assets remaining after payment of liabilities shall be distributed to one or more Christian organizations of like faith determined and declared in the motion for the vote to dissolve.

## **Article XI Statement on Marriage**

At IBC our convictions about the nature of marriage are governed by the same biblical authority that informs all our teaching and ministry. We affirm that God speaks through Scripture to the issues of marriage, sexual conduct, divorce and remarriage, and, therefore, will guide individual believers and the church accordingly.

That each person, as created in the image of God, is unique, possesses dignity, and is worthy of respect. We also affirm that we are called to introduce each person to the loving, reconciling ministry of Jesus Christ and the life changing transformation described in Scripture. As Christians we seek to share the truth about God with all people, which includes affirming and holding fast to the truths of Scripture as it pertains to marriage. (See Church Constitution Article III Section 8)

That God's intention for marriage is established throughout the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The Divine establishment of marriage is confirmed in both the history of creation

and by the words of Jesus and the New Testament authors.

That God ordained marriage as a voluntary union for life between one man and one woman.

Our creation as man and woman, who are complementary to one another, has significance in revealing aspects of the image of God and His relationship to humanity.

That sexual intimacy is legitimate only within the bounds of marriage. The commands of God are clear, sexual intimacy outside of marriage, promiscuity, common law relationships, adultery, homosexual acts, exploitation, incest and sexual perversion contradict God's purpose for human sexuality.

That marriage is more than a contract between two persons: It is a covenant before God. In the covenant of marriage, God joins a man and a woman together "in one flesh" and forbids anyone to break it.

That in Christian marriages, the Church acts as an agent of God's blessing, as a primary witness and as a supportive community. Therefore, the church cannot confer the spiritual blessing of marriage on other relationships.

That a healthy marriage is the best foundation for families and the raising of children. A healthy marriage includes the stability of the family and the access of children to a mother and a father. God intended that children should receive nurture from a male and a female parent, and in turn learn to honor both.

Therefore, be it resolved that:

1. As a matter of belief, doctrine and religious practice, that IBC reserves the term "marriage" for the covenant relationship between one gender-normative man and one gender-normative woman to the exclusion of all others.
2. And that IBC establishes the standard that all members, who are licensed to perform marriages, will not officiate at or co-officiate at any marriage outside of the previously stated definition of marriage.
3. That the facilities of IBC will not be used for weddings or receptions where the marriage union is contrary to the provisions of this resolution.
4. Be it further resolved, that IBC restricts the use of its facility, as it pertains to marriage ceremonies and receptions, to members. Non-members are excluded from reserving the facility for the purpose of performing a marriage ceremony and/or a marriage reception.